



Introduction to Sociology (SYG1000)– Hybrid Section

Course website: <http://campus.fsu.edu>

Tues (Section 2) *or* Thurs (Section 11),
12:30-1:45 in BEL 180

Fall Semester, 2008

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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We encourage the use of the class discussion board for posting general administrative, technical, or substantive questions or comments at any time of the day or night. As the semester gets going, these postings should be your first point of reference when you have a question or concern, since questions and answers will be open for everyone to read and archived for later reference. Note that we do *not* monitor the discussion board or our email 24/7. You should reasonably expect a reply to your electronic communications within 24 hours, *except for weekends and holidays*.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

This is a “hybrid” version of the course “Introduction to Sociology.” Our goals and objectives are comparable to any other section, but this one is intended to combine the best of face-to-face classroom experiences with substantial out-of-class, internet-based practical applications and discussion, in order to enhance your learning. It is critical that you know and understand that half of the regular class time is replaced by online individual and group work, *in addition* to the out-of-class activities that would be part of any regular course. You *must* have adequate internet access to complete this course; on-campus labs are available for this purpose.

This class combines two separate sections that run in parallel. Each section has one face-to-face class meeting per week, and *attendance is required*. Section 2 will meet on Tuesday and Section 11 will meet on Thursday. The two sections will meet together for a common final examination at the FSU designated time. *You must attend your assigned section to receive credit for in-class work*.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to familiarize the beginning student with “sociological ways of looking at the world” and with the broad array of topics sociologists study. As with most introductory courses, primary emphasis will be on concepts and interpretations. Lectures and a varied selection of textbook and supplementary material will help students develop a sociological framework and provide substantive insights into the subject matter of the field. Importantly, we also emphasize “learning by doing.” A series of web-based individual and group projects will require students to use available social and demographic data to accurately describe specific social patterns and trends of interest, as well as to develop theoretically meaningful descriptions and interpretations of findings. To complement these projects, several decision cases will be required in which groups of students apply the basic concepts, perspectives, and data of the course into coherent policy-relevant positions pertaining to key social issues. A particularly important part of the course is active and thoughtful participation in frequent online group discussions of issues following from readings, lectures, and projects. Thus, unlike other introductory courses that base the majority of students’ grades on in-class exams, the hybrid and active learning format of this course spreads student assessment across a range of in-class and out-of-class activities (see below).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Our overall goal for the class is that *after completing the course, you will be able to apply basic sociological information, concepts, relationships and perspectives to the interpretation of selected aspects of human society by combining empirical analysis and critical thinking.*

We have three specific objectives:

1. *Content/ Discipline knowledge and skills:* You will learn sociological concepts, relationships, and substantive findings, and you will learn to apply sociological perspectives to selected problems and issues in human society. This objective relies primarily on lectures, readings, exams, and projects, as well as student written work and participation in online discussions.
2. *Communication:* You will improve your skills in written and oral communication by satisfactorily completing assigned individual and group exercises, project reports, and participating in online discussions.
3. *Critical thinking:* You will improve your critical thinking skills by interpreting, analyzing and evaluating theory and evidence pertaining to specific questions from data analysis projects and assigned decision cases, and participating in online discussions.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Purchase:

1. John Macionis (2007) **Society: The Basics: Ninth Edition.** Prentice-Hall. ISBN: 0-13-22849-01. If you prefer, a 180 day subscription to an electronic version of this book is available at around \$45, or about half the price of a new book – roughly the cost of a used book. The bookstore should have information on the electronic subscription, or go directly to: <http://www.coursesmart.com>.

2. **Interwrite PRS-RF Transmitter** (“clicker”) – available from the FSU Bookstore. See <http://learningforlife.fsu.edu/ctl/explore/bestPractices/docs/PRS-STUDENTS.pdf> and the course website for more information. You *must* bring your registered PRS to class *every day* for graded work. *Note that we will use the RF model, not the older IR one.*

Other required materials:

Software requirements: You must be able to access the internet, read PDF documents, view streaming audio and video, and use basic word processing and spreadsheets. There will be weekly required online readings and numerous streaming audio/ video presentations to reinforce key points and stimulate discussion. If you do not have a high-speed internet connection at home you need to set aside time in your schedule to access the online material from a computer with a sufficient connection speed. Any campus computer lab will suffice. There are labs in Strozier and Carothers as well as the Union. Slow connection speed at home is not a valid excuse for failing to complete a course requirement on time.

GRADING/EVALUATION:

Course grades will be based on the following weighting of course requirements:

Exams	25%
Discussion Board	30%
Data Analysis Projects	10%
Decision Cases	10%
In class PRS	15%
Online quizzes	10%

Exams. Three exams are required, including a regular unit test that will be given during the official final exam period. Each exam will be composed of objective (e.g., multiple choice) and short answer/ essay questions. The exams will cover potentially all material from lectures, assigned readings/ supplementary materials and projects, including the discussion board. Each exam will be graded on a 100 point scale.

Discussion Board. Six group discussion assignments are required where students consider and write about themes and issues from the readings and supplementary materials, lectures, and projects. These will be asynchronous within an assigned time frame and conducted online using discussion boards on the course website. Groups will be virtual and created randomly to include students from both sections, so it is not expected that there will ever be any physical group meetings. Specific questions will generally be posted so there is some choice in the topics or issues to be considered. Each student is required to post an original comment and reply on the issue at hand (generally about 2-3 long paragraphs that include the creative and relevant use of sociological concepts, good grammar, and demonstrate an understanding of the link between data, alternative sociological interpretations, and the issues at hand). A grading rubric will be posted on the course website. Note that ground rules for appropriate use of discussion boards (“netiquette”) will be posted on the website. We intend to offer seven discussion assignments. The best six scores will be included in the final grade.

Data analysis projects. Two projects are required in which students analyze US census data and answer specific questions about the findings, demonstrating the application of sociological frameworks and interpretations. Each project will consist of data tables and graphs about the US and perhaps other populations; students will be required to answer specific questions based on these data. Answers will require theoretically informed interpretation and a consideration of applying cause-effect logic to non-experimental data. These projects will be implemented within regular discussion groups and will require individual postings and reactions among group members. Specific assignments and a grading rubric will be posted on the course website.

Decision Cases. Two decision cases are assigned in which students develop coherent policy-relevant positions on key social issues. These projects will also be implemented online within regular discussion groups. Case studies require you to analyze a policy question from a variety of perspectives, and then apply sociological principles or insights to better grasp the source, complexity, and potential way(s) to resolve the dilemma. The goal is that you will develop a collective response to the questions that are posed in which you discover a practical use of sociological principles by shedding new light on broad, thematic social tensions and conflicts. Additional information and specific assignments will be given in advance of each project. A grading rubric will be posted on the course website. *Note:* You should keep documentation that proves your contribution to the group response. Group members who contribute nothing to the final product will receive no credit for the assignment.

In class PRS. We will use clickers to encourage active preparation/ reflection on the material being covered. As a by-product, we will record the required daily attendance. During each class after the first week, one or more questions will be asked by the instructor that will be answered by students using PRS (and *only* using PRS) and graded. Absent students with an excused absence will receive their semester average PRS score as a daily grade, while those without an excused absence will receive a score of zero for the day they miss. It is not possible to say in advance how many total PRS points will be possible. At the end of the term, we will scale these points on a percentile basis in computing the grade (100% of the maximum score, 90%, etc.). Note that it is a violation of the academic honor code to use a clicker that is not your own. Links to additional information on PRS will be posted on the website.

Online Quizzes. As an incentive to actively master the material in the text and lectures, we require ten weekly online quizzes covering the material in each chapter. Each quiz consists of 10 objective questions, and a score of 7 or higher is required for the quiz to count. Quizzes may be taken multiple times *within the assigned week*; only the *last* grade will count. We will offer twelve quizzes, and students may receive credit for up to 10. The best 10 scores of 7 or higher will be summed for inclusion in the final course grade.

Grading will be according to a standard scale, and plus/minus grading will be used for final semester grades. FSU does not allow a final grade of "A+." The specific grade ranges are below.

A =93-100 A- =90-92 B+ =87-89 B=83-86 B- =80-82 C+ = 77-79
C=73-76 C- =70-72 D+=67-69 D=63-66 D- =60-62 F=<59

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance & Late Work. The class is organized in weekly units, *where the week begins Tuesday morning and ends at 11:59 pm Monday night.* Unless otherwise specified in the particular assignment, all work is due by the end of the week it is assigned; otherwise it is considered “late.” The following late work *cannot* be made up: In class PRS, Discussion Board, and Online Quizzes. Late data analysis projects and decision cases are subject to a late penalty of 10% to encourage punctuality. *No paper may be turned in more than one week late.* Exams missed due to an excused absence will be eligible for a make-up without penalty. Students bear the responsibility of contacting us *within one week* of the missed exam in order to schedule a make-up.

Attendance is required for the Tuesday or Thursday face-to-face class meeting assigned for your section. This will be recorded using the PRS. Excused absences will not be penalized, if we are notified preferably in advance or at the latest by the next class meeting *and* if appropriate documentation is provided upon request. We cannot make provisions for PRS questions to be made up, because these occur in a class setting that cannot be reproduced for those who did not attend, whether for an excused absence or not. To adjust for this, students with an excused absence will receive their semester’s average daily PRS grade as a score for the day they miss.

The instructor decides whether an absence is excused. As guidance, an excused absence is typically one of the following: Religious holidays, official FSU functions where your attendance is required (e.g., varsity sports), verified emergencies, and serious medical illness. We reserve the right to require documentation. No one is penalized for excused absences, but everyone remains responsible for all content missed. Please notify us in advance of missing a class to observe a religious holiday.

Incomplete Grades. Missing work is insufficient reason for a grade of Incomplete (I). An incomplete will only be given under extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. Note that College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

Academic Honor Code. The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” See <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>.

Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "zero" for that particular assignment. We

reserve the right to use all means at our disposal to screen for plagiarism, including electronic citation checkers (e.g., Turnitin.com). For more information on plagiarism, see <http://online.fsu.edu/learningresources/plagiarism>.

Student Conduct Code. Everyone in this class is expected to adhere to principles embodied in the FSU Student Contact Code, available at: http://registrar.fsu.edu/student_handbook/. This code essentially requires everyone to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct in this class, whether in face-to-face meetings or online. Violation of the conduct code carries a range of penalties that can range from a reduced grade to expulsion.

Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center; 97 Woodward Avenue, South; Florida State University; Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167; (850) 644-9566 (voice); (850) 644-8504 (TDD); sdrc@admin.fsu.edu; <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

Syllabus change policy. This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. It and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Dates, readings, and assignments are subject to change

<i>Semester Calendar</i> (Week #, Class dates)	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Things to Do</i> (All supplemental materials are accessible through the course website)	<i>Things to Turn In</i> (Due 11:59 pm the following <u>Monday</u> , unless specified)
Week 1 (8/26-28)	Introduction to the Course Overview of technology used in the class	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 1; (2) Excerpt from Mills (1959) <i>Sociological Imagination</i> VIEW VIDEO: (1) “The Power of the Situation.” (2001) <i>Discovering Psychology</i> # 19. BBC	
Week 2 (9/2-4)	Sociological Perspectives The logic of research	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 1, cont. (2) Sampson (2008) “Rethinking crime & immigration.” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Data project #1
Week 3 (9/9-11)	Culture	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 2; (2) Darby (2005) “Why can’t we stop circumcising boys?” <i>Contexts</i> (3) Althaus (1997) “Female circumcision.” <i>International Family Planning Perspectives</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #1** ** Supplemental material: (1) WHO Fact Sheet, (2) NPR stories
Week 4 (9/16-18)	Population	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 15 (2) Simon (2008) “The joys of parenthood reconsidered.” <i>Contexts</i> VIEW VIDEO: (1) “Population Transition in Italy.” (1996) <i>Human Geography</i> #6. BBC.	(1) Online quiz (2) Decision case #1 ** **Supplemental material: NPR stories on fertility and fertility policy
Week 5 (9/23-25)	Exam 1 Class Survey # 1 – Extra credit	Review all material assigned to date & study questions.	Exam 1 – In class

Week 6 (9/30-10/2)	Groups & Organizations <i>Rosh Hashanah is Tuesday; Observant students may come to Thursday class 10/2</i>	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 5 & pp 95-102 in Ch 4 (Social Interaction) (2) Ritzer (2002) <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i> (excerpt)	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #2 ** ** Supplemental material: “Is Wal- Mart Good for America?” <i>Frontline</i> (2004). Parts 1, 3, 5. Plus other news items.
Week 7 (10/7-9)	Religion <i>Yom Kippur is Thursday; Observant students may come to Tuesday class 10/7</i>	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 13 (2) Ecklund (2008) “Religion & spirituality among scientists” <i>Contexts</i> (3) Carr (2008) Keeping the faith.” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #3 ** **Supplemental material: - “God’s Country” (PBS news video)
Week 8 (10/14-16)	Education	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 14 (2) Farkas (2004) “Black- white test score gap.” <i>Contexts</i> VIDEO/AUDIO: (1) “No Child Left Behind” <i>PBS News Hour online.</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Data project #2
Week 9 (10/21-23)	Sexuality	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 6 (2) England (2005) “The decline of the date and the rise of the college hook up” (3) Weitzer (2007) “Prostitution: facts & fictions.” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #4 ** **Supplemental material TBA
Week 10 (10/28-30)	Deviance	READ: (1) Macionis ch 7 & pp 69- 76 in ch 3 (Socialization) (2) Loury (2007) “Why are so many Americans in Prison?” VIEW VIDEO: (1) “The New Asylums” <i>Frontline</i> (2005). Parts 1, 2, 5. ; Other audio reports	(1) Online quiz (2) Decision case #2** **Supplemental material: (1) “Under the Rainbow” (PBS). (2) Stacey – “Does the sexual orientation of parents matter?” ASR 2001

Week 11 (11/4-6)	Exam 2 Class survey #2 – Extra credit	Review all material assigned since the last exam & study questions.	Exam 2 – In class
Week 12 (11/11-13)	Social Stratification & Poverty <i>Veteran’s Day Holiday (11/11)</i> <i>NO Class meetings this week – All online</i>	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 8 (2) Kenworthy (2007) “Is equality possible?” <i>Contexts</i> (3) Esping-Anderson (2007) “Equal opportunities & the welfare state.” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #5 ** **Supplemental material TBA
Week 13 (11/18-20)	Gender Stratification	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 10 (2) Edin & Kefalas (2005) “Unmarried with children” <i>Contexts</i> (3) Stone (2007) “The rhetoric & reality of 'opting out'” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion Board #6 ** **Supplemental material: (1) “Is Polygamy Good For Feminists” (2) “Polygamists fight to be seen as part of mainstream society.”
Week 14 (11/25-27)	Race & Ethnicity <i>Thanksgiving Holiday (11/27) – DRIVE SAFELY!!</i> <i>NO Class meetings this week – All online</i>	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 11 (2) McArdle (2008) “Sociologists on the colorblind question.” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz (2) Discussion board #7 ** **Supplemental material: “Memory of the Camps” OR “The OJ Verdict.” <i>Frontline</i>
Week 15 (12/2-4)	Social Change Course Evaluation	READ: (1) Macionis, Ch 16 (2) Furstenberg (2004) “Growing up is harder to do.” <i>Contexts</i> (3) Wilensky (2005) “Can social science shape the public agenda?” <i>Contexts</i>	(1) Online quiz **Supplemental material: TBA. Finish any late assignments. All late work is due Monday, 12/8.
Week 16 (12/11)	Exam 3 Class survey #3 – Extra credit	Review all material assigned since the last exam and study questions	Exam 3, <i>Thursday, 12/11,</i> 3:00-5:00, Room TBA.