Department of Social Sciences & Human Services

**Introduction to Sociology** W, F 9:30-10:45 S739

SOC 100.096 Professor Simone Kolysh

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3 credits Phone: 917-753-9526

**Course Description**

Sociology is one of the most exciting fields within the social sciences because it provides us with ways to examine society, communities and ourselves. Throughout this course, you will learn basic sociological concepts, theories and applications. We will cover a broad range of material paying particular attention to sociological insights in regards to current events and cultural conversations. Students should expect to do a fair amount of reading, writing and self-reflection.

This course is divided into 5 sections: The Sociological Perspective, Social Groups and Social Control, Social Inequality, Social Institutions and Social Change. Each section is further subdivided into relevant subfields ranging from issues of socialization & deviance to that of race, gender & sexuality. Your participation will be of outmost importance and your feedback will, to some extent, shape the journey of this course. Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Complete informal writing assignments both in and outside of the classroom in response to a variety of prompts, concepts, media and questions.
2. Define sociological concepts and explain key aspects of sociological theories as well as identify & apply relevant sociological research methods.
3. Connect sociological thinking to their everyday lives, patterns and events.

**Required Text** (Available at the BMCC Bookstore, 212-267-3474)

Henslin, James H. 2010. *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach.* 11th Edition, Pearson.

Course Requirements

1. *Attendance/Participation* 20% - Your attendance is of outmost importance and will contribute to 15% of your final grade. Each absence beyond the 2 allowed will cost you .5 points and 2 latenesses=1 absence. Participation requires you to be engaged in our class and will contribute to 5% of your final grade.
2. *Quizzes* 30% - There will be 5 quizzes (6% each). There are no make-ups.
3. *Group work* 10% - You will conduct 1 group work assignment outside of class.
4. *At-home responses* 15% - You will write ten 1-2 page responses throughout the semester and each assignment will be marked out of 1.5. You will get a 1 or a .5 if it is late or if it is too short or inadequate.
5. *Noteblook* 5% - I will collect your notebook at the end of the semester so take good notes, define words you do not understand in your readings, make mention of favorite texts, etc.
6. *Final paper* 20% - You will write a research paper that is 6-8 pages that will be 15% of your grade. A 1-2 page paper proposal will be 5% of your grade.

NOTE: ALL documents must be TYPED, 12-font, TIMES NEW ROMAN and STAPLED!

No Exceptions. Your last resort is to hand-write your work. If you are absent or do not have your assignment with you, you must email it to me prior to class or ASAP. I suggest you complete all extra-credit assignments. Respect one another and come to me with difficulties. Kids and friends are welcome in my class, especially in an emergency. All cell phones off, food is okay, and sleeping is not.

**93-100 =A 90-92 =A- 87-89 =B+ 83-86=B 80-82=B- 77-79 =C+ 73-76=C 70-72=C-**

**67-69 =D+ 63-66=D 60-62=D- Below 60=F**

College Attendance Policy

At BMCC, the maximum number of absence hours is limited to one more class than the contact hours as indicated in the BMCC college catalog. For example, you may be enrolled in a four-hour class that meets four times a week. You are allowed five hours of absence, not five days. In the case of excessive absence, the instructor has the option to lower the grade or assign an “F” or “WU” grade. Our course meets 3 hours a week so you are allowed to miss 4 hours of class which amounts to at least 2 missed classes without penalty. Each absence beyond that will cost you .5poitns.

Classes begin promptly at the times indicated in the Schedule of Classes. Arrival in classes after the scheduled starting time constitutes lateness. Latecomers may, at the discretion of the instructor, incur an official absence. In our course, 2 instances of lateness will constitute 1 absence.

Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments for this course must contact the Office of Accessibility at 212-220-8180. BMCC is committed to providing equal access to all programs and curricula to all students.

BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations require citations to the original source (see below). Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has some guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC’s website, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu).

**Sources & Citations (APA format)**

You need to make a works cited page for the final paper and you must cite properly using the APA format. \*\*\*Wikipedia is not an academic source, but may lead you to primary sources.

1. Paraphrasing primary sources (preferred):

Media in the 1950s catered to the rising middle class, giving a misleading impression of America’s families (Coontz 1990, p. 31).

1. Direct quotations (use sparingly) must be introduced:

Stephanie Coontz cites the enduring power of the media for creating a new American tradition during the baby boom: “The happy, homogenous families that we ‘remember’ from the 1950s were… a result of the media’s denial of diversity” (1990, p. 31).

*The above portion of the syllabus adapted from Professor Mattson’s Intro to Socio course syllabus, Oberlin College.*

**Course Outline**

Part I: The Sociological Perspective

**Week 1, Class 1** (Wednesday, Jan 30) – What is Sociology?

1. In-Class Questionnaire.
2. Syllabus Review.
3. Watch ‘Kai Davis-Fuck I look Like (Official Video)’ on YouTube.

**Week 1, Class 2** (Friday, Feb 1) – The Sociological Perspective

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 1
2. Read “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” by Horace Miner from *The American Anthropologist.*

\**Last day to drop with 75% tuition refund/last day to add or change class*

**Week 2, Class 3** (Wednesday, Feb 6) – How Sociologists Do Research

1. Response #1 DUE: Your objective is to explore a historical figure in sociology by locating information about and contributions of the assigned thinker. Here are two great resources:

<http://www.sociosite.net/topics/sociologists.php>

http://faculty.olympic.edu/cbarker/deadociologistsociety.htm

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 5

**Week 2, Class 4** (Friday, Feb 8) – Culture

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 2
2. Read “Live from ICP’s Gathering of the Juggalos” by Camille Cordero from *The Village Voice.*
3. Response #2 DUE on reading assigned.

\**Last day to drop with 50% tuition refund*

**Week 3, Class 5** (Wednesday, Feb 13) – Socialization – QUIZ 1

1. Study for Quiz 1: Chapters 1, 2 and 5 in Sociology and the rest of the material covered.
2. Read Sociology: Chapter 3

**Week 3, Class 6** (Friday, Feb 15) – Social Structure and Social Interaction

1. Response #3 DUE: Relate the article “Microaggressions: More than just race” by Derald Wing Sue from *Psychology Today* to your own life.
2. Read Sociology: Chapter 4
3. Group Work assignment distributed.

\**Last day to drop with 25% tuition refund/last day to drop a course so it doesn’t appear on your transcript. Course withdrawal period begins February 16 – a grade of “W” is assigned.*

**Wednesday, Feb 20 – NO CLASS (Class follows Monday Schedule)**

**Week 4, Class 7** (Friday, Feb 22) – Mass Media – FILM: The Bro Code

1. Read Sociology Now Ch. 18 ‘Mass Media’ and ‘Women & Media’ handouts.
2. Response #4 DUE: Pick 2 different magazines and conduct content analysis. Think about the magazines’ target audience, the overall message, the topic, the person one must be if they are to listen to each magazine, etc. Draw preliminary conclusions based on your findings.

Part II: Social Groups and Social Control

**Week 5, Class 8** (Wednesday, Feb 27) – Societies to Social Networks

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 6
2. *Extra Credit Assignment* 1 DUE: Watch at least 5 ‘Shit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ say to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’ videos on YouTube and analyze the material seen from a sociological standpoint. A 1-2 page report will give you 2 extra credit points.

**Week 5, Class 9** (Friday, Mar 1) – Bureaucracy and Formal Organizations

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 7
2. Read the “White Privilege and Male Privilege” by Peggy McIntosh handout.
3. Group Work assignment DUE.

**Week 6, Class 10** (Wednesday, Mar 6) – Deviance and Social Control

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 8
2. Response #5 DUE: Watch the 10 o’clock news on 2 different channels. Analyze what’s on the news and the news itself (who’s presenting what section, how diverse are the news anchors or the topics presented, etc.) You may connect your findings/patterns to a single issue such as race, gender, age, crime, fear tactics or you may write a general overview of the news using a sociological framework. Think about the following questions: What is the purpose of news? What is the purpose of telling the specific stories you see told? What is the purpose of the advice given during the news? Whose voices aren’t heard? Who is the target audience for the evening news and how do these evening ‘conversations’ influence society, if at all?

Part III: Social Inequality

**Week 6, Class 11** (Friday, Mar 7) – Age and Disability – QUIZ 2

1. Study for Quiz 2: Chapters 3, 4, 6-8 in Sociology and the rest of the material covered.
2. Read Sociology: Chapter 13
3. Read “Disability, Dependence, and Old Age: Problematic Constructions” by Sharon Dale Stone in *Canadian Journal on Aging* handout.

**Week 7, Class 12** (Wednesday, Mar 13) – Sex and Gender

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 11
2. Read the “The Five Sexes” and the “Five Sexes Revisited” by Anne Fausto-Sterling handout.
3. *Extra Credit Assignment* 2: Conduct a survey of 5 people using the following questions: What is an intersex person? If your child was born intersex, who would you listen to first: yourself, your family, doctors, lawyers, or the media? Are gender differences in-born? A 1-2 page report will give you 2 extra points.

**Week 7, Class 13** (Friday, Mar 15) – Sex and Gender

1. Read the “Sexuality and Gender in Children’s Daily Worlds” by Thorne & Luria in *Social Problems* handout.
2. Watch ‘LEGO Friends – LEGO & Gender Parts 1 & 2’ on YouTube.
3. Read “Gendered Reactions to Male and Female Nudity” by Lisa Wade of Sociological Images.
4. Read “Feminism For Men” by PunkJohnnyCash on www.gonzotimes.com.
5. Response #6 DUE on material assigned.

*Extra Credit Assignment* 3*:* Find a parent of a pre/school or a kindergarten child, shadow them (with their permission, but don’t tell them what you’re studying exactly) for a couple of hours, record what they teach their child, find patterns in your data and write a research report summarizing your results and analyzing them in terms of what we have learned so far, sociologically speaking. A 1-2 page report will give you 2 extra credit points. This assignment is DUE anytime during the semester.

*Extra Credit Assignment* 4: Spend an entire day doing what you would normally do but make sure to hold doors for people regardless of their gender. Note people’s responses and analyze why they responded the way that they did taking into account your own perceived gender. A 1-2 page report will give you 2 extra points. This assignment is DUE anytime during the semester.

**Week 8, Class 14** (Wednesday, Mar 20) – Sexuality

1. Read the “Heterosexuality” by Dyer and Foucault handouts.
2. Read “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” by Audre Lorde.
3. Response #7 DUE on reading assigned.

**Week 8, Class 15** (Friday, Mar 22) – Race and Ethnicity GUEST SPEAKER: Carlos Camacho

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 12
2. Read the “How It Feels to be Colored Me” by Zora Neale Hurston handout.
3. Read the “Where I Come From Is Like This” by Paula Gunn Allen handout.

**SPRING BREAK – March 25 thru Apr 2**

**Week 9, Class 16** (Wednesday, Apr 3) – Race and Ethnicity

1. Read “Racism Today: Continuity and Change in the Post-Civil Rights Era” by Howard Winant in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* handout.
2. Read “Light-skinned vs Dark-skinned African-American beauty complexion pageant causes outrage” by Daily Mail Reporter.
3. Response # 8 DUE on reading assigned.

**Week 9, Class 17** (Friday, Apr 5) – Social Class in the United States – QUIZ 3

1. Study for Quiz 3: Chapters 11-13 in Sociology and the rest of the material covered.
2. Read Sociology: Chapter 10

**Week 10, Class 18** (Wednesday, Apr 10) – Global Stratification

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 9
2. *Extra Credit Assignment* 5 DUE: Find two articles related to global societal changes and analyze the reasons behind these shifts using sociological concepts. A 1-2 page report will give you 2 extra points.

Part IV: Social Institutions

**Week 10, Class 19** (Friday, Apr 12) – The Economy

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 14
2. Read the “Charts: Here’s What the Wall Street Protesters Are So Angry About…” handout.
3. *Extra Credit Assignment* 6 DUE: Watch the movie here: <http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/341/index.html> Note any and all sociological themes/patterns/concepts you see when viewing this movie. A 1-2 page reflection paper that keeps in mind what we learned in the previous lecture will give you 2 extra points.

*Last day to withdraw with a grade of “W”*

**Week 11, Class 20** (Wednesday, Apr 17) – Politics

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 15

**Week 11, Class 21** (Friday, Apr 19) – Marriage and Family – QUIZ 4

1. Study for Quiz 4: Chapters 9, 10, 14, 15 in Sociology.
2. Read “In Strangers’ Glances at Family, Tensions Linger” by Susan Saulny in the NY Times.
3. Read Sociology: Chapter 16

\**Student Faculty Evaluations distributed*

**Week 12, Class 22** (Wednesday, Apr 24) – Religion

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 18
2. Read “Why Does Michigan’s Anti-Bullying Bill Protect Religious Tormentors?” by Amy Sullivan from TIME.com
3. Read “Wired for Creationism?” by Jennie Rothenberg Gritz from The Atlantic.
4. Response #9 DUE on assigned reading.

**Week 12, Class 23** (Friday, Apr 26) – Science & the Body

1. Read the
2. Watch “Reproductive Justice for Latinas: Coerced, Forced, and Involuntary Sterilization” and Sonya Renee “What Women Deserve.”

**Week 13, Class 24** (Wednesday, May 1) – Medicine and Health

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 19
2. Read “In Praise of Bad Habits (Healthism and Liberty)” by Peter Marsh from freerepublic.com.
3. Response #10 DUE on reading assigned.

**Week 13, Class 25** (Friday, May 3) – Education

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 17
2. Paper Outline DUE

Part V: Social Change

**Week 14, Class 26** (Wednesday, May 8) – Population and Urbanization – QUIZ 5

1. Study for Quiz 5: Chapters 16-19 and the rest of the material covered.
2. Read Sociology: Chapter 20

**Week 14, Class 27** (Friday, May 10) – Collective Behavior and Social Movements

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 21

**Week 15, Class 27** (Wednesday, May 15) – Social Change and the Environment

1. Read Sociology: Chapter 22
2. Notebooks DUE.

**Week 15, Class 28** (Friday, May 17) – Final Class

1. FILM: Life in a Day
2. **Final Papers Due** in class.
3. Notebooks will be returned.