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Department of Sociology

**Introduction to Sociology**  
SOC 1101 TR9 - Section 21689  
Spring 2017

Instructor: Mara G. Sheftel  
Class: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-10:45am  
Room: James Hall 5501

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11-12:30 or by appt.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is intended to familiarize students with the basics of sociology and introduce the central issues in the field. The primary objective is to encourage students to develop a sociological imagination that enables them to observe the world around them sociologically by reading, thinking, and engaging *carefully* and *critically*. To that end, students will be required to take an active role in the learning process through critical reading and participation in large and small group discussions and activities. We will challenge commonly held assumptions about how and why society is the way it is and begin to understand how our individual lives are intimately related to social forces that exist beyond us. This course will draw upon the cannon of classical sociological theory as well as more contemporary literature, empirical studies and film. Upon completing the course students should be comfortable with the basics of sociology as well as analyzing and debating a number of contemporary social issues.

**Learner Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand and apply the “sociological imagination”.
- Understand the basic sociological methods.
- Understand the central concerns and concepts of sociology
- Understand how social structures reproduce social inequality.
- Critically evaluate the arguments of others based on the evidence they present rather than on your own assumptions
- Improve writing and critical reading skills

**Required Course Materials**

*Required textbook:* **OpenStax College, Introduction to Sociology 2e** (make sure you use version “2e” and not use an older version). We are using “open” courseware in this class—meaning free! It is available for full download online here: <https://goo.gl/xDU5Bo> by clicking the link on the right under “Get this title.” Alternatively, you may purchase a physical copy of the textbook for \$19.99; see website for purchase details. This book is referred to as “2e” in the course schedule.

*New York Times:* CUNY students may subscribe for free using their CUNY email addresses at: <https://myaccount.nytimes.com/verification/edupass>

*Other required reading:* All other reading materials will be made available on Blackboard at least one week prior to their due date.

For practical tips on reading sociology: <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/media/Practical-Tips-for-Reading-Sociology.pdf>

**REQUIREMENTS AND OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

<b>Course Requirements</b>		<b>Grading Scale</b>			
Class Participation	100	A	95-100	C	73-75.99
Reading Quizzes (12 x 10pts)	120	A-	90-94.99	C-	70-72.99
Critical Reading Memos (6 x 30pts)	180	B+	86-89.99	D+	66-69.99
Exam I	150	B	83-85.99	D	63-66.99
Where Do I Fit In? Paper	200	B-	80-82.99	D-	60-62.99
Images of Social Change	100	C+	76-79.99	F	59 and below
Final Exam	150				
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>				

**Class Participation**

Students are expected to play an active role in this course. This means you are responsible for attending class, reading assigned materials, participating in classroom discussions and activities, asking questions, listening carefully to your classmates, treating everyone with respect, and meeting with the instructor in person during office hours when you have questions or concerns that were not addressed in class. This also means acting considerately towards other students and the instructor and refraining from engaging in distracting behaviors including texting and side conversations. Participation will make up a total of 100 points (10%) of your total grade. Please see the end of the syllabus for the class participation rubric.

**Reading Quizzes**

A short quiz covering the assigned readings will be given during the first 5 minutes of each class period on days when no Critical Reading Memo or Paper is due. This will serve to ensure students keep up with weekly reading and are able to contribute to the course discussion. It also serves to prepare students for the type of questions that will be asked on the exams. Quizzes will make up 120 points (12%) of your total grade. Each individual quiz will be worth 10 points. There will be 15 quizzes (including the submission of a review question for the review session on May 19) over the course of the semester but 3 quizzes may be missed without penalty. Any quizzes completed above the 12 minimum will count as extra credit. **There will be no makeup quizzes and those who arrive late to class will not be able to complete the quiz.**

**Critical Reading Memos**

In addition to our textbook, we will also be reading primary sociology research literature through which we will gain an applied understanding of the concepts covered in the textbook. In order to fully engage with these readings, students will complete critical reading memos where they will be expected to connect sociological concepts from the textbooks and lectures to the assigned research article or book chapter. Each student is required to complete 6 critical reading memos in

response to the 8 possible memos assigned this semester; you will receive extra credit for each additional memo completed. Memos will follow a one-page critical reading template provided on Blackboard and each will be worth 30 points for a total of 180 points (18%) towards your final grade. Memos are due via Blackboard by 9:30am on the day they are due. As the goal of this assignment is to prepare you to discuss these readings in class, 10 points will be taken off for late submissions and late submissions will be deemed ineligible for extra credit. **While all memos are to be submitted via Blackboard, it is recommended that students bring in a copy of their memo to aid them in class discussion participation.**

**Paper: *Where Do I Fit In?***

Drawing on your Sociological Imagination, use [Census Data](#) and [Social Explorer](#) to get data on the New York community you currently or previously lived and use [The Pew Research Center's Political Typology Quiz](#) to get information about your political leanings. Based on this data write a 5-page paper presenting your personal, family and community profile and making a thesis argument using theories related to race, class and gender to explain some of the data you have gathered. For example, this may involve how class explains the challenges or advantages your you and your community face, how your race/class/gender position in the community relates to your experiences there, in college, or at work, or how your background influences your political leaning. Make sure to directly reference both the textbook and research we have read in class to support your thesis, using proper [APA citations](#), and demonstrate a depth of understanding of the concepts we learned in Section III of the course. This assignment is worth 200 points (20%) towards your final grade and is due via Blackboard at 9:30am on April 27<sup>th</sup>. More detailed instructions will be provided prior to this assignment. **Late submissions (after 9:30am on April 27<sup>th</sup>) will be deducted 20 points for each day late.**

***Images of Social Change*** Identify a significant social change, either globally or in the US, which has taken place in the past twenty years and is of interest to you. Do the following, paying special attention to due dates:

- 1) Take an original photograph or series of photographs creatively documenting this social change.
- 2) Post this photograph(s) along with a “tweetable” question to the Images of Social Change Discussion Board on Blackboard by **Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm.**
- 3) View your classmates’ photos and questions. Respond to at least three questions by **Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am** by posting “comments” on their Blackboard Discussion Board post.
- 4) Submit a paragraph (no more than 1 page) via the assignment link on Blackboard by **Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am** describing the social change you have documented and answering the question you have asked. Make sure to identify who the central agents of social change are (corporations, governments, social movements, experts) and how they are operating to make this change. Note how widespread and successful the change has been. What has helped or hindered the success of this change? What are the implications of this change for Americans or global citizens? Are some groups of people more impacted by the change than others? Why or why not? Make sure to directly support your statements by referencing the textbook, other research we have read in class. You may use outside sources, but are not required to. Make sure all sources (including the textbook) are cited using proper [APA citations](#). Examples of social change include, but

are not limited to: Civil Rights, GLBTQ Rights, Environmental/Climate Change, Terrorism, Corporate Power, Communications/Information Technology, Migration and Refugees, Urbanization, Overseas Manufacturing.

- 5) In class on Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> your photos will be printed and hung on the classroom walls along with your “tweetable” question. We will do a gallery walk, viewing the photos, and you will be expected to discuss your photograph(s) with fellow classmates.

This assignment is worth 100 points (10%) towards your final grade. A detailed grading rubric will be provided prior to this assignment. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

### **Exams**

A midterm exam (covering Sections I & II of the course) held during class time and a final exam at the end of the semester will be given, **each** worth 150 points (15%) of the final grade. The exams will be cumulative and will draw on points from the course readings, lectures, films, and discussions. Exams will include a mix of multiple choice, matching, short answer, fill-in, and listing questions.

### **POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

#### *Attendance and tardiness*

Attendance is mandatory. Tardiness is disruptive to the entire class. Reading quizzes administered during the first 5 minutes of each class will serve as a record of attendance. Those who miss a class or are late will not be able to make up missed quizzes, thus forfeiting all points on the quiz for that day. On days without a quiz, students will be able to sign in until 9:30am. Those who are late will not be able to sign in and will be counted absent impacting their participation grade.

#### *Blackboard*

Assignment submissions and course announcements will be made through Blackboard. All students are required to update their **email addresses** in the Brooklyn College Portal to their current and active email addresses. Announcements sent through Blackboard are delivered through the BC Portal email system and students who have not updated their email address will miss them. Check your email daily! For ALL technical issues, contact the Brooklyn College ITS Help Desk 718.951.4357 [helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu) **I cannot provide technical assistance—students are responsible for handling technology issues on their own.**

#### *Contacting your instructor*

When contacting your instructor by email make sure to include your full name as well as the course title/number. You can expect to receive a response via email within less than 36 hours during the week (excluding the weekend). If you do not receive a response after 36 hours email again or use Blackboard to send me a message to make sure your original email did not go to spam.

#### *Writing and citations*

It is expected that submitted writing assignments be written at a college level. This means that your papers will be graded for their readability and grammatical accuracy as well as the substantive ideas they convey. Make sure to avoid colloquialisms, short hand, contractions and terms that would be appropriate in speaking (or texting!) but not professional writing. All

resources should be cited using proper [APA citations](#). For additional help with this, individual tutoring services can be found at the campus Learning Center located in 1300 Boylan Hall. You can learn more about the center by calling them at 718.951.5821 or visiting their online webpage at <http://lc.brooklyn.cuny.edu/>

*Academic honesty and plagiarism*

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

*Services for students with disabilities*

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

*Services for undocumented students*

As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them confidentially with me and I can direct you to free confidential assistance like CUNY Citizenship Now: <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now/>








*Religious holidays*

New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we "make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his [or her] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he [or she] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days." Please inform me of any absences for any observed religious holidays that overlap with class time.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

The course schedule is intended to be revisable and subject to change with advance notice.

<b>Part I: Introduction to thinking sociologically</b>		<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
January 31	Introduction to the Course		
February 2	Why Sociology? Sociological Imagination	2e Ch 1.1, 1.2, 1.4	Student Survey: <a href="https://goo.gl/forms/xc5VcTq8M8hYMePD3">https://goo.gl/forms/xc5VcTq8M8hYMePD3</a>
February 7	Theoretical Perspectives	2e Ch. 1.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3	
February 9		*SNOW DAY*	
February 14	Research Methods	2e Ch. 2	
<b>Part II: What unites us?</b>		<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
February 16	Culture I	2e Ch. 3	
February 21	Culture II	Lee & Zhou (2014)	Critical Reading Memo 1

		“The Success Frame”	
February 23	Socialization	2e Ch. 5.1-5.2 Kane (2006) “No way my boys are going to be like that!”	
February 28	Institutions	2e Ch. 5.3, 6.3 Gould Ch. 4	
March 2	Deviance & Social Control I	2e Ch. 7	
March 7	Deviance & Social Control II	Chambliss (1973) “The saints and the roughnecks”	Critical Reading Memo 2
March 9	EXAM: In-Class Covering Parts I & II of the Course		
<b>Part III: What Divides Us</b>		<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
March 14	*SNOW DAY*		
March 16	Social Stratification & Class I	2e Ch 9.1-9.2, 18.3	
March 21	Social Stratification & Class II	Lareau (2011) "Concerted Cultivation"	Critical Reading Memo 3
March 23	Race & Ethnicity I	Conley pg. 321-337 2e Ch. 11.2, 11.4, 11.5	
March 28	Race & Ethnicity II	Alexander (2011) “The New Jim Crow”	Critical Reading Memo 4
March 30	Race & Ethnicity III	Lee & Bean (2004) “America’s Changing Color Lines”	Critical Reading Memo 5
April 4	Gender and Sexuality I	2e Ch. 12	Topic and Thesis Statement for Paper Due
April 6	Gender and Sexuality II	Pascoe (2005) “Dude you’re a fag”	Critical Reading Memo 6
April 11	NO CLASS – Spring Break		
April 13	NO CLASS – Spring Break		
April 18	NO CLASS – Spring Break		
April 20	NO CLASS – classes follow Monday schedule		
April 25	Intersectionality Structure and Agency	Watch: <a href="#">Crenshaw Ted Talk</a> Fernandez Kelly (2015) “The Hero’s Fight”	Critical Reading Memo 7
April 27	Inequality in NYC	Part 3 of “ <a href="#">Invisible Child</a> ” from  New York Times 12/9/13 (Feel free to read the other parts as well)	<i>Where Do I Fit In?</i> Paper Due 
<b>Part IV: How do Societies Change?</b>		<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
May 2	Social Movements I	2e Ch. 21	
May 4	Social Movements II	Caster  (2012) “Networks of Outrage & Hope”	Critical Reading Memo 8
May 9	Corporations & Globalization 	Conley  Ch. 14 pg 546-566	
May 11	Environment & Urbanization 	Giddens Ch. 15 pg 546-475, 485-491	
May 16	Social Change	Read and Comment on postings of at least 3 classmates (see assignment sheet for details)	Images of Social Change (See due dates above in assignment description)
May 18	Applying your Sociological Imagination	Irwin (2017)  “What if Sociologists had as much influence as Economists”	
May 19	Review Session		Review Question
May 23	Final Exam 8:00-10:00am		

**PARTICIPATION GRADE RUBRIC**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absent</li> </ul>
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present, but has a number of absences</li> <li>• Disruptive and/or not engaged</li> <li>• Does not participate or respond when called on</li> </ul>
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present, not disruptive.</li> <li>• Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.</li> <li>• Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion on his/her own initiative.</li> </ul>
60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic facts from the readings, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.</li> <li>• Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the readings), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).</li> <li>• Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.</li> <li>• Demonstrates sporadic involvement.</li> </ul>
80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates good preparation: knows facts from the readings well, has thought through implications of them; often brings readings to class; shows evidence of taking some notes on readings.</li> <li>• Offers interpretations and analysis of readings (more than just facts) to class.</li> <li>• Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.</li> <li>• Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.</li> </ul>
100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed readings exceptionally well, relating them to other material (e.g., course material, discussions, experiences, etc).</li> <li>• Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.</li> <li>• Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.</li> <li>• Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.</li> </ul>