

Introduction to Sociology

Course Text

- Hughes, Michael and Carolyn L. Kroehler. *Sociology: The Core*, 8th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2008. ISBN: 9780073528120 [This text is available as an etextbook at purchase or students may find used, new, or rental copies at [this link](#)]

Course Description

This course provides a broad overview of sociology and how it applies to everyday life. Major theoretical perspectives and concepts are presented, including sociological imagination, culture, deviance, inequality, social change, and social structure. Students also explore the influence of social class and social institutions, such as churches, education, healthcare, government, economy, and environment. The family as a social structure is also examined.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- View people's behavior from a sociological perspective, discover your own sociological imagination, and apply it to a variety of social problems and situations.
- Discuss the development of sociology as a science and differentiate it from the other social sciences.
- List at least five sociologists and their major contributions to the field.
- Describe the three major sociological perspectives—Functionalist, Conflict, and Interactionist—and analyze human behavior applying these perspectives appropriately.
- Explain the elements of a culture and how culture is different from society.
- Explain the seven steps of the scientific research process and recognize appropriate research procedures in an experiment or an article describing research.
- Explain the relationships between social structure, social stratification, and the consequences of social status.
- List at least four universal social institutions and describe the characteristics of each.
- Describe how inequality and other social factors contribute to social change.
- Summarize the relationship between socialization and the family.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take Introduction to Sociology.

Important Terms

In this course, different terms are used to designate tasks:

- **Practice Exercise:** A non-graded assignment to assist you in practicing the skills discussed in a topic.
- **Homework:** non-graded True/False quizzes which include feedback. These may be attempted any number of times for practice.
- **Discussion:** In Introduction to Sociology, you upload your responses to discussions that have been designed to better prepare you for completing the course successfully. Each discussion highlights key objectives of the course, which will help you gain confidence in your approach to the graded assessments. Prompt feedback will be provided to you after

uploading your submission.

Please be sure that you are meeting the stated requirements before submitting each discussion (if your submission does not meet requirements you may be asked to resubmit). Your discussion posts should address the topic given in the prompt, and you should aim for between 150 – 250 words per discussion. Together, the successfully completed discussions are worth 10% of your grade. Be sure to put your best foot forward on each discussion so the faculty can effectively guide you to successful course completion. Completing them is required.

- **Quiz:** A short graded online assessment.
- **Exam:** A longer, cumulative graded online assessment.

Course Evaluation Criteria

StraighterLine provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. See [Academic Questions](#) section in FAQ for further details on percentage scores and grading scale. A passing percentage is **70%** or higher.

If you have chosen a Partner College to award credit for this course, your final grade will be based upon that college's grading scale. Only passing scores will be considered by Partner Colleges for an award of credit.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Topic	Assessment	Points Available
1	Discussion 1	10
2	Topic 2 Quiz	50
2	Discussion 2	10
4	Discussion 3	10
5	Topic 5 Quiz	50
5	Discussion 4	10
6	Topic 6 Quiz	50
6	Discussion 5	10
7	Topic 7 Quiz	50
7	Discussion 6	10
8	Topic 8 Quiz	50
8	Graded Midterm Exam	150
9	Topic 9 Quiz	50
9	Discussion 7	10
10	Topic 10 Quiz	50
11	Topic 11 Quiz	50
11	Discussion 8	10

12	Topic 12 Quiz	50
12	Discussion 9	10
13	Topic 13 Quiz	50
13	Discussion 10	10
14	Graded Final Exam	250
Total		1000

Course Topics and Objectives

Topic	Topic	Subtopics	Objectives
1	The Sociological Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Sociology? Theoretical Frameworks of Sociology The Sociological Imagination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the sociological perspective and relate it to everyday life experiences and to contemporary social issues. Explain the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology. Define sociological imagination and apply it to social problems.
2	Development of Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociological Timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the historical development of the three major sociological perspectives and list the sociologists who contributed to each. Demonstrate your understanding of the history of sociology by naming at least six early sociological thinkers and listing their contributions to the field.
3	The Research Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scientific Method Applying a Code of Ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and identify the basic steps of the scientific method. Differentiate between validity and reliability and differentiate between quantitative and qualitative research. Explain objectivity and evaluate the objectivity of a researcher in an article from a peer-reviewed journal. Discuss the major research designs used by sociologists. Discuss the role of technology in sociological research. Explain the importance of ethics in sociological research, and give an example.
4	Culture and Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Culture Cultural Value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare and contrast society versus culture. Differentiate between the following elements of a culture: language, norms, sanctions, and values. Give examples of cultural universals. Explain how sociologists use the terms diffusion and innovation. Examine and analyze questions of stereotypes, prejudice, and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture in Flux • Cultural Values 	
5	Social Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Structure • Social Roles • Groups in Societies • Parts of Complex Societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how we define and reconstruct our social reality. • Give your own examples of ascribed, achieved, and master statuses. • Discuss the social roles we acquire throughout our lives. • Differentiate between role conflict, role strain, and role exit. • List the four stages of role exit. • Explain what is meant by the term social network. • Define groups. • Contrast the functionalist, conflict, and interactionist views of social institutions. • Describe the characteristics of the hunting-and-gathering society, the horticultural society, the industrial society, and the postindustrial and postmodern society.
6	Socialization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Is Socialization? • Agents of Socialization • Sociological Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what is meant by the socialization process. • Summarize the impact of isolation on both children and primates. • Name the agents of socialization and rank their importance. • Discuss what research tells us about the influence of heredity on social development (nature vs. nurture). • Compare and contrast the development of self-identity as described by Charles Horton Cooley, by George Herbert Mead, and by Jean Piaget. • Explain the significance of gender roles and how those roles relate to rites of passage. • Differentiate between anticipatory socialization and resocialization.
7	Deviance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deviance • Facets of Deviance • Deviance and Sociological Theory • Deviance and Crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the concept of social control. • Provide examples of formal and informal social control. • Explain how sociologists use the term deviance. • List and describe Merton's five adaptations people make according to the anomie theory of deviance.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize the various theories of deviant behavior. Describe what sociologists mean when they talk about cultural transmission. Give examples of types of crime. Discover and analyze patterns found in crime statistics.
8	Social Stratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Social Stratification Social Stratification Stratification Theory Aspects of Stratification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify characteristics of the following systems of stratification: slavery, castes, estates, and social classes. Examine stratification from the functionalist and conflict perspectives. Differentiate between open and closed stratification systems. Define the problems associated with the culture of poverty. Define the threshold of poverty. Discuss social mobility in the United States.
9	Social Inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Social Inequality Terms Associated with Inequality Responses to Inequality Social Inequality Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the five basic properties of a minority group. Differentiate between the biological significance of race and the social construction of race. Distinguish between prejudice and discrimination. Explain what the term institutional discrimination means. Differentiate between sexism, sex discrimination, and sexual harassment. Describe the effects of ageism.
10	Social Institutions: The Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Family Family Structure Challenges to Families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the functions of the family as a social institution. Explain the challenges to family life in America today. Compare and contrast traditional, blended, and extended families. List at least four factors that contribute to divorce. Explain how family violence violates the protection function of a family.
11	Social Institutions: Government, Economy, and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Government and Economy Economic Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify basic social institutions and how they contribute to the transmission of society's values Compare and contrast democracy, socialism, and communism. Explain the relationship between the global economy and multinational corporations. Explain the concept of deindustrialization and its impact on the American economy. Identify the three basic sources of power within any political system. Discuss models of power structure

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Systems • The Environment 	
12	Social Institutions: Religion, Education, and Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining Social Institutions • Religion • Education • Health Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify basic social institutions and how they contribute to the transmission of society's values • Develop a chart that illustrates the four functions of religion. • Compare and contrast the views on religion of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. • Discuss why education can be seen as a transmitter of culture. • Explain how education is used as a tool to maintain social control. • Discuss the idea of the hidden curriculum. • Contrast the Interactionist view of education with that of the Functionalist and Conflict views. • Compare and contrast the Functionalist and Conflict approaches to health and illness in our society. • Explain how health profiles of many racial and ethnic minorities reflect the social inequality that is evident in the United States.
13	Social Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Behavior • Social Movements • Theories of Social Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define collective behavior and identify its six determinants. • Explain how sociologists use the terms traditional social movements and • Compare and contrast the three theoretical approaches to change: evolutionary, functionalist, and conflict theory. • List and discuss the four processes of social change according to Parsons. • Discuss the factors involved in resistance to social change and technology.
14	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and final assessment