

**University of Manitoba**  
Department of Sociology  
**Introduction to Sociology**  
(6 credit hours)  
077.120, L18 (2003-4)  
Mon: 7:00-10:00 p.m.  
235 Isbister

Instructor: Elizabeth Pirnie  
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Office Hours: by appointment

**Course Description:**

Sociology is the study of social relationships and social life. It provides a context for examining our world and how we (as individuals and as groups) live within it. This course is designed to give a theoretical overview of some of the major issues addressed by/through sociology, while leaving room for you to *develop, articulate, and substantiate your own perspective*. The course is loosely structured around the theme of **form vs. substance**. The benefit of using a theme is that it enables the class to share a common language and structure from which to abstract. Although this course requires the student to follow particular arguments closely, the topics remain diverse enough to allow you to integrate your own interests with the material being presented.

**Course Objectives:**

- Increase awareness regarding society's organization, its basic elements and how it functions.
- Understand the importance of social influence on the individual.
- Understand the importance of individual agency in light of social influence.
- Bridge the gap between course study and everyday life.
- Develop critical thinking in regards "nature" of society and the individual's part in it.
- Look at issues of social diversity, noting both its significance and paradoxes.

**Required Texts:**

- ❖ Plato. Great Dialogues of Plato, trans. W.H.D. Rouse, Signet Classic.
- ❖ Tavuchis, Nicholas. Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation, Stanford University Press.
- ❖ James, Henry. The Turn of the Screw, Dover Publications Inc.
- ❖ Nietzsche, Friedrich. On the Genealogy of Morality, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, Cambridge University Press.
- ❖ Spiegleman, Art. The Complete Maus, Pantheon Publications.

## **Recommended Texts**

- \*MLA Handbook
- \*A Good Dictionary
- \*A Writers Handbook

## **Assignments**

There will be five essays required of students over the course of the year. The first essay will be written in class. All other essays should be typed and double-spaced. All essays are due, and must be submitted, at the beginning of class. Late papers may not be accepted if I have not been contacted *prior* to the assignment being late.

In addition, during the first term, each student is required to do 5 response papers on the topic presented in the first hour of class. Each paper is to be typed, one page in length, double spaced, and will be assigned one week prior to its being handed in. These papers will not be due on the same day as the major papers.

During the second term, each student is required to do 5 comparison papers. For these papers, the students are asked to compare and contrast the issues presented within the first hour of class to an analogous issue that may or may not have been discussed directly in class. The papers are meant to allow students to apply what they have learnt in the course to an area of study of their particular interest. These papers should demonstrate the student's ability to think critically and must illustrate an understanding of the complexities of analyzing social phenomena. Again, each paper is to be one page in length, double spaced, and will be assigned one week prior to its being handed in. These papers *will not* be due on the same day as the major papers.

## **Class Schedule**

**Each class will be divided into two sections.**

### **The first section:**

Consists of the first hour of class (from 7:00 – 8:00) and will concentrate on material that the student is *not responsible* for preparing for. (Although material will be made available on reserve in the library for those students who are interested in looking at the material ahead of time, it is *not required reading* and there is absolutely *no penalty* for those who do not). This first hour of class will be used to introduce students to a wide range of sociological topics, in manageable and accessible doses. Although this time is set aside primarily for lectures, I am trying to arrange a few “special guests” to address the class. Therefore, the topics for this first section will be announced two to three weeks ahead of time in order to remain flexible enough to accommodate their schedules, as well as to accommodate and reflect class interest through-out the course. Students will be asked to hand in five reflection papers, over the course of the first term, and 5 comparison papers over the second term, on the material covered in this first hour of class. These papers will be due the week following the Monday they are assigned and should not exceed one page in length, typed.

**The second section:**

Will follow a twenty-minute class break, and will begin at approximately 8:20. The remaining class time will be used to address the *required reading* as outlined below.

September 8<sup>th</sup> - first class – introductions and syllabus review

September 15<sup>th</sup> to September 29<sup>th</sup> - classes will consist of a close textual reading of Books 1-4 of Plato’s, “The Republic.”

October 6<sup>th</sup> - in class, written exam

October 13<sup>th</sup> - Thanksgiving (no class)

October 20<sup>th</sup> to November 3<sup>rd</sup> - classes will consist of a close review of the material from Tavuchis’ book, Mea Culpa.

November 10<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> - classes will consist of selected readings from Henry James, ’ The Turn of the Screw.

December 1<sup>st</sup> - last day of class for term. The class will consist of an introduction to the material to be covered in second term.

January 5<sup>th</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup> – classes will consist of a close textual reading of the second essay of Nietzsche’s, On the Geneology of Morality.

February 9<sup>th</sup> – last class before reading week. The class will consist of an introduction to Art Spiegleman’s, The Complete Maus.

February 16 – reading week (no class)

February 23 to March 29 – classes will consist of working through the material of Spiegleman’s, The Complete Maus.

April 5 - last class, overview and debriefing, final grades will be given out at the end of class

**Method of Evaluation**

**Term 1: Sept. – Dec. 2003**

- Essay #1 (Plato, due on Oct. 06)..... 10%
- Essay #2 (Mea Culpa, due on Nov. 10)..... 15%
- Essay #3 (Turn of the Screw, due on Dec. 01)..... 15%
- Response Papers (5 x 2%).....10%

**Term 2: Jan. – Apr. 2004**

- Essay #4 (Nietzsche, due on Feb. 09)..... .20%
- MARCH 17: LAST DAY FOR VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL**
- Essay #5 (The Complete Maus, due on Mar. 29)....20%
- Comparison Papers (5x2%).....10%

Total Course Work 100%

There will be no final exam.

## **How will assignments be graded?**

**A+ to A** ..... Shows extensive development and knowledge of subject as well as excellent organization.

GPA = 4.5- 4.0

**B+ to B** ..... Shows solid understanding of subject and is well-organized. Some minor problems or inconsistencies of argumentation may be present.

GPA = 3.5 – 3.0

**C+** ..... Shows basic understanding and adequate development of subject. There are some errors or inconsistencies in organization, and/or argumentation.

GPA=2.5

**C** ..... May lack adequate understanding or development of certain aspects of the subject. There are errors and organization and argumentation.

GPA = 2.0

**D** ..... Lacks development, and/or shows major errors of expression and/or substantial problems with structure and argumentation.

GPA =1.0

**F** ..... Assignment incomplete, undeveloped, off topic, handed in too late to be considered, and/or fundamental errors/ problems. Papers not handed-in receive an automatic F.

GPA= <1.0

### **Attendance**

Active attendance in this course is mandatory, and unexcused absences will not be permitted. For more on the University of Manitoba's attendance policy see Section 6.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Examinations: Personations' (p.28) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (p. 29) found in Section 7.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar.

**University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307**

There will be a post-examination review of final grades in all multi-sectioned courses, ensuring an equitable correspondence between grades and level of performance in all sections. Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve this equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

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