

**University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology**

**077.120 - L19
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY**

2003- 2004

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Credit hours 6
Required Textbook:

John Macionis & Linda Gerber (2002) *Sociology* (4th Canadian Edition).
Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada.

Overview

This course is designed to introduce you to the diversity of concepts, principles, procedures, and facts that comprise an introduction to the discipline of sociology. A quick perusal of the table of contents in your textbook demonstrates that during this course you shall investigate a variety of subject areas.

Learning sociology is like learning the lessons of any other discipline. For most of us, this means both fun and work. I am confident that you shall find some of the topics included in this course taxing or tedious; others, you shall find interesting and relevant. All of this is part of becoming a liberally educated person.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to help you learn the lessons of Introductory Sociology in two ways. These ways of knowing the course content comprise the course objectives identified below:

1. In this course there exists a body of fundamental concepts, principles, procedures, and facts that you must know. Learning this **basic information** is the fundamental educational objective of Introductory Sociology.
2. The second objective of this course builds upon the first one, and requires you to move beyond understanding the contents of the textbook. The second objective requires you to be able to **comprehend and apply** sociological concepts and principles.

Class Organization and Activities

This course is designed on the principle that *learning is a social enterprise*. Accordingly, much of our classroom activity will involve *team learning*. The ideas behind team learning, and how this kind of learning will take place in our class, will be discussed during our first meeting. From the outset, however, you need to appreciate that a considerable proportion of your time in class will involve *working with other students* completing exercises directed at the course objectives.

With occasional variations, our class time will be allocated as follows.

Part 1 of the Class: Each week you will be assigned a required reading from the textbook. The first component of our class will be devoted to testing your basic understanding of the week's reading assignment and reviewing any difficulties you encountered. This weekly testing will take the following form.

First, each student will complete a short quiz on the reading material. Next, students will gather in their teams and complete a group quiz. The group quiz will be the same as the individual quiz, except that your team will have to arrive *at a consensus* about the correct answers. After these quizzes are completed, we shall review the correct answers, grade the quizzes, and discuss any problematic issues.

By following these procedures, the first part of the class is aimed at the first course objective, mastering the basic information covered in the textbook readings. The second part of the class will be devoted to the second course objective, comprehending and applying sociological concepts and principles.

Part 2 of the Class: The format for second component of our class will be less standardized than the first part. Typically the second component will involve my giving a short lecture on some issues related to the week's readings and then having you work with your group on an application exercise. The focus of the second part of the class will center on *applying* sociological ideas by working with your team members. The goal is to encourage you to see the operation of abstract sociological concepts and principles in concrete situations.

Evaluation

Although you will be working in groups during part of your class time, in the final analysis you will be individually responsible for mastering the contents of the course. However, since the course outcomes (individual mastery) are tied to the learning process (team learning), it is reasonable to evaluate both individual and group performances. Specifically, your final grade in the course will be composed of your performance on the following items.

Weekly Individual Quizzes: Most weeks you will be completing a quiz based on the week's reading assignment. These quizzes will concentrate on identifying your understanding of the basic information contained in the week's readings. In total, your grades on these individual quizzes will account for 13 percent of your final grade in the course.

Unit Tests: The weekly readings are organized into units containing four chapters. After completing each unit, you shall write a unit test. The unit test will cover the contents of the readings of that unit as well as any additional materials we have introduced in class. There will be 5 unit tests during the course and each unit test will test both course objectives (i.e. basic information as well as comprehension and application). Each unit test will count for 11 percent of your final grade in the course so, in total, 55 percent of your course grade will come from your performance on these unit tests.

Weekly Group Quizzes: As mentioned earlier, after you have completed an individual weekly quiz, you will work with your team members to complete the same quiz as a group. The group score a team achieves on these quizzes will be awarded to each member of the team. The scores each person receives from these weekly group quizzes will comprise 5 percent of that person's final course grade.

Sociological Journals: The second course objective noted that a fundamental goal of this course is to encourage you to apply sociological concepts and principles to concrete situations in the real world. One way of demonstrating comprehension and application skills comes from completing a sociological journal. The details of the sociological journal will be presented in a separate handout. For now, the basic point is to understand that each of you will be creating and submitting a sociological journal that identifies the operation of sociological concepts and principles in real world situations. Your sociological journal will be graded and will account for 10 percent of your final grade in the course.

Analyzing A Case Study: A second way of demonstrating comprehension and application skills involves analyzing a complex social situation. In this analysis, you will be viewing a videotape that documents the experience of a lower class, urban, poor family. Your team's task in the exercise involves identifying how sociological forces are operating on this family. The details of this exercise are described in a separate handout that will be distributed to you later in the course.

For now, you need to appreciate that *your group* will be performing a sociological analysis of a documented case study. Your team's sociological analysis will be graded and the project's score will be awarded to each member of the team. Your completed case study will account for 10 percent of your final grade in the course.

Group Assessment: As noted, your mastery of the course material and achievement of the course objectives is facilitated through teamwork. In a real way, your learning will be dependent upon the support and encouragement of the other members on your team. Likewise, their educational experience will be affected in important ways by your support of them. Since team members are dependent upon one another in these ways it is appropriate that members' contributions to the group be evaluated. In this course, 7 percent of your final grade will be based on evaluations of your contributions to the group throughout the course. The details of how these group assessments will be made are discussed in a separate handout.

To summarize, your final grade in this course will be composed of your performance on the following individual and group activities:

Individual Performance:

Weekly Quizzes -- 13 percent

Unit Tests -- 55 percent

Sociological Journal -- 10 percent

Group Performance:

Weekly Quizzes -- 5 percent

Case Study Analysis -- 10 percent

Group Assessment -- 7 percent

Critical Dates

In addition to the regular weekly individual and group quizzes, the following are important dates and deadlines.

Unit Tests:

Unit Test 1 -- October 15

Unit Test 2 -- November 19

Unit Test 3 -- January 21

Unit Test 4 -- March 3

Unit Test 5 -- April 7

Sociological Journal Submissions:

1st Submission -- December 3

2nd Submission -- April 7

Case Study Analysis Submission: April 7

Some Final Notes

1) The weekly quizzes are so frequent that there is no reasonable way to permit students to rewrite quizzes they miss for justifiable reasons. Accordingly, of the 20 weekly quizzes that are administered, only the best 18 grades will be included in computing a student's overall quiz performance. This procedure is intended to make accommodation for students who are unable to complete a quiz or simply have a poor performance day.

2) Only documented reasons will be accepted as justifications for missing unit tests. In cases where a make-up test is permitted, the "objective questions" component(s) of the test may be replaced by essay questions. Late assignments will not be accepted.

3) Students always ask how the percentage grades you receive on the tests and the assignments are translated into the letter grades awarded at the end of the year. The procedure is straightforward. Each course component is weighted according to what it's worth toward your final grade and these weighted products are added together. Then the following key is applied:

Total Percentage Letter Grade

90+ A+

80-89 A

75-79 B+

70-74 B

65-69 C+

60-64 C

50-59 D

0-49 F

Note: Senate Policy #1307 requires "A post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will encourage 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 such equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

4) Class will not be held on the following date: February 18 -- Mid-Term Break

5) Voluntary withdrawal deadline date: March 17, 2004.

6) As a cautionary note, students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Examinations: Personations' (p.28) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating (p.29) found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

7) On the issue of politeness: Off-task talking or early departures from the classroom are disrupting. Please be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of others in the class. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving the class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class.

8) Each week you are responsible for reading a textbook chapter and each unit test covers 4 chapters. The *order* the chapters are covered and the *coverage* for each unit test includes the following:

Unit Test 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

Unit Test 2: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 9

Unit Test 3: Chapters 10, 11, 12, 14

Unit Test 4: Chapters 17, 19, 20, 18

Unit Test 5: Chapters 13, 16, 22, 24

NOTE: The weekly readings do not cover all textbook chapters and are not in sequence. It is your responsibility to ensure you cover the correct readings for each quiz and unit test.