

Department of Sociology
077.120
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Intersession 2005

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Required Textbook:

John Macionis & Linda Gerber (2004) *Sociology* (5th Canadian Edition). Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada.

NOTE: This is the most recent edition of the textbook. To anticipate a question some of you may ask: No, I do not know exactly how different this edition is from the 4th edition. The course is based on the 5th edition; so if you decide to rely on an earlier edition, please note that you do so at your own risk.

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

Note: Past experience suggests that some students enrolling in Intersession believe that class attendance and participation is less important than it is for regular session courses. For this course, such an attitude is seriously dysfunctional. A substantial proportion of your grade in this course involves teamwork. *Students who do not fully participate in group exercises and projects will have their group work scores heavily downgraded, sometimes to zero.*

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: For classes 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 reading assignment and reviewing any difficulties you encountered. This 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 either a short lecture on some issues related to the week's readings and/or 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.

An Additional Feature: In this class I am experimenting with the idea of using *visual sociology* to assist your application of the course material to real world situations. This feature of the course involves viewing video clips from a variety of sources and answering sociological questions about the situations portrayed. The video clips will be shown intermittently throughout the course, and the questions will be addressed through group discussion. A separate handout will explain the details of this exercise.

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.

Individual Quizzes: Most days you will be completing a quiz based on the reading assignment. These quizzes will concentrate on identifying your understanding of the basic information contained in the readings. In total, your grades on these individual quizzes will account for 10 percent of your final grade in the course.

Unit Tests: The 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 12 percent of your final grade in the course so, in total, 60 percent of your course grade will come from your performance on these unit tests.

Group Quizzes: As mentioned earlier, after you have completed an individual 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 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 group will be creating and submitting a sociological journal that identifies the operation of sociological concepts and principles in real world situations. Your group's sociological journal will be graded and will account for 7 percent of your final grade in the course.

Case Study Analysis: 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 8 percent of your final grade in the course.

Visual Sociology Exercise: A third group application exercise is the visual sociology exercise. At various intervals throughout the course video clips of real world situations will be presented in class, along with a set of group discussion questions. Your team's task in completing this exercise is to develop and present answers to the discussion questions. The details of this exercise, worth 5 percent of your final grade, will be discussed in a separate handout.

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, 5 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:

Chapter Quizzes	10 percent
Unit Tests	60 percent

Group Performance:

Chapter Quizzes	5 percent
Case Study Analysis	8 percent
Sociological Journal	7 percent
Visual Sociology Exercise	5 percent
Group Assessment	5 percent

An Important Note About Group Work Contributions: The default plan is to award each member of the team the group score on the chapter quizzes, case study analysis, sociological journal, and visual sociology exercise. However, *I reserve and will exercise the right to award individual team members less than group scores if there is evidence that they are "free-riding"*. Evidence of free-riding will be include, but not be limited to, low group assessment evaluations, missing more than two classes, and inactive class participation.

Critical Dates

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

Unit Tests:

Unit Test 1	--	May 11
Unit Test 2	--	May 19
Unit Test 3	--	June 1
Unit Test 4	--	June 13
Unit Test 5	--	June 21

Intersession VW date - Wednesday, June 15

Sociological Journal, Case Study Analysis & Visual Sociology Exercise Submissions: June 21

Some Final Notes

- 1) The chapter 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.
- 3) Late assignments will not be accepted.
- 4) Many students are interested in how the percentage grades received 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

- 4) Classes will not be held on the following dates: May 23 – Victoria Day; May 27 – Mid-Term Break; June 2 – except for scheduled make us tests.
- 5) As a cautionary note, please acquaint yourself with the university's policies on *academic dishonesty* (i.e. plagiarism and cheating and *class attendance*), as described in the General Calendar
- 6) 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 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.

INTERSESSION 2004 – READING ASSIGNMENTS & CRITICAL DATES

NOTE: These dates emphasize the reading assignments and critical dates. Lecture content, application exercises, and the visual sociology exercises are not identified on this listing, but will occur regularly throughout the course.

May

2 Orientation
3 Chapter 1
4 Chapter 2
5 Extended application related to Chapter 2
6 Chapter 3

9 Chapter 4
10 Review Class & Group Work
11 Unit Test 1
12 Chapter 5
13 Chapter 6

16 Chapter 7
17 Chapter 9
18 Review Class & Group Work
19 Unit Test 2
20 Chapter 10

23 No Class – Victoria Day
24 Case Study Analysis Project and Video
25 Chapter 11
26 Chapter 12
27 No Class – Mid-Term Break

30 Chapter 14
31 Review Class & Group Work

June

1 Unit Test 3
2 Class Cancelled – Except for Granted Make-Up Tests
3 Chapter 17

6 Chapter 19
7 Chapter 20
8 Chapter 18
9 Video Showing 2 & Group Work
10 Review Class & Group Work

13 Unit Test 4

14 Chapter 13
15 Chapter 16
16 Chapter 22
17 Chapter 24

20 Review & Group Work

