

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology

SOC 1200 A12 Introduction to Sociology

Tuesdays and Thursdays 8.30-9.45
235 Isbister Building
Fall/Winter 2008-2009, 6 Credit Hours

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10.00-12.00

Course Summary

Sociology is an exciting and challenging subject, which gets to the heart of our everyday lives, and the world in which we live. It is also a subject that has a broad range of interests – there is definitely something for everyone in sociology! This course will provide an introduction to what sociology is; what sorts of social phenomena sociologists typically research; what sorts of questions sociologists typically ask; and what the aims of sociology are. The course will first introduce students to the ‘sociological imagination’, challenging students to begin thinking sociologically. The course will proceed to examine some of the key theoretical perspectives, ideas, and themes in the discipline of sociology. We will consider some basic social processes such as the social construction of the self and identity, the significance of social interaction in everyday life, as well as the different kinds of social collectivities in which we participate. The course will explore the relationship between culture and society, with a special emphasis on the media. We will investigate issues of social inequality, particularly focusing on gender inequalities, race and ethnic relations, class structures and poverty, as well as global inequalities. In addition, we will look at some of the broader social institutions, processes, and issues that sociologists are concerned with such as the economy and work, urbanization and the city, politics and social movements, globalization, and the environment. The course will conclude with a discussion of how sociologists engage in sociological research. The course will be organized around a combination of lectures, discussions, films, and small group work.

Course Objectives

- To introduce students to sociology as a social science discipline
- To introduce students to the concept of the ‘sociological imagination’ and facilitate the development of students’ own sociological imaginations
- To enable students to critically engage with, and understand social processes, phenomena, and the societies in which they live
- To present the variety of sociological discourse and demonstrate some similarities and differences between different forms of sociological reasoning and analysis
- To familiarize students with a number of generic themes in sociology
- To enable students to relate key ideas and theoretical perspectives to substantive social issues and problems

Required Textbook

Brym, R. (2008) *New Society*, 5th ed (Toronto: Nelson Thompson).

Note: Additional required readings will be available *on reserve* in the **Dafoe library**. These will be from the following text: Brym, R., and Lie, J. (2007) *Sociology: Your Compass for a New World*, 3rd ed (Belmont: Thompson Wadsworth).

Assessment

In-Class Term Tests (**December 2, and April 9**)

- Two tests of 60 minutes each will be held in-class. Students will be presented with a list of possible questions, and asked to choose a fixed number of questions and answer these in mini-essay format. Questions will cover material presented in lectures, readings, films, and class exercises throughout each term. The tests are cumulative for each term. For this class there will be no exams held during the examination periods. *Students should note that the instructor will not reschedule these tests for any reason other than medical.*

Quizzes (**October 2, November 6, and February 12**)

- Three short quizzes will be held in-class. They will consist of a combination of matching, fill-in-the-blanks, and/or short answer questions. The quizzes will cover material presented in lectures, readings, films, and class exercises. The quizzes will be non-cumulative.

Short Written Assignment (**Due January 20**)

- Students will be asked to complete a short written assignment of 800-1000 words. The assignment will consist of a sociological analysis of the media, drawing on class lectures, films, and the text. Students will choose from a list of several topics for their analysis. Details for the assignment will be handed out in class.

Short Essay (**Due March 12**)

- Students are required to write a short essay of 1500-2000 words. The essay topic for this piece of written work will be chosen by the student from a list of several possible essay questions, which will be distributed in class. Essay writing and expectations will be discussed in class, accompanied by instructive handouts.

Participation

- Participation marks will be based on student submissions to informal, unannounced in-class exercises. There will be at least three of these exercises each term. Each student's mark will be the average of the best two of the exercises he or she has participated in each term. These will usually be carried out collaboratively in small groups, with the group submitting one finished product and all members of the group receiving the same grade for that assignment. Students may be asked to hand in questions following a film, or analyze one of the course readings, or apply their sociological knowledge to a question given by the instructor.

Note: All work must be submitted in hard copy form (on paper)! Electronic copies will not be accepted. *Do not submit essays by email.* Students are instructed to *always keep a personal copy of any submitted work* in the case that they are required to submit another copy.

Grade Weights

Fall Term

Quizzes 20%
In-class Test 15%
Participation 5% (best 2 out of 3)

Winter Term

Quiz 10%
In-class Test 15%
Short Written Assignment 10%
Short Essay 20%
Participation 5% (best 2 out of 3)

Grade Distribution

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>GPA</i>	<i>Description</i>
A+	91-100%	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-90%	4.0	Excellent
B+	75-79%	3.5	Very Good
B	70-74%	3.0	Good
C+	65-69%	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64%	2.0	Adequate
D	50-59%	1.0	Marginal
F	49% or less	0	Failure

Note: University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307 requires ‘a post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will ensure 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.

Missed Tests, Quizzes, and Late Submissions

Missing a test or a quiz is a serious problem and is likely to result in a grade of 0. Only *documented reasons* will be accepted for missing a test or a quiz. If you miss the test or quiz for health-related or emergency reasons, you should a) provide advance notice, if possible, by phoning or emailing the instructor, then b) directly contact the instructor *as soon as possible* to arrange a makeup test or quiz. Note that it is the student’s responsibility for initiating a makeup test or quiz. Ordinarily, arrangements must be made within one week of the missed test or quiz; requests made later than one week will normally be denied. Under no circumstances will a makeup test or quiz be offered more than two weeks after the scheduled test or quiz.

Late papers will be penalized 3% per day late (including weekends). Medical documentation will normally be required to waive this penalty. However, if you know before the due date that a paper or written assignment will be late you should contact me immediately. Extensions may be granted under extenuating circumstances, entirely at the instructor’s discretion, ONLY if the student contacts the instructor PRIOR to the deadline.

Missed Films

If you miss a film during a lecture you will need to view it at an alternative time. Making this arrangement is a student responsibility. To view a missed film, you will need a form that is available from 123 Fletcher Argue and which will require the instructor’s signature. It is your job to bring the form to the instructor for signing during office hours or by appointment.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence. Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (Section 7.1) and 'Examinations: Personations' (Section 4.2.8) found in the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar. *Penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and range from failing the course to expulsion from the University.* Guidelines for properly referencing your papers will be distributed in class.

Note: The Faculty of Arts reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Voluntary Withdrawal

Last day for voluntary withdrawal from the course without academic penalty is ***March 19, 2009.***

Religious Holidays

The University of Manitoba acknowledges the right of all students to observe recognized holy days of their faith. You will need to inform the instructor in writing of your intended absence(s) at least three weeks in advance, particularly if such absence(s) coincide with the set in-class test dates.

Special Learning Needs

Students with special learning needs (who, for legitimate reasons, require extra time to write a test, or who require aids or other supports) should introduce themselves to the instructor during the first week of the course in order to organize suitable accommodation and assessment arrangements.

Student and Instructor Responsibility

My responsibility as your instructor begins with the University's ROASS Policy and extends to creating a safe, cooperative and stimulating learning environment for students. As your instructor, I have selected texts and organized classroom time to meet the objectives of this course. Lectures are designed to help you understand and extend the concepts and ideas discussed in your texts and in the films. I comply fully with all University of Manitoba policies regarding teaching.

Student responsibilities include:

- Students are responsible for their own learning. You are expected to do readings in advance of class and are required to come prepared. You will often need to independently cover material in the textbooks (since not everything in the textbook will be directly addressed in class). Tests and quizzes will draw on assigned readings as well as the lectures.
- If you are unclear about material or have academic concerns or questions, it is your responsibility to ask for help. I will be pleased to provide help during my office hours or by appointment. Students are warmly invited to drop by during office hours or to arrange an appointment to discuss any issues, concerns, or questions related to the course. Students are also responsible to track their own progress in the course, and to take action if you discover you are failing tests or papers.
- Students are responsible for complying with the policies on grades and tests, including policies on missed tests or quizzes. You will find all course policies listed in this syllabus – please review it regularly. If you misplace this syllabus or a term schedule, you can download a copy from the course website.
- Students are asked to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a collegial learning environment; one in which all can develop as individuals and scholars, and in which the free and respectful exchange of ideas occurs. In order to achieve this, students are especially asked to be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of other students in the class. Whispering and talking is especially inappropriate, since it bothers other students. Students who talk in class will be asked to leave the classroom. Other disruptions include late arrivals, early departures, mobile phone use, and other behaviour deemed inappropriate by the instructor or other students. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class and sit in a seat near the door to minimize disruption.

Lecture Topics and Readings

Introductions

- Sept. 4 Introductions
- Sept. 9-11 The sociological imagination and the sociological perspective
- Brym, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-11)
- Sept. 16-18 Thinking sociologically: sociological theories
- Brym, Chapter 1 (pp. 11-27)

Socialization, social interaction, and society

- Sept. 23-25 As nature intended? The natural and the social
- Brym, Chapter 3 (pp. 52-66)
- Sept. 30-Oct. 2 How did I become me? The creation of the self and identity
- Brym, Chapter 3 (pp. 66-77)
- *Quiz Oct. 2***
- Oct. 7-9 What's the difference between men and women? Gendered identities
- Brym, Chapter 4
- Oct. 14-16 The importance of the everyday: social interaction and the self
- Brym and Lie, Chapter 5**
- Oct. 21-23 Social groups and organizations
- Brym, Chapter 21 (online)

Culture and society

- Oct. 28-30 Society
- Brym, Chapter 21 (online)
- Nov. 4-6 Culture: the components
- Brym, Chapter 2 (pp. 30-36)
- *Quiz Nov. 6***
- Nov. 11-13 Culture: freedom and constraint; counter-culture and sub-culture
- Brym, Chapter 2 (pp. 36-49)
- Nov. 18-20 Media: perspectives and production
- Brym, Chapter 5 (pp. 104-114)
- Nov. 25-27 Media: message, meaning, and audience
- Brym, Chapter 5 (pp. 114-131)

Dec. 2 In-class Test

**On reserve in the Dafoe library. Students are advised to copy the reading well in advance of the class.

Social inequality

Jan. 6-8 Social stratification and class
 • Brym, Chapter 6

Jan. 13-15 Gender inequality
 • Brym, Chapter 7

Jan. 20-22 Race and ethnic relations
 • Brym, Chapter 8

****Short Written Assignment Jan. 20****

Jan. 27-29 Inequality among nations: international development
 • Brym, Chapter 9

Social institutions, processes, and change

Feb. 3-5 The economy and work
 • Brym, Chapter 11

Feb. 10-12 Health and Aging
 • Brym, Chapter 17

****Quiz Feb. 12****

Feb. 16-20 No Classes, Mid-Term Break

Feb. 24-26 Politics and social movements
 • Brym, Chapter 18

Mar. 3-5 Deviance and the criminal justice system
 • Brym, Chapter 14

Mar. 10-12 Cities and urbanization
 • Brym, Chapter 15

****Short Essay Mar. 12****

Mar. 17-19 Globalization
 • Brym, Chapter 19

Mar. 24-26 The environment and risk
 • Brym, Chapter 16

Sociological inquiry

Mar. 31-Apr. 2 Research frameworks and methods
 • Brym, Chapter 20

April 7 Review and clarification

April 9 In-class Test

Note: This is a tentative schedule and may be subject to change!