

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Professor Emelio Betances

Fall 2015

Meeting times: MWF 10:10 to 11 p.m.

Office HOURS: GLATFELTER 110C. Classroom: G-103

Office Hours M+F 2:00 to 3:30 P.M. or by appointment.

Phone 6299; email: ebetance@gettysburg.edu

Final comprehensive examination: Thursday, December 17 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY (SOC 103)

Fall 2015

COURSE DESCRIPTION.

The course seeks to introduce students to the sociological perspective and to develop analytical skills in critical thinking and research.

WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY?

Sociology is essentially a coherent approach to the study of social life. It enables us to understand human societies and to look beyond individuals to the larger social context. The sociological perspective suggests that to comprehend any aspect of social life we must put it in the appropriate social, historical, economic, political and cultural context. The sociological perspective is broad in scope and generally seeks to provide a comparative view on social life and change.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND METHODS.

The sociological perspective requires imagination to understand the inner works of social life. Sociologists have developed a series of concepts and tools that

enable us to capture social realities in their complexities. This course will introduce students to the main social scientific tools - concepts, theories, methods and findings - to help them understand what is behind the social scene and to comprehend what social forces and patterns move that which otherwise looks random.

This course is not an introduction to American society, but it will draw examples from it to illustrate sociological concepts. Similarly, it will draw examples from different developed and developing societies to explain the usages of sociological concepts and tools to examine social life. Finally, the course will emphasize the need to add a global perspective to understand the process of social change in contemporary societies.

GOALS FOR THE STUDENTS

The students will learn how to use the sociological perspective to obtain a better understanding of their places in society. Concepts, theories, and research methods will be taught in a way that helps students appreciate how these social scientific tools can enable them to grasp social reality. Other goals for the students include:

- . Know that sociology is a social science based on empirical research as well as theoretical interpretations.
- . Be familiar with research designs, such as experiment, survey, ethnographic interviews, and participant observation.
- . Recognize that understanding empirical research requires a familiarity with variables, hypotheses, measurement, relationship between variables, and sampling.
- . Comprehend that the organization of society is related to the economic base.
- . Identify the effects of the transition from agrarian to industrial societies.
- . Appreciate the elements of culture and social structure such as

norms, role, sanctions, groups, power, values, culture, and socialization.

- . Understand the dynamics of race, gender, ethnicity, and migration.
- . Be familiar with the changing nature of work in contemporary society and how it affects our lives.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

- . Recognize that sociology is a multi-paradigm discipline.
- . Learn about the dynamics of social and cultural change in a global perspective.
- . Understand that the lived experience of individuals as a social construction arises from social context and social location.
- . Appreciate that the role of sociologists as public intellectuals.

Sociology 103 and the Gettysburg College Curriculum

The Gettysburg College Curriculum is organized around four major components: learning how to look at the world from multiple perspectives (multiple inquiries); learning how to combine different perspectives to form a deeper understanding of the social world (integrative thinking); learning how to share knowledge and information with others in a clear and effective manner (effective communication); and learning how to use the knowledge and information gained to make a contribution to communal life (informed citizenship). This class touches upon all of the components of the College curriculum. Thus, not only we will look at various theoretical perspectives (multiple inquiries), you will also be encouraged to combine the insights that you gain from this class with those of other classes that

you are taking (integrative thinking). The reaction papers, class assignments, and exams of this class will also be opportunities to improve how you communicate knowledge and information to others (effective communication). Lastly, this class will enhance your ability to be an informed citizen by helping you to better understand how and why aspects of social life are the way that they are (informed citizenship).

SUPERVISED STUDENT WORK

Students will be expected to complete two supervised assignments: The first assignment consists of conducting an experiment on the violation of a social norm. Students will receive detailed instructions on how to conduct these two assignments. The work involved in this process includes the following steps:

- 1) Students must read two journal articles dealing with norms as a form of social control = **4 hours**
- 2) Design the experiment following guidelines provided by the instructor= **2 hours**
- 3) Conduct the observations= **6 hours**
- 4) Write up the observations and run the essay by the Writing Center = **6 hours**

Total: 18 hours

The second supervised assignment requires reading and reviewing a sociological book. The project consists of the following steps:

- 1) Choose a book a book from a list provided by the instructor and read it carefully =**8 hours**.
- 2) This assignment requires that students show how the book under review fits into some body of the sociological literature. This means that they must read at least three professional reviews published in sociological journals = **2 hours**.
- 3) Writing the assignment and taking it to the Writing Center for a revision of

the grammar and structural organization. This review must show that students understand issues of theory, methods, and research process = **10 hours.**

Total number of hours: 20

Total: Assignment 1=18 + Assignment 2= 20 = 38 hours.

In addition, students will also make short presentations to class based on assigned readings and will receive a grade for such presentations. To ensure students read carefully, they will write short summaries of the chapters indicated in *Thirty Readings in Introduction to Sociology* and *Who Rules America?* For each reading, students will receive questions to help them understand the reading. They will, then, write and submit their summaries to the instructor on the day of class discussion.

EXAMINATIONS, CLASS ATTENDANCE, DUE DATES, AND GRADING SYSTEM

EXAMINATIONS:

Students will have three examinations. The first examination covers topics and concepts up to the examination's date. The second covers materials since the first examination. The final is comprehensive. The essay portion of the final is more substantive and seeks to test students' cumulative knowledge. Examinations may include essays on sociological issues, multiple choice, matching exercises, and testing students' knowledge of key sociological concepts. **ALL EXAMINATIONS MUST BE TAKEN AS SCHEDULED.** Make-up examinations may be provided for students with an official excuse. Should a student know that she/he will be absent on the day of an examination, she/he must discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible. In case of unforeseen absences (illness or other emergencies), students must notify the instructor as soon as possible, preferably before or on the day the examination is scheduled.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

CLASS PARTICIPATION

This course is taught in a seminar format. This means that students must come prepared to speak in every class. Class participation is an integral part of this course and it is crucial for its successful completion. **The instructor will ask students to write two-page summaries of all the readings from Thirty Readings in Introductory Sociology and Who Rules America. Prior to doing these readings, the instructor will provide questions so students respond to them in their summaries. They will bring these summaries to class on the day readings are due and be ready to participate in class discussions.**

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND OTHER REGULATIONS. Students who miss classes must find out what went on in class. Students will be allowed one unexcused absence. Additional absences will have a negative impact on final grades. **Students must buy a memory stick to save their work. Excuses such as a computer failure the night before a paper is due will not be acceptable.**

All cell phones and computers must be off during class time. Students caught texting will be excused the first time. Subsequently, for each time a student is caught texting he/she will lose half a letter grade. However, if a student really needs a computer to take notes, she/he must ask for permission from the instructor.

IMPORTANT DUE DATES:

Handout instructions for observational paper – 9/11

Observational Paper is due – 9/25

Hand out instructions for Critical Review – 9/25

Examination 1 – 9/28

Examination II: 10/ 23

Critical Review: 11/16

Final comprehensive examination: Thursday, Dec. 17 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

GRADING POLICY

Examination 1: 15%

Examination 2: 15%

Final Examination 25%
Observational Paper: 15%
Critical Review: 20%
Homework and Class Participation: 10%

READING REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Giddens, Anthony, Duneier, Mitchel, Appelbaum, Richard. **Introduction to Sociology** (9th edition). New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014.
- 2) Gould, Kenneth A. and Lewis, Tammy. **Thirty Readings in Introduction to Sociology**. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- 3) Domhoff, G. William. **Who Rules America? Challenges to Corporate and Class Dominance**. McGraw Hill, 7th edition.

SCHEDULE OF READING ASSIGNMENTS

- I -

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Week 1: 8/31 – 9/4: **WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY? WHY SHOULD WE STUDY IT?** (Giddens et al., part 1, chapter 1). **Thirty Readings in Sociology**: Reading by Gould and Lewis, 1 and 2.

Week 2: 9/7– 9/11: **Sociological Research Methods** (Documentary with Anthony Giddens, “Capitalism and Modern Social Theory,” scheduled on 9/7. Giddens et al., part 1, chapter 2), **Thirty Readings in Sociology**: Chapters 5 and 6. **Hand out Instructions for Sociological Observation Paper 9/11.**

II -

CORE CONCEPTS: CULTURE, SOCIAL STRUCTURE, AND INEQUALITY

Week 3: 9/14 – 9/18: **CULTURE AND SOCIETY** (Giddens et al., part II, chapter 3.) **Thirty Readings in Sociology**: Chapters 7 and Reading 8.

Week 4: 9/21 - 9/25: **STRUCTURES OF POWER AND INEQUALITY** (Giddens et al., part III, chapter 8). Read chapters 16 and 17 in Thirty Readings in Sociology before watching documentary “**Inequality for All**,” scheduled on 9/23 and 9/25. **Observation Paper is due 9/25.**
Hand out Instructions for Critical Review 9/25

EXAMINATION 1: 9/28

Week 5: 9/28 – 10/2: **RACE, ETHNICITY, AND MIGRATION** (Giddens et al, part III, chapter 11. Thirty Readings in Sociology: Chapters 13, 14 and 15

- III -

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: THE FAMILY, THE ECONOMY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Week 6: 10/5 -10/9: **THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY** (Giddens et al, part IV, chapter 15). Read chapter 21 in Readings in Sociology before watching “Juggling Work and Family” scheduled on 10/7 and 10/9.

Reading Days: October 10-13

Week 7: 10/14 - 10/16: **GENDER INEQUALITY. Giddens et al, part III, chapter 10.** Thirty Readings in Sociology: Chapters 19 and 20.

Week 8: 10/19 – 10/23: **WORK AND SOCIAL CHANGE** (Giddens et al., part IV, Chapter 14).

Examination II: 10/ 23

Week 9: 10/26 - 10/30: **GLOBALIZATION IN A CHANGING WORLD** (Giddens et al. Part V, chapter 20). Thirty Readings in Sociology: Chapters 25 and 26.

- IV -

UNDERSTANDING U.S. SOCIETY AND POLITICS

Week 10: 11/2 – 11/6: **GOVERNMENT, POWER AND SOCIAL CHANGE.**
Giddens, part III, chapter 13. Thirty Readings in Sociology, chapters 11 and 24.

*Week 11: 11/9 – 11/13: **Class and Power in America.** See Domhoff, Introduction, chapter 1 and 2.*

Critical Review is due: 11/16

*Week 12: 11/16 –11/20: **Corporate Community.** Chapters, 3 and 4.*

Thanksgiving recess begins Monday, November 24 at 5 p .m. and ends November 30 at 8 A.M.

Week 13: 11/23– 12/4: **Corporations and Society.** Chapters 5 and 6. Film: “The Inside Job” is scheduled on 12/2 and 12/4.

Week 14: 12/7 – 12/11: **Policy Planning, Public Opinion, and Elections.**
Chapters 7 and 8.

Final Examination: Thursday, December 17 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.