

Introductory Sociology (Honors)  
SOC 101 (Course # 87129)  
LSA, Room 109  
Autumn 2011 T, Th 3-4:15pm

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~jadams27/courses/101H/>

**Professor:** jimi adams, PhD  
**Office Hours:** T,Th 10:30-11:30am  
or by appointment

**Office:** Social Sciences Building, 203C  
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### **Course description**

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Sociology boils down to the scientific study of human society and social behavior. That statement, while seemingly simple, actually has wide implications for what sociologists study, how they design and implement their studies, and to whom the results of such studies are directed. This semester will introduce you to the basics of a sociological perspective and give you the opportunity to apply that perspective to what you read for this course (and hopefully others), your lives, and the world around you.

We will touch on many core themes, theoretical perspectives and methods of sociology - but not all. A typical introductory sociology class frequently surveys the many arenas of social life to which this sociological perspective is applied. We are not going to do that. Instead, we will focus on several specific examples of sociological work that touch on a variety of those core themes. There are a few opportunities in this class for you to explore some of the themes that we do not cover in detail as a class.

### **Required reading**

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1. Healy, Keiran. 2006. *Last Best Gifts: Altruism and the Market for Human Blood and Organs*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
2. Khan, Shamus Rahman. 2011. *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at Saint Paul's School*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
3. Regnerus, Mark. 2007. *Forbidden Fruit: Sex & Religion in the Lives of American Teenagers*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
4. Small, Mario Luis. 2009. *Unanticipated Gains: Origins of Network Inequality in Everyday Life*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Additional readings are posted on the course Blackboard.

All 4 books are available at the ASU Campus Bookstore <http://bookstore.asu.edu> and should be readily available elsewhere (e.g., Amazon, Barnes & Noble's, etc).

### **Requirements & Policies**

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**Attendance** – Due to the large role that discussion will play in this course, all students are expected attend each class session, having completed ALL assigned readings. You should plan to show up on time and not leave early from class sessions; if you must, do so discretely.

**Contacting the Instructor** – The best way to reach me is email – [jimi.adams@asu.edu](mailto:jimi.adams@asu.edu). Typically, I will respond within 2 working days. Additionally, you are highly encouraged to make use of office hours to address any questions you have about the class.

**Participation** – The topics of study in this course will at times touch on personal and/or controversial issues. Your thoughts and opinions in discussing these topics will be valued and respected. To foster this, the following ground rules will apply for all in-class *and* online interactions:

- 1- Be respectful of others and their opinions. While healthy debate will be constructive in the learning process, disrespectful or insulting contributions *will not be tolerated*.
- 2- The content of your expressed opinions will in no way affect your grade. You are encouraged to share your *thoughtful* opinions, beliefs, values openly. The class will particularly benefit from statements that support and/or challenge both those of other students and the instructor (*as long as it is done in a manner consistent with rule #1*).

**Reading** – Since some of the assigned readings will include concepts beyond the scope of this course, one important goal for you in this course will be to learn to read and evaluate evidence in scientific research without all of the necessary skills for thorough interpretation. Your aim in most assigned readings is to extract the essential argument(s) or key finding(s) from it, without getting bogged down in the details. We will discuss strategies for this at the beginning of the course. If you are finding this to be a difficult process in your reading of course materials, please take advantage of office hours to explore alternative strategies with the instructor.

**Late Work** – Under *NO* circumstances will late work be accepted for the reading responses or any participation elements. Because there are numerous opportunities to meet each of these requirements they are all due *at the beginning of class on the day* for which the corresponding reading is listed on the syllabus, or as described on any corresponding assignment handouts.

Students who miss an exam must contact the instructor **IMMEDIATELY** to make arrangements for a make-up exam. Any make-up exam will consist of a series of (8-10) essay questions intended to cover similar material to what is included on the corresponding exam. Missing an exam is highly discouraged.

Any late project elements will result in a 10% per day deduction *from the entire project grade*.

### **Written Assignments**

ALL written assignments (reading responses, project elements) must be/have:

- |                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Cover-page (name nowhere else) | ✓ 12-point font                      |
| ✓ Typed                          | ✓ Times New Roman font               |
| ✓ Double-spaced                  | ✓ One-inch margins on all sides      |
| ✓ Stapled                        | ✓ Proper ASA citations (see handout) |

### **Course Blackboard**

Blackboard will be used for online communication in this course. You should use this service to your advantage. You can find the most up-to-date syllabus and all assignments there.

### ***Academic Integrity***

Any student caught cheating on an examination, or plagiarizing any written assignments (from published sources or another student) will receive a zero for that portion of their grade, and the assignment will not be eligible for make-up. Students caught cheating more than once will receive an E for the course, and I will write a letter to the Dean regarding the student's dishonest behavior to be placed in the student's academic record.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

Accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. Please let me know your arrangements with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible.

### **Grading**

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#### ***Potential Points:***

Participation	80 (16%)	Exam 1	80 (16%)
Reading Responses	80 (16%)	Exam 2	80 (16%)
Project	100 (20%)	Exam 3	80 (16%)
		<b>Total</b>	<b>500 (100%)</b>

Final Grade Assignment is based on a standard grading scale:

A	B	C	D	E
451-500	401-450	351-400	301-350	≤300

*A Note about Grading* – My desire is that grades are of a secondary concern in this class, while I am aware that they are probably your first priority. As a result I have tried (to some degree) to give you the chance to tailor your grade for the course to your desires and expectations. The goal of this course is to introduce you to the field of sociology, while giving us the opportunity to learn together. While I attempt to be extremely flexible in the way that grades can be earned, I will not spend my time giving students extra opportunities to gain points beyond what is described in the syllabus (i.e., do NOT ask about “extra credit”). I do NOT discuss individual student's grades in class or over email; grade questions should be addressed during office hours.

### **Evaluation Elements**

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#### ***1- Participation***

There will be a great deal of discussion in this class. The first portion of your grade will reflect a variety of options intended to reflect/encourage your participation in this discussion. There are numerous ways to earn participation points, and you can choose *any combination* (within the specified limits) of the following to amass *no more than* 80 participation points. Points listed are the maximum that can be earned for each element. **To prevent a last-minute barrage of grading, no more than 10 points can be accumulated via options iv-vi in any given week.**

- i. Class Discussion Guide (20 points maximum) – Once during the semester, you (alone, or with a partner) can introduce the class discussion for a selected assigned reading. This will entail a presentation of approximately five minutes, in which you should: summarize the basic points of the reading, provide a brief critical commentary on the reading, and discuss how it addresses at least one of the core concepts that we have discussed in the class. A sign-up sheet for serving as

- Discussion Guide will be available in class, and administered on a first-come, first-served basis.
- ii. Random quizzes (4 pts each) – As an encouragement to read all assigned readings, and to help you prepare for class discussion and lecture, you are required to come to class with reading summaries for each of the assigned readings for each class period. A reading summary consists of a (no more than) two sentence summary of the main point the author is trying to convey in the piece. A good summary will accurately state the thesis of the reading and demonstrate reading comprehension. I will randomly select (approximately 6-7) days to collect reading summaries.
  - iii. In-class writing (3 pts each) – Periodically, at the end of a class period, I will ask you to write a brief reaction to the day's material and/or discussion. These will not be graded for content, but for the presence of thoughtful contributions.
  - iv. Email questions (2 pts each) – You can email questions for in-class discussion to address regarding the assigned readings. These should reflect a basic understanding of the reading(s). Questions are due no later than midnight the night before the reading will be covered in class. No more than one question is accepted for credit per student per class day. (*maximum of 20 pts*)
  - v. Class Discussion Board Posts (8 pts each) – Using the Discussion Boards available on Blackboard, you will produce original contributions that apply in-class concepts to events you encounter outside of class. Beginning with a brief description of current events (from the news, personal observation or other sources), your contributed discussion board posts will then address how those events relate to concepts covered in class. To receive full credit, your posts must demonstrate an understanding of the applied concept(s) *and* describe how those concepts are represented, help interpret, or otherwise relate to the described event. Point assignments will be based on how accurately you apply the concepts to the observed event. *You will not receive credit for an event that has been previously described in a post by one of your classmates.* The deadline for discussion board posts is November 24<sup>th</sup>. (*maximum of 40 points*)
  - vi. Class Discussion Board Reactions/Responses (3 points each) – Thoughtful reactions to your classmates discussion board entries are encouraged. These may take a variety of forms, including (but not limited to) alternate observations that either support or contradict those presented in the original post or additional interpretation of the same event applying other concepts introduced in class. The deadline for discussion board reactions is November 24<sup>th</sup>. (*maximum of 20 points*)
  - vii. Perfect attendance (8 pts) – If you have perfect attendance in class you will receive 8 participation points. I will not take class attendance; this will be determined by you having turned in (regardless of the grade) *all of* the quizzes and in-class writings.
  - viii. Near perfect attendance (4 pts) – Same as #7, with one missing grade.

## **2 - Reading Responses**

Along with the reading that you do for this course, you will be required to submit two (2) reading responses during the course of the semester. These responses will be worth 40 points apiece. These will consist of brief summaries of the essential arguments of a reading and critical analysis of the articles, totaling 2½ -3 pages each. Reading Response requirements are described in further detail on a separate handout.

NOTE: If you are not satisfied with the grade you earn on your first reading response, I will accept a third response, and you can discard the score for the first response. *This option can only be used to replace the grade for the first response you write.*

### 3 - Exams

The course will include three in-class exams, each worth 80 points. These will consist of a variety of question formats (multiple-choice, fill-in, short answer and essay). The exams will cover material from lectures *and* course readings.

### 4 - Mini Research Project

The final component of your grade will allow you to apply some of the research skills gained in this course to a specific event of your choosing. This “mini-research project” will include a short fieldwork project (i.e., data collection), where you will be asked to come up with a research strategy for answering a single research question (or a few closely related questions), report your observations, and generate some interpretations and conclusions from the data you produced.

Each of you will present a preliminary outline of your project to the class on Oct 27<sup>th</sup> or Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, and this presentation will be a part of your grade. You will have the option of conducting this project on your own or with a partner. The due date for your completed project is Tuesday, November 22nd. This project will consist of several parts that will be worth a combined total of 100 points. More details of this project are provided in a separate handout.

### Tentative Course Schedule

Please Note, this schedule is subject to change – all changes will be announced in class.

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments	Date
1	Introductions & Syllabus			Th, 18 Aug
2	What is Sociology?	*Berger 1963 (BB)		T, 23 Aug
		*Mills 1959 (BB)		
3	Brief Overview History of Social Theory	*Durkheim 1895 (BB)		Th, 25 Aug
		*Weber 1904 (BB)		
		*Ritzer 1996 (BB)		T, 30 Aug
		Marx 1849 (BB)	Discussion Guide I	Th, 1 Sept
4	Methods	*Gans 1972 (BB)		
		*Blumer 1969 (BB)		
4	Stratification	*Henslin 1991 (BB)		T, 6 Sept
		*Becker 1986 (BB)		
5	Elites	Dubrow 2011 (BB) & Massey 1993 (BB) - OR - Ehrenreich 1999 (BB)	Discussion Guide II	Th, 8 Sept
		Khan 2011 (pp. 1-76)	Discussion Guide III	T, 13 Sept
			<i>Project Outline</i>	Th, 15 Sept

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments	Date
6		Khan 2011 (pp. 77-199)	Discussion Guide IV	T, 20 Sept Th, 22 Sept
	<b>***** Exam 1 *****</b>			T, 27 Sept
7	<b>Religion</b>	*Weber 1905 (BB)		Th, 29 Sept
8	<b>Health</b>	Healy 2006	Discussion Guide V	T, 4 Oct Th, 6 Oct
				T, 11 Oct
9	<b>Social Capital</b>	Small 2009 (pp. 3-126)	Discussion Guide VI	Th, 13 Oct
10				T, 18 Oct
		Small 2009 (pp. 129-200)	Discussion Guide VII	Th, 20 Oct
11				T, 25 Oct
	<b>Student Presentations</b>	NONE	<i>Projects - I</i>	Th, 27 Oct
12			<i>Projects - II</i>	T, 1 Nov
<b>***** Exam 2 *****</b>				Th, 3 Nov
13	<b>Religion &amp; Sex – I</b>	Regnerus 2007 (pp. 3-56)	Discussion Guide VIII	T, 8 Nov Th, 10 Nov
				14
		Regnerus 2007 (pp. 57-118)	Discussion Guide IX	T, 15 Nov Th, 17 Nov
15	<b>Religion &amp; Sex – II</b>	Regnerus 2007 (pp. 119-182)	Discussion Guide X <i>Project</i>	T, 22 Nov
				Th, 24 Nov
		<b>NO CLASS – Thanksgiving</b>		Th, 24 Nov
16		Bearman 2004 (BB) Smith 2005 (BB)	Discussion Guide XI	T, 29 Nov
		*Regnerus 2007 (pp. 183-207)		Th, 1 Dec
17	<b>Miscellaneous &amp; Wrap Up</b>			T, 6 Dec
<b>Thursday, Dec 8 – Final Exam 12:10-2:00 pm</b>				

### Additional Recommended Reading:

While we are not using a textbook for this course, many of the topics covered will often align with their treatment in more traditional Introductory Sociology texts. If you would like additional material, or prefer a more traditional treatment of the topics to supplement lectures, the following are some commonly used texts (for each of these, you should be able to find copies on line – older editions should work, though statistics may be out of date).

- Henslin, James M. 2009. *Sociology: A Down to Earth Approach* (10<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York: Prentice Hall.
- Giddens, Anthony et al. 2009 *Introduction to Sociology* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York: Prentice Hall.
- Macionis, John J. 2009. *Sociology* (13<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York: Prentice Hall.