

Grande Prairie Regional College
SO1000: Introductory Sociology (sections A2, C2, D2)
September, 2006 ~ December, 2006

Instructor: Murray Shaw

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:00, or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: None

Required Materials:

- Kendall, Diana; Jane Lothian Murray & Rick Linden. Sociology in Our Times. 4th Canadian Edition. Toronto: ITP Nelson, 2007
- A package of additional course readings will be made available in the bookstore.

Course Description

Sociologists study human behaviour and the organization of society. Their work assumes that social forces external to individuals play a major role in shaping human behaviour. The study of sociology can help us to become aware of the influence society has on our everyday behaviour, and help us to understand daily events as being the product of social systems as well as of individual actions. This survey course is intended to introduce students to some of the social issues, controversies, and conflicts that are at the heart of sociological inquiry. In this course we will study the key sociological concepts (for example, society, culture, social structure, socialization, social interaction), the major theoretical perspectives in sociology (classical and contemporary), the principal methods of sociological analysis, as well as a range of social issues. The goals of the course are to encourage students to think critically about the social world, and to examine various social issues through a sociological lens – in short, to develop the ‘sociological imagination’: “the ability to see the relationship between individual experiences and the larger society”(C. Wright Mills, 1959).

Requirements & Grading

The course will combine lectures, weekly readings, written work, group discussions, computer labs, and videos. It is important that the assigned readings are done prior to each class – otherwise you will have difficulties following the lectures and discussions. Evaluation for the course will consist of three exams, attendance and participation in discussion groups, three short (1-2 page) written commentaries that relate a current issue to the course content, and three in-class computer labs.

Exam 1	15 %
Exam 2	25 %
Exam 3	25 %
Attendance & participation in discussion groups	15 %
Written commentaries	10 %
Computer labs	10 %

Exams

The three exams will be based on the lectures, readings, discussion group topics, and videos, and will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions. Missed Exams will not be accommodated – unless the situation is an unexpected personal or family emergency. No make-up exams unless it's an emergency.

Discussion groups

Participation in discussion group activities is an essential part of this course. During the first class we will form discussion groups of five or six people in each group. During the term we will frequently break into these groups during class time, and each group will discuss several questions that relate to the course material. Discussion group sessions will take place at least once a week.

Responding to these questions in the discussion groups will provide you with the opportunity to collectively think critically about the material you are exposed to in the weekly readings, lectures and occasional videos, and to comment on this material within the smaller group setting. Following each group session, each group will report back to the class on their responses to one or more of the questions.

Participation mark and attendance: During each discussion group session, each group will select a leader, a recorder, and a spokesperson. The group leader reads the discussion questions and is responsible for keeping the discussion on focus, the recorder takes minutes (brief notes) of the discussion points, and the spokesperson reports back to the class on one or more of the questions when the class reconvenes. Each group will hand in to the instructor a sheet listing everyone in the group that day, which serves as a record of attendance. On this sheet, each group should make clear who served as leader, recorder, or spokesperson for that day, which will serve as a record of participation. During the course of the term, each student should be able to lead, record, or act as spokesperson several times, which will ensure full marks for participation.

Written commentaries

Students will each submit three short written commentaries on some current issue, and relate this to the course content. Each commentary should be 1-2 pages long, double-spaced. The issue selected can be from one's own experience, or from the news or other media. For example, a news story reporting on an increase in home schooling in a particular region could be related to some aspect of the section of the course dealing with socialization. Or a story about an Aboriginal group opposing land development in their region could be related to some aspect of the section of the course dealing with race and ethnicity. These commentaries are intended to provide you with an opportunity to apply the course content to an issue that interests you, and will be graded quite leniently.

Computer labs

Three of our class sessions will take place in the computer labs. In each of these classes, students will use internet sources to conduct the research necessary to complete a short assignment.

Course Schedule And Reading Assignments

The following is a list of topics and readings that will be covered in this course.

Week	Topic	Readings
Sept. 7 th	Introductions, pass out & review class syllabus, discuss course procedures, requirements, and content.	
Sept. 11-15	Introduction to the 'Sociological Perspective' Classical Theoretical Approaches to Sociology	Text, Chapter 1 (pages 10-16) Short selections from Readings Package: -Emile Durkheim. Suicide. -Karl Marx. Alienated Labor. -Max Weber. The Disenchantment of Modern Life.
Sept. 18-22	Contemporary Theoretical Approaches to Sociology Sociological Research Methods	Text, Chapter 1 (pages 19-27) Roberta Hamilton. "Feminist Theories" Text, Chapter 2

Sept. 25-29	Culture & Socialization	Selections from Text Chapters 3 & 4 (TBA)
Oct. 2 & 3	First exam	
Oct 4 & 5	Social Structure & Social Interaction	Selections from Text. Chapters 5 & 6 (TBA)
Oct. 9-13	Social Structure & Social Interaction [continued] Crime & Deviance	Text, Chapter 7
Oct. 16-20	Social Inequality	Text, Chapter 8 Herbert Gans. "The Uses of Poverty: The Poor Pay All"
Oct. 23-27	Race & Ethnicity	Text, Chapter 10 Peggy McIntosh. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"
Oct 30-Nov. 3	Gender Socialization & Gender Inequality	Text, Chapter 11 Judith Lober. "'Night to His Day': The Social Construction of Gender"
Nov. 6 & 7	Second exam	
Nov. 8 & 9	Family	Text, Chapter 15 Jennifer Strickler. "The New Reproductive Technology: Problem or Solution?"
Nov. 13-17	Work And Economic Structure	Text, Chapter 13 Daniel Bell. "The Dimensions of Post- Industrial Society"

Nov. 20-24	Global Inequality	Text, Chapter 9 Edna Bonacich et al. “The Garment Industry in the Restructuring Global Economy”
Nov. 27-Dec. 1	Population and Urbanization	Text, chapter 19
Dec. 4-8	Social Movements	Text, chapter 20
<i>Dec. exam period</i>	<i>Third exam</i>	

Grading system

Grades will be assigned on the *Letter Grading System*.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A ⁺	4	90 – 100	Excellent
A	4	85 – 89	
A ⁻	3.7	80 – 84	First Class Standing
B ⁺	3.3	76 – 79	
B	3	73 – 75	Good
B ⁻	2.7	70 – 72	
C ⁺	2.3	67 – 69	Satisfactory
C	2	64 – 66	
C ⁻	1.7	60 – 63	
D ⁺	1.3	55 – 59	Minimal Pass
D	1	50 – 54	
F	0	0 – 49	Fail

Academic behavior

It is expected that all students will respect the rights of all other members of the class. This means:

- No disruptive behavior such as private discussions during lecture/discussion sessions that distract other students or prevent them from hearing the main discussion going on.
- When participating in a discussion, stating your ideas and opinions in class in a way that does not offend others.

Policy on academic dishonesty: You will not present the work of others as your own. Any incident of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will lead to a failing grade. The instructor reserves the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services.