

**Grande Prairie Regional College**  
**SO1000: Introductory Sociology**  
**January, 2007 ~ April, 2007**

Section A3: Monday & Wednesday, 8:30 ~ 9:50, classroom A314

Section C3: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:30 ~ 12:50, classroom B206

Instructor: Murray Shaw

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Office hours: Make an appointment, or drop by the office.

Course Prerequisite: None

**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).

**Course materials:**

- Kendall, Diana; Jane Lothian Murray & Rick Linden. Sociology in Our Times. 4th Canadian Edition. Toronto: ITP Nelson, 2007
- Additional readings will be on reserve in the library for you to photocopy.

## **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 written commentaries, and two or three take-home computer labs.

Exam 1	20 %
Exam 2	20 %
Exam 3	25 %
Attendance & participation in discussion groups	10 %
3 Written commentaries	15 %
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. 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 [10 marks]:*** 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. Attendance will count for 5 of the 10 marks, and participation will count for the remaining 5 marks.

### **Written commentaries**

Students will submit three short written papers, each of which will demonstrate an understanding of the theories and concepts covered in the course. Each of the three commentaries is due at the time as each of the three exams. For each commentary, I will post on blackboard several topics from which you can choose. The papers will be very short (2-3 pages; 3-4 paragraphs), will follow a specific essay format which I will post on blackboard, and are each worth 5 percent .

### **Computer labs**

There will be two or three take home computer labs. In each of these labs, students will use internet sources to conduct the research necessary to complete a short assignment. The mark for this assignment will be based on ‘completion’, that is, if you complete the assignment, you receive full marks.

### **Course Schedule And Reading Assignments**

The following is a list of topics and readings that will be covered in this course. If there are any changes to the schedule or readings, I will let you know well ahead of time, and will post an updated outline on Blackboard.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Jan. 8-12	Introduction to the ‘Sociological Perspective’  Classical Theoretical Approaches to Sociology	Text, Chapter 1 (pages 1-16)  Readings on reserve: -Emile Durkheim. Suicide. -Karl Marx. Alienated Labour. -Max Weber. The Disenchantment of Modern Life.

Jan. 15-19	Classical Theoretical Approaches to Sociology [continued]  Contemporary Theoretical Approaches to Sociology	-Text, Chapter 1 (pages 19-27)  Readings on reserve: -Roberta Hamilton. "Feminist Theories"
Jan. 22-26	Sociological Research Methods  Culture & Socialization	-Text, Chapter 2  -Text, Chapters 3 & 4
Jan. 29-Feb. 2	Culture & Socialization [continued]	
Feb. 5-9	<hr/> <b>Monday Feb. 5, &amp; Tuesday, Feb. 6</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Exam</b> <b>(&amp; hand in 1st written commentary)</b> <hr/> <i>Next section, beginning Wednesday &amp; Thursday:</i> Social Inequality	-Text, Chapter 8  Readings on reserve: -Herbert Gans. "The Uses of Poverty: The Poor Pay All"
Feb. 12-16	Social Inequality [continued]  Economy & Work	Text, pages 394-408  Readings on reserve: Daniel Bell. "Post Industrial Society."
Feb. 19-23	Holiday	
Feb. 26-March 2	Race & Ethnicity	-Text, Chapter 10  Readings on reserve: -Peggy McIntosh. "White Privilege."

March 5-9	Monday & Tuesday: Movie & discussion: Two Worlds Colliding  Wednesday & Thursday: Crime & Deviance	-Text, Chapter 7
March 12-16	Monday & Tuesday: Crime & Deviance [continued]	
	<b>Wednesday, March 14, &amp; Thursday, March 15</b>  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Exam</b> <b>(&amp; hand in 2nd written commentary)</b>	
March 19-23	Gender Socialization & Gender Inequality	-Text, Chapter 11  Readings on reserve: -Judith Lorber. “‘Night to His Day’: The Social Construction of Gender”
March 26-30	Family	-Text, Chapter 15
April 2-6	Population, Development, & Global Inequality  <b>3rd written commentary due April 6</b>	-Text, pages 590-610; 283-288  Reading on Blackboard: -Edna Bonacich et al. “The Garment Industry in the Restructuring Global Economy.”
April 9-13	Social Movements	-Text, chapter 20
<b>Final [3<sup>rd</sup>] Exam</b> <b>During spring exam period</b>		

## Grading system

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

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A <sup>+</sup>	4	90 – 100	Excellent
A	4	85 – 89	
A <sup>-</sup>	3.7	80 – 84	First Class Standing
B <sup>+</sup>	3.3	76 – 79	
B	3	73 – 75	Good
B <sup>-</sup>	2.7	70 – 72	
C <sup>+</sup>	2.3	67 – 69	Satisfactory
C	2	64 – 66	
C <sup>-</sup>	1.7	60 – 63	
D <sup>+</sup>	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.