

Course Syllabus: Introduction to Sociology*

Mark Swiencicki, Ph.D. Office: Room 557, 5th floor, BCC); Ph: 510-981-2916;
 Sociology 1 Office Hours in Rm. 557: Mon. 4:20-5:20 pm; Wed. 12:20-1:20 pm; Thur. 4:50-5:50 pm; Digital/Online Office Hour: Tues. 12-1 pm; & 1 hr by appointment.
 Fall 2017 3 Credits Email address: mswiencicki@peralta.edu

* Meets major requirements for BCC Sociology AA-T to CSU; SOCIOL 1 at UC-Berkeley; SOC 1000 at CSU-East Bay; & IGETC & CSU-GE breadth requirements for UCs & CSUs.

Meeting Times/Places/Codes:

Mon & Wed. 11 am - 12:15 pm, BCC 322 (40976)
 Mon & Wed. 3 pm – 4:15 pm, BCC 421 (40839)

Why take Intro Sociology?

Ever wonder what your life would be like if you were a different ethnicity, social class, or sex category? Or what causes racism, sexism, and poverty? Or why most Americans prefer football to soccer? Or why the American family keeps getting smaller? If so, learn how society shapes our personalities, lives, and institutions in this introductory sociology course that uses lots of movies, TV shows, and popular culture to study the workings of American society.

Course Description:

This introduction to sociological reasoning critically and scientifically examines the social forces and processes that shape our personalities, institutions, culture, and society. Using sociological theories, concepts, research, Powerpoint slides and numerous videos we investigate: 1) how U.S. society and culture are shaped by race, ethnicity, class, and gender, 2) how people become socialized; 3) how socialization and culture get people to follow society's "norms"; 4) what causes young people to engage in extreme forms of "deviance" such as joining gangs or shooting everyone at school; 5) what social scientists know and can do about criminality; 6) the pros and cons of different kinds of families; 7) how and why social change and successful social movements and revolutions occur; and 8) what causes human populations to explode or shrink, and what impact does this have on climate change?

Student Learning Outcomes: At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

1. define core sociological terms and identify how these terms are connected to the sociological perspective;
2. identify the key theoretical approaches and explain how the insights generated by these approaches inform sociology;
3. demonstrate how identities such as race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and nationality contribute to a range of social experiences and social perspectives;
4. reframe their lived experience by evaluating the impact of culture, stratification and power in their own lives.

Course Objectives: At the end of the course students will be able to:

- 1) Apply the sociological imagination to a variety of contemporary social phenomena;
- 2) Describe the historical development of Sociology as a separate social sciences discipline;
- 3) Distinguish among various research methods;
- 4) Identify, compare, and apply primary sociological perspectives;
- 5) Explain and apply key sociological concepts;
- 6) Describe the basic dimensions of social inequality & social change in historical and contemporary society;
- 7) Assess the social forces & organizational structures shaping individual & group behavior in contemporary society.

1) Required Texts & Reading Materials:

a) Textbook: *The Real World: An Introduction to Sociology* (5th edition), Ferris & Stein, Norton (hereby abbreviated as TRW). Sold or rented in the bookstore; cheaper at www.half.com or www.amazon.com; available at the BCC library reserve. Note, if you're short on cash, the used 4th edition is only \$4 online, and is about 96% identical to the 5th ed.

b) Class Slides: the PowerPoint slides shown in class can be downloaded from the course Moodle site for free

(about a 73 pg. pdf document). About 4.5 cents a copy (B&W) at Krishna Copy Center, 2001 University Ave @ Milvia. Print on only 1 side so you can add extra notes on the back of each page. Note, these slides are **just as important** as the text book, so if you don't print these up and bring them to class it will hurt you at exam time.

c) Library Reserve Readings can be photocopied at the BCC library reserve desk. To check out for 3 hours bring your BCC ID, and give them both my last name and the exact title of the reading as it appears below:

-Brown, Prince, Jr. 1998. "Biology and the Social Construction of the 'Race' Concept." Pp. 131-137 in the *Social Construction of Race & Ethnicity in the United States* (Joan Ferrante, ed.). Longman Publishers.

-Kimmel, Michael. 2001. "Manhood and Violence: The Deadliest Equation." Newsday. Download it @ www.europofem.org/contri/2_04_en/en-viol/06en_vio.htm

2) Course Assignments & Grading Policy:

a) **Exams (89%)**: 3 multiple-choice exams will be given (and I'll drop the lowest score **if** you take all 3 exams **and** no exam is lower than a 70%). Questions come from the lectures, readings, class slides, discussions and videos, and review sheets will be provided in class only, 1 week before the exam. Nothing can be brought to the exam besides a #2 pencil and a green, 100-item (50 each size) scantron sheet (buy at bookstore). No retakes for a higher grade.

Exam Makeup Policy: You may make up 1 exam without a documented hardship (i.e., hospital report, doctor's note, court docket, etc.) if you contact me **in email** within 4 days of the exam. However, this will cost you a 15 point penalty on your exam (i.e., 1.5 letter grades) if you don't supply an officially documented excuse. People with official excuses that can't do the regular makeup will take a different version of the exam during finals week. Finally, **all requests for makeups must be emailed to me** (it's not enough to just ask me in person).

b) **Term Paper (11 pts.)**: students will write one 5-7 page typed essay that analyzes either: a) the socio-economic class of shoppers in 2 local department stores, or b) the sociological forces at work in a social group or formal organization that you are closely involved with (note: the assignment guidelines will be posted on Moodle). Plagiarized papers earn a 0, and can't be re-written. Plagiarism consists of turning in someone else's exact work, making minor changes to their work, or copying passages from the web or any printed source without citing your sources. Hard copy of **paper due 11/22 in class**. No late papers without an officially documented excuse (i.e., doctor, court, etc.), and no emailed papers unless you are legally visually impaired.

c) **Extra Credit "Online Reading Quizzes" (0-6 pts)**: In the 2 days before the date at which each chapter is first listed for discussion in class, log into the course Moodle shell at <http://eperalta.org/fall2017/> (see page for logon instructions) and take your chapter reading quiz. See Moodle for the official quiz due dates, and quiz dates may be extended if the class gets behind schedule.

You have 7.5 minutes to answer 10 questions, and there are no retakes or make ups for missed quizzes so be sure to use a reliable web connection, and don't take the quiz at the very last minute because sometimes the Moodle server goes down. Also, individual quizzes that score less than 40% will not count.

Students with documented disabilities requiring extra time on the quizzes can get this if you show me your DSPS documentation; however, anyone exceeding their allotted extra time will get a 0 on the quiz.

If you don't have an internet connection you can take the exams at the BCC computer lab or your local library. Students having trouble using Moodle can get help at the computer lab, or during my office hours. Note: the quizzes work best in IE, Mozilla, or Safari, and are not meant to be taken on smart phones.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory so students get dropped for missing the first 2 weeks of class, or for missing **over 4 weeks** of class by Attendance Verification in November - unless acceptable officially documented excuses are provided for at least half of those absences (i.e., medical notes, hospital forms, court documents, car towing bill, etc.). Please see page 28 of the BCC 2015-17 Catalogue for my authority to do this. However, students who miss over 4 weeks and present valid official documents will be dropped if they continue missing class. Also, students signing up after classes start are marked "absent" for previously missed classes, and students who leave during class without permission get marked absent. Being "present" = clearly letting me know you're present during role call. However, students can be late 2x without being marked absent if they let me know at the end of class. Finally, students must get copies of any missed lecture notes from another student.

Note: Any changes to the syllabus or class deemed necessary will be announced in class, and I will not answer questions about the class that are answered in the syllabus. See me after class or in my office hours if you are having trouble understanding the syllabus.

Grading Scale: A: 90-100 points; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 0-59.

Classroom Rules:

- 1) If you have a documented disability please register with PSSD office in room 261 (510-981-2812) ASAP to arrange for any special accommodations, and see me after class if you need materials in a different format.
- 2) Students who disrupt the class (i.e., chatting with friends, monopolizing discussions, disrespecting others, using cell phones or digital devices, etc.) will get a warning upon each disturbance. Upon the 3rd warning I will ask the Dean to drop you from the course (per pp. 314-315 of the BCC 2015-17 Catalog).
- 3) No cell phones, laptops or digital devices may be used in class, nor may students place book bags or purses on their desks in front of them. Students caught using cell phones or digital devices will face the penalties in #2 above. If you are expecting an emergency cell phone call place your phone on vibrate and take it outside.
- 4) If you take issue with any classroom rules/policies/assignments you must discuss it with me in private after class or at my office hours. Class rules/policies/assignments will not be debated in the classroom.
- 5) Students caught cheating on an exam will receive a 0 on that exam.

Note: By returning to class you are acknowledging that you consent to the policies in this syllabus.

3) Class Readings, Assignments & Exam Dates:

8/21, 8/23 (Topic 1): Introduction to instructor, course goals, syllabus; What is sociology and how is it done? Why is sociology such a powerful tool for science, government, and business?

8/28, 8/30 (Topic 2): Sociological Theory: sociology's history; sociological imagination, perspectives & theories; TRW Ch 1. Videos: "The History of Sociology"; "Geraldo on Hoodies". Discussion.

9/6, 9/11 (Topic 3): Sociological Methods: research methods; classic studies & methodological issues. TRW Ch 2. Videos: "Excel rounding Error", "Don't Be a Research Chump"; "That Mitchell Webb Report".

9/13, 9/18, 9/20 (Topic 4): Culture & Society: the components of culture; ethnocentrism; relativism; ideology; culture and economics.

TRW: Ch 3. Video: "40 Year Old Virgin"; discussion.

9/20, 9/25, 9/27 (Topic 5) : Socialization, Groups & Social Structure: nature vs. nurture; theories and institutional agents of socialization; social statuses, roles & groups; organizations & institutions, social structure. TRW: Ch. 4 (skip from "New Interactional Contexts" on) & Ch. 5 (skip from "Experiments in Conformity" on); Videos: "George Lopez Remark"; "When will it End?"; "Role Conflict in LA" "Key & Peele's The Call"; discussion.

9/27: Exam 1, on Topics 1-5. Bring green, 1/3-page, 100 items total, BCC Scantron Sheet.

10/2, 10/4, 10/9 (Topic 6) : Gender & Society: sex vs. gender; gender identity; gender as culture & stratification; theories of gender formation; gender pay gap, glass ceiling & the sticky floor; solutions to gender discrimination. TRW: Ch. 9; Videos: "PRW BTTM"; "Youtube Wedding Videos"; "Gender for 5 yr olds & College Students"; "Trump Campaign Debate"; discussion.

10/11, 10/16, 10/18, 10/23 (Topic 7): Class, Stratification & Inequality: what is "socio-economic class"; who is in each class?; what causes socio-economic stratification & poverty?; how does class harm the poor & non-affluent?; who lives in poverty in the U.S.?

TRW: Ch. 7; Videos: "Portrait of the Lower Class", "Chapelle's Mad Real World". Discussion.

10/25, 10/30, 11/1, 11/6 (Topic 8): Race & Ethnicity in America: race vs. ethnicity; prejudice, discrimination, racism; theories of prejudice & discrimination; institutional discrimination; ethnic composition of the US.

TRW: Ch. 8; Brown "Biology and the Social Construction of the 'Race' Concept, pp. 131-137 (on reserve); Videos: "Backseat Italians"; "Gov. LePage on Drug Dealers", "Marion Barry";

11/6: EXAM 2 [on Topics 6-8 material]; Bring green, 1/3-sized, 100 items total, BCC Scantron Sheet.

11/8, 11/13 (Topic 9): The Family & Society: What is a family? What kinds of families exist in the U.S.? What are the pros & cons of each family type? What social problems confront U.S. families?

TRW Ch. 12.

11/15, 11/20, 11/22 (Topic 10): The Sociology of Deviance & Crime: What is deviance?; how is deviance socially constructed?; theories of deviance; social control & deterrence theory; types of crime, crime rates; US criminal justice system; the homicide problem.

11/15-20: TRW Ch 6:

11/22: Kimmel: “Manhood & Violence” (on reserve and online).

11/22: Term Paper due in class (no late papers without official serious excuse).

11/27, 11/29 (Topic 11) Sociology of Social Change: Theories of social change, social movements and revolutions; a case study of a successful U.S. social movement.

TRW: Ch. 16.

11/29, 12/4, 12/6 (Topic 12): Human Population & the Environment: Theories about human population size and control; socio-economic causes of environmental degradation; solutions to the environmental crisis.

TRW: Ch 15. Videos: “Planet Earth”; “Carbon Tax vs. Cap & Trade”. Discussion.

Section & Meeting Time:

Mon & Wed. 11 am - 12:15 pm, BCC 322

Mon & Wed. 3 pm – 4:15 pm, BCC 421

Final Exam Time:

Mon 12/11 @ 11 am – 12 pm.

Weds. 12/13 @ 3 - 4 pm

Where to Find each Type of Reading: Each type of reading uses a different type of symbol, which indicates where it is found. Below is a legend for each of these symbols:

a) TRW: means that this reading comes from the course textbook, *The Real World, 5e*;

b) “ ”: titles in quotation marks are xeroxed articles (found at Library Reserve or online).

c) Video: means this is a video documentary or movie clip that will only be shown in class.

See the Sociology Program Web Page at www.berkeleycitycollege.edu/wp/socsci/course-descriptions/sociology/ if interested in other sociology courses, or becoming a sociology major.

4) Important dates: 8/26 - last day to add classes w/o a permission card/number; 9/3 - last day to drop classes w/o a “W”; 9/8 - last day to file for PASS/NO PASS; 10/20 - last day to file petitions for AA/AS Degree; 11/15 - last day to withdraw with a “W”.

5) Content Warning: Because this class examines intensely personal things in a critical fashion -- such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion -- you should only take this class if you are prepared to critically look at your own behavior and social group.