



SOC 111.WS0: Introduction to Sociology
Online Winter 2019-2020

Instructor: Megan Arnett

Email: marnett@siue.edu

Class Details: Online only, via Blackboard from December 16, 2019 – January 5, 2019

Office Location: PH 1229

Office Hours: *Plan to communicate with me via email but if you would like to see me in my office, I will be happy to meet with you in person when the university is opened; please make an appointment in advance.*

Required Textbook

Eglitis, Daina S. and Chambliss, William J. (2019) *Discover Sociology: Core Concepts* (lease at Textbook Services)

You'll find additional readings on Blackboard under the "Course Materials" tab.

Course Description:

The course is a general survey of the discipline of sociology. Reading/essays, discussions, and critical thinking activities will familiarize students with the theories, methods and concepts of sociological analysis. In addition to introducing students to the basic concepts and theories that sociologists use to explain the social world and social interaction, the course will encourage students to develop the skills necessary to understand our social world and to ask sociologically meaningful questions about it. Because of the online nature of the course, our class will be writing intensive. Writing takes place frequently, formally and informally. Our class is online where interaction between students and the instructor takes place via Blackboard (Bb). All work is to be submitted on Blackboard.

What is Sociology?¹

Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organizations, and societies, and how people interact within these contexts... The field also offers a range of research techniques that can be applied to virtually any aspect of social life: street crime and delinquency, corporate downsizing, how people express emotions, welfare or education reform, how families differ and flourish, or problems of peace and war. Because sociology addresses the most challenging issues of our time, it is a rapidly expanding field whose potential is increasingly tapped by those who craft social policies and create social programs. Sociologists understand social inequality, patterns of behavior, forces for social change and resistance, and how social systems work. Sociology courses are valuable for any student entering disciplines related to human services, communications, management, business, health services, criminal justice, education, anthropology, psychology, history and philosophy. Sociologists are employed in the following areas: communications, marketing, business, management, government, military, research institutions, criminal justice, teaching, law, social work, education and journalism.

What is the central insight that one can draw from an Introduction to Sociology course?

Perhaps the central insight of sociology is that the root of human experience is not in individual action but in the social structures and opportunities that both constrain and enable individual action. In a nutshell, sociologists start not with the individual but with social conditions. Therefore, this course will enhance your ability to understand how culture and history shape human behavior and character. But because most of us believe that we are who we are merely as a result of individual actions, sociology can be a challenging discipline. Clearly, I think that the challenge is well worth the reward of deeper understanding of human social life.

¹ Statement prepared by the American Sociological Association. ASA has given permission for this statement to be used.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce major sociological perspectives, concepts and methods.
- Increase awareness regarding how social relationships influence people's attitudes and behavior.
- Enhance development of critical thinking skills.
- Provide the intellectual foundation for taking more advanced courses in Sociology.
- Explore social diversity and note its importance in social organization.
- Promote the idea that writing is a way to learn.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, students who 1) use the Blackboard (Bb) website, 2) read the textbook and other reading assignments, 3) take notes on reading, 4) engage in online discussions and 4) fulfill all course requirements, will be able to do the following:

- Ask sociological meaningful questions about their own lives.
- Develop an awareness of the structure of society.
- Compare and contrast theoretical perspectives on the nature of society.
- Analyze the dynamics of social inequalities among groups.
- Grasp the importance of tolerance and diversity.

Teaching Style

Our course requires much reading and writing. Students will be expected to come to online discussion prepared. Prepared means that the student has: a) completed all assigned readings, b) given thought to those readings, c) prepared written responses to discussion questions, and, d) formulated comments about what they found interesting, confusing, or unclear. The success of this class is based on student cooperation, enthusiasm, and a willingness to participate fully on Bb. Although we will not be physically meeting, I do hold my web-based students to the same deadlines as my in-class students. Assignments are due as stated on the syllabus. See Course Policies (below) for my policy with regard to late work. It is helpful to begin the course with clear expectations:

What you can expect from me: **1. A sincere effort to help you learn the course material.** I intend to spend enough time and effort in class preparation to make the material understandable and interesting. **2. Accessibility.** I will be available to you in the online environment and will answer your messages within 24-48 hours via email. **3. Fairness.** Your grade will be based upon what you have learned. It will neither be based upon any purely personal consideration nor by whether you and I agree about an issue.

What I expect from you: **1. A sincere effort to learn the course material.** **2. Careful and complete reading of the assignments in a timely manner.** **3. Regular use of the class Blackboard site.** Please use email and/or the discussion board if you have questions. This structure allows me to communicate with the class in an organized way.

What we can expect from each other: Respect and courtesy. Just as I will respect you, I expect you to respect and to be courteous to other students and to me. Please address me as Professor Arnett. My preferred pronouns: she/her/hers.

Course Policies:

1. If you have a condition (learning disability, etc) or circumstance (ill child, etc) that may result in difficulty in completing assignments fully and on time, **contact me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to avoid any potential problems.** We only have three short weeks together, let's avoid issues.
2. Students must **come into our web-based class prepared** to learn. Preparation includes completion of work on time.
3. Students must honor the course schedule (Course Calendar at the end of the syllabus) and deadlines. Some assignments (Intro Letter, Checklist, Worksheets, and the Semester Paper) submitted after the deadline will earn a **20% deduction for each day (24 hour period) it's late, beginning at the date/time they are due***.
4. **There are NO make-up or late discussions*.**
5. **There are NO make-up or late quizzes*.**
6. **There are NO make-up or late essays*.**
7. *** Make-up Work:** You may make-up assignments and/or avoid deductions for late work **ONLY if you have legitimate documentation.** For example, a note from the doctor stating you were ill on or near such date. A note from your mom will NOT be accepted.
8. Students will demonstrate **ethical behavior** (netiquette) and use appropriate language in discussions, which includes a respectful tone when responding to others' work and opinions. Students must respect each other, online bullying or disrespect of any kind is NOT tolerated and will result in disciplinary actions.
9. **All work will be submitted electronically through Blackboard, NOT via email attachments. All assignments should be written at the expected college level** and most assignments are submitted in Microsoft Word. Although our course isn't English 101, if the writing contains multiple severe errors, points will be deducted. Please use the Writing Center in the Student Success Center if you need help, especially for citations.
10. There is **no "extra" credit** in our course. If you work hard throughout the semester, this won't be in issue.

Course Requirements

Introductory Discussion

I think it's important to try to get to know my students a little each semester. Through my experience, I've learned that teaching online doesn't naturally offer the opportunities to get acquainted like a face-to-face classroom. In this online class, I'm asking for you to share information about yourself with me and your classmates. Under the "Discussions" tab on Bb, you'll see I've written an Introduction to you all and I've asked you to do the same. Share to the extent of your comfort. This assignment is worth up to **10 points.** Due by 11:59pm on Monday, 12/16.

I am Ready Checklist

It's essential that everyone is prepared for online learning this semester as we haven't got much time to "catch-up" or "learn Blackboard" when our time together is concluded in a mere 3 weeks. On Blackboard, under "Assignments" I've attached a Microsoft Word document with a checklist for you to complete. You're expected to know how to do every technological task on the checklist and therefore, do not submit your checklist until you can answer "yes" to all of the items on the list. If you submit a completed I am Ready Checklist on Bb under "Assignments" by 11:59pm on Monday, 12/16, you can earn up to **10 points.**

Essays (3 of the 9)

With each chapter, you have the opportunity to write an essay. These essay assignments are a good way for students to improve/maintain professional writing skills. Throughout the semester, we will have nine essays, but you choose which three you'd like to write – based on your schedule or interest. Each essay is worth **twenty-five points each** for a **total of 75 points.** The purpose is to demonstrate that you have read (show me what you know). Please provide thorough and thoughtful responses to the proposed questions. You can find these questions on Blackboard under "Assignments." The questions that correlate with each chapter will be available to you before they are due, thus you can work around your schedule. It is possible for students to earn

between 0 and 25 points depending on the quality of the response. I suggest you wait for my feedback on the first submission before turning in another, to ensure you're on the right track. These essays are submitted on Bb under "Assignments". See the course calendar and Bb for the due dates; all essays are due by 11:59pm on said due dates. Do NOT use the internet to construct these assignments, if you do you will lose significant points. These assignments are based on the assigned readings for class. Be sure to cite the text, especially when quoting or reporting statistics, not doing so will result in loss of points. NO MAKE-UP OR LATE ESSAYS ACCEPTED (HENCE, OPTIONAL) thus, I do not recommend waiting to do the last three.

Quizzes (8 of 9)

Our quizzes cover information in the chapters. There is a quiz for each corresponding chapter. The quizzes take place on Bb under "Quizzes". These quizzes will be available to you a few days before they're due. See the Course Calendar at the bottom of your syllabus and on Bb under "Quizzes" for due dates; all quizzes are due by 11:59pm on said due dates. Be sure to take the quizzes after you've read and had time to chance to study. These online quizzes are technically "open-book/open-note," but you will have only 10 minutes to complete these ten-question quizzes. The format for the quizzes is multiple-choice, true/false questions, and some fill-in-the-blank - each question is worth two points. THERE ARE NO LATE QUIZZES AND THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS. I will, however, drop one lowest quiz score for each student at the end of the semester. Thus of the **9** total Quizzes, worth **twenty points each**, your total score will be from **8 quizzes and thus worth a total of 160 points**. I strongly advise you NOT TAKE A QUIZ FROM YOUR SMART PHONE; you will need a reliable Internet connection and device to avoid technological issues.

Worksheets (5 of the 6)

While you only have one textbook, I've provided additional readings the supplement the chapters we will be reading for the course. These readings are available on Blackboard under "Course Materials" which is also where you submit your worksheets. Here you will see a PDF of the reading scheduled along with a Microsoft Word document/worksheet. Most of the worksheets are based upon one reading per chapter. The worksheets help you learn and understand what you read and you're responsible for uploading your completed worksheets by 11:59pm on said due dates (in the Course Calendar at the end of the syllabus and on Bb under "Course Materials"). There are six worksheets, but I will drop the lowest score thus they are worth **10 points each for up to a total of 50 points this semester**. LATE WORKSHEETS ACCEPTED, but 20% deduction per 24 hour course policy on late work applies; please see the course policy on late work under Course Policies section (above) of the syllabus.

Discussions (5 of the 6)

Discussions on Blackboard are an excellent learning aid, students learn a great deal from conversations with each other. It is also beneficial as students can participate in discussions about the course online. The discussion entries are expected to be of high quality and it is essential you take them seriously. The assignments for the Bb discussions will be diverse and it is important that you follow the instructions for each assignment. You will find details for each requirement under "Discussions" on Blackboard. There will be a total of six discussions this semester, each are worth thirty points, you choose which five in which to engage, for a **total of 150 points**. It is important for you to remain academic while discussing the topics, high quality is expected. Your complete participation in the Discussions are due by 11:59pm on the stated dates in our Course Calendar and on Bb under "Discussions". NO LATE OR MAKE-UP DISCUSSIONS ACCEPTED.

Tips for Successful Discussion Board Entries:

- 1) Be sure your entries are academic. Avoid limiting your reply to "I agree/disagree" or expect points to be deducted. If you choose to input your opinion, connect it to the reading and/or an example that pertains to the topic.
- 2) When in doubt, cite. If a citation is required (quoting the text or another source) then you MUST cite or points will be lost. It is important NOT to plagiarize on the discussion board.
- 3) The discussions must be like a group conversation; therefore, more than one entry is required, or points will be deducted.
- 4) Students who spend a minimum amount of time in discussions will not receive full credit compared to your classmates who log in several times and participate with multiple entries.
- 5) Avoid casual language. Points will be deducted for "texting lingo" and other errors; remember, this is an academic atmosphere. Avoid "i," "u," "IDK," "til," etc. Watch for spelling errors to avoid losing points too.

Semester Paper

At the end of each semester it's important to have an assignment that reveals the cumulative knowledge gained from the course. Sometimes your gained-knowledge is measured by a final exam, in our online class, you'll be asked to write a paper. The final paper is about 4 double-spaced pages, and worth up to **75 points**. You're required to use at least three sources: 1) your textbook and 2) & 3) at least TWO additional creditable sources (scholarly journal articles (in EBSCO and/or JSTOR...), NPR, New York Times, etc.) I've found

that students enjoy autonomy and thus the topic of your paper is up to you, within a few given parameters. Think about a topic you've enjoyed pertaining to info from: the chapter on culture (Ch 3), Socialization (Ch 4), deviance (Ch 6), social class (Ch 7), families (Ch 10), race and/or ethnicity (Ch 8), or gender (Ch 9). Chose one or more of these topics we have covered and think about what interested you that you'd like to learn more about. This is your opportunity to take control of your education; did you want to learn more about white-collar crimes? Then look up sources and write a paper about it. Did you wish we'd cover more about the gender pay gap? Then read additional information and write a paper about it. In other words, think of a topic we at least semi-covered and go more in depth. If you want to ask me to "approve" your topic, to know you're on the right track, I'm happy to discuss it with you. I suggest using your textbook as your guide or starting point and then consult (at least two) additional sources to explore the topic in greater depth. In your paper, please include why you chose your topic in your introductory paragraph. Include at least two concepts from the textbook upon which your topic is based and 1) define it using the textbook definition, and 2) apply it throughout your paper (by providing examples from "real life" based upon the additional sources you find). Use your sociological imagination! Please BOLD your 2+ concepts so we are both clear which you are applying. Be sure to cite throughout and in a works cited. You're asked to submit your paper under the "Assignments" tab on Bb via Turnitin by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 4th. Turnitin will allow you to submit only one draft, so make sure you're done editing and your works cited page is included before submitting your work.

Academic Integrity

According to SIUE's university policy, plagiarism is a serious violation of academic dishonesty. **Plagiarism refers to the act of representing someone else's work as your own.** Such offenses include copying from a book, article, the Internet, or a paper written by anyone other than yourself. When you use someone else's work, be sure to cite the reference and page numbers. Also, use quotation marks where appropriated. *If you are unsure what constitutes as plagiarism, either see me, contact the Writing Center, or for further information:* <http://www.siu.edu/policies/1q5.shtml>

Grading

A >90% B 80-89% C 70-79% D 60-69% F <60%

Introduction Letter	10
I am Ready Checklist	10
Essays (3)	75
Quizzes (8)	160
Worksheets (5)	50
Discussions (5)	150
Final Semester Paper	75
	530

For more information on SIUE grading policies, go to <http://www.siu.edu/policies/1j1.shtml>.

How to Succeed in This Class

Successful students will be those who do the following:

- ✓ PRINT THE SYLLABUS. It is your guide to the class. Refer to it often.
- ✓ This course takes place in 3 short weeks, but carries the content of a 16-week 3-credit hour course, be prepared to work to keep up.
- ✓ Check Blackboard every day, including the weekends. The exceptions being the two legal holidays: 12/25 and 1/1. Plan to spend at least 16 hours **online** for this class each week. This is the amount of time that we would spend in class if we were meeting face-to-face. Of course, you will spend additional hours off-line reading, writing, etc.
- ✓ Complete each assigned reading/assignment early enough to allow time to thoughtfully formulate answers to questions posted in the Bb Discussions and before officially submitting your work.
- ✓ **Participate in discussions at least a few days before** the deadline. Engage with other students within discussions on **DIFFERENT days** a week.

- ✓ Write clearly and with few spelling or grammatical errors. Use the spell check option.
- ✓ Only final drafts are to be submitted to Turnitin via Bb, **Turnitin will only allow students to submit work once**, therefore, only submit your work once it's been edited.
- ✓ Complete all assignments by the deadlines. Some coursework will be docked 20% for each 24 hour time period beginning immediately after the 11:59pm deadline. Please see Course Policies (above) for more details.
 - The rare exception: if the Blackboard system happens to be "down" when an assignment is due (the college will inform me of such an event and it has not happened for over a year) then please email it to me as an attachment. The attachment will not substitute for the completed assignment, but it will show that you met the deadline. Please submit assignment in Blackboard once the system comes back online.
- ✓ Practice writing to me, like you would with your professional employer.
- ✓ Follow all instructions in the syllabus carefully.
- ✓ **Note: the University Campus will be closed from 12/24/18-1/2/19, which is the majority of our semester.**
- ✓ **All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m.**, avoid waiting until minutes before the deadline to submit/participate.

Successful studying tips I suggest accessing a beneficial web site: <http://www.how-to-study.com/> . The two major keys to success in college are so basic that they are often overlooked. Keep up with your reading and work. In online learning, you're even more responsible to engage in class. University courses are designed with the expectation that for each hour you spend in the classroom, you will spend two to three hours outside of the classroom reading, thinking, studying, and working on assignments. Reading course material is not like reading a novel for entertainment. You should be reading for understanding. This implies that not only do you read for information, but you become an active rather than a passive reader, and think about what you are reading until it becomes clear. You may need to look up unfamiliar terms or read something several times and take notes. It's important too that our minds be open and ready to receive and think about new ideas. **Your education is your responsibility.**

Resources on Campus

- Counseling Services: (618) 650-2197 <https://www.siu.edu/counseling/>
- Lovejoy Library is an excellent resource for academic journals and DVD/videos. <http://www.siu.edu/lovejoylibrary/>
- Career Development Center (CDC) can aid you in your professionalization (618) 650-3708 .
<http://www.siu.edu/careerdevelopmentcenter/students/index.shtml>

For Blackboard Assistance go to Internet Technology Services. You can reach them via email: help@siue.edu or by phone: 618-650-5500. They're located in the basement of Lovejoy Library. Website: <http://www.siu.edu/its/>

*Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with **Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS)** and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270. You can also reach the office by e-mail at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling 618.650.3726. For more information on policies, procedures, or necessary forms, please visit the ACCESS website at www.siu.edu/access.*