

SOC.100: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Spring 2012

PH1-140 (11:00 - 12:15 p.m.) Tues-Thur

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Tuesday: 12:30-1:30 and 4:25-6:25 p.m.

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TEXT (required): **SOCIOLOGY: A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH**, 11th Ed. (James M. Henslin)
(**Second** Custom paperback edition - Package includes **MySocLab**)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course has three basic and related major goals:

- (1) To demonstrate the ways and extent to which culture and your inclusion and participation in various social categories and formal and informal groups within society lead to the "structuring" of your behavior. By "structuring" I mean that your behavior often is not unique and idiosyncratic, but structurally similar to that of other occupants of the social categories and groups to which you belong. Obviously this structuring is characteristic of all societies, and we will investigate the comparative effects of this process in different cultures.
- (2) To develop your appreciation and application of:
 - (a) The perspective and procedures sociologists use in their attempts to describe and account for structured behavior.
 - (b) The sociological concepts, theories and findings relevant to an understanding of the processes and effects of interaction at various "levels" (e.g., the dyadic to the societal).
- (3) To develop your ability to:
 - (a) Apply the sociological perspective to the analysis of everyday life.
 - (b) Think critically and analytically about social interaction and the structuring of social behavior in modern societies.

TEACHING/LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

In any class I teach I would like to create an atmosphere which allows the student to learn and retain as much of the course content and perspective as possible. I personally feel that such an atmosphere is more likely when instructor/student interaction is as informal and nonthreatening as we can make it and still meet the basic requirements I have set for the course. I also invite you to ask questions in class and/or discuss the course content and its practical implications for your life whenever else we have the opportunity.

CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING REQUIREMENTS

There will be three exams in the course, and will cover materials dealt with in the text, lectures, and class discussion. Although all three exams will be objective type questions, they will require a demonstration of reflective, analytical, and critical thinking skills. Simple definitions and concept recognition will not be enough to get a good grade. Exam #1 will be scheduled for week five, and Exam #2 scheduled for week 10. The third exam will be your final exam scheduled during finals week.

You will also have the opportunity to write a final extra credit paper that applies these same critical thinking skills in discussing a range of major sociological topics you have found to be most useful in understanding your experience as a member of society.

I will provide a detailed review before each exam, and separate format sheets for the written assignment. A cumulative summary of your assignment scores will be provided after exam so you know where you stand in the course at that point.

Note: Any papers you submit in the class should be typed, double-spaced, and written at a level of competence that demonstrates "college level writing skills." The written assignments are designed to fulfill the Upper Division General Education Interdisciplinary Courses requirement stating that such courses "...will integrate into the course a substantial writing component" which demonstrates college-level writing skills and are evaluated "...not only on content but also on organized coherence and integration of disciplinary perspectives."

The major basis for your grade in the course will be your performance on the 3 exams given during the semester. However, there will be one other major source of points. Throughout the course we will have discussion questions or exercises based on the text and/or lecture material. There will be about 18 of these, with satisfactory completion of each worth 5 points. NOTE: The purpose of the exercises is to encourage you to keep up with your reading and allow you to share and compare your information, observations, and analysis of topic areas and their application with others in the class. Although some make-ups of exercises will be permitted, they are strongly discouraged because they defeat both aspects of their basic purpose.

Your final grade will depend on your ranking on a overall cumulative distribution of points for all course requirements. However, so you will know where you stand at any particular point in the course, I will work up a running cumulative distribution of scores after each exam. Cut points for letter grades are:

A=90-100% B=80-89% C=65-79% D=50-64% F=49% and below

EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE

The point breakdown of course assignments is as follows:

Exam #1	100 points (25.6%)
Exam #2	100 points (25.6%)
Final Exam	100 points (25.6%)
Exercises	90 points (23.2%)

You will not be graded on attendance per se. But since lectures, class discussions, and handouts distributed during class will be an integral part of the course, it is your responsibility to arrange to obtain notes and course-related materials and information for any class you have to miss. In this regard, it would be a very good idea to get to know at least one or two other students in the class and exchange phone numbers so you will know what information or materials you will be responsible for if you are absent.

MAKE-UP POLICY

Because I realize that serious and unforeseen problems may prevent a student from attending a class during which we have an exercise or exam, make-ups will be allowed for what I consider to be valid reasons. The make-up policy is as follows:

- (1) **Exercises** - Should be made up no later than the beginning of the second session after they were originally due. No more than four exercises can be made up for full credit.
- (2) **Exams** - Arranging for individual make-up exams causes extra problems for everyone involved, and will be allowed only for very good reasons. However, if you absolutely cannot take the exam on the day scheduled, you should let me (not the Sociology Department secretary) know in advance (my home number is listed on the front page of this syllabus), and we will arrange a time for you to take a make-up. Exams should be made up by the first class session after the scheduled date of the exam. Given the time constraints of the Final Exam scheduling, it won't be possible to arrange a make-up that would allow your grade to be submitted with the regular grade roster. However, if you have an emergency that would fall within the University's acceptable reasons for assigning an "incomplete" for the course, we can discuss that option. Again, you must contact me in advance to make these arrangements.

PLAGIARISM AND COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Plagiarism - Any assignments you turn in for this class should be the products of your own academic efforts. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and should not happen - ever. If you have any question about what constitutes plagiarism, see the explanation at <http://www.csulb.edu/library/subj/plagiarism/> . Also see the CSULB policy on plagiarism and cheating in the online catalog.

Withdrawal - Sometimes emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances make it necessary for you to withdraw from a course. If so, make sure you do so in a timely manner that will be the least costly to you and your academic career. Check this semester's deadlines for two particularly important deadlines: (1) the deadline to drop without receiving a "W" for the course; and the deadline to drop without the Dean's permission. Also see the full description of CSULB withdrawal policy in the online catalog.

Specific week-by-week reading assignments will be distributed separately for each exam.