

**Introduction to Sociology**  
**Online Course**  
SOC 2303:001  
**Spring 2020**

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**Welcome to Introduction to Sociology!**

The essence of sociology is the study of human relationships and institutions. In this introductory course, we will survey how humans create their societies, and how society shapes individuals, groups and institutions. Through readings and research, we will analyze power, culture and agency. We will examine the social categories of race, gender, class and citizen; and concepts like deviancy, norms

and performance. This course will introduce sociological inquiry and research methods. And we will ask how those things that are considered natural or “inevitable” are socially constructed and permeable to change.

**Course Objectives and Skills**

- Acquisition of a sociological perspective on human society: individuals, groups and states.

Assessment: exams, writing responses, original research projects

- Development of a sociological imagination and critical analysis of data, theory and texts

Assessment: exams, writing responses, original research projects

- Acquisition of research skills:
  - Primary research sources
  - Application of social theory
  - Presentation of original research

Assessment: exams, writing responses, original research projects

- Analyze meta queries: What is considered “natural” and what is socially constructed? If social life is constructed, what is our responsibility in changing injustices in society? How do we determine agency in society? What is social power?

**Special Online Introduction**

Welcome to the online-based offering of this course. Blackboard and email are going to be our virtual class spaces, and **communication is vital** for you to get the most out of this course!

I will be available to meet via Skype, phone, email or in person (SRSU-Alpine) by appointment. I am happy to meet with you or discuss an idea, deadline, etc.

**You can always email me for clarification.** Part of the beauty of an online delivery is flexibility of time and space. One of the challenges is doing the work independently---without the verbal exchange between professor and student, and colleagues. It is your responsibility to organize your time and contact me when you don't understand a concept or are unclear on deadlines, etc.

**For each week, the most effective way to do this class is:**

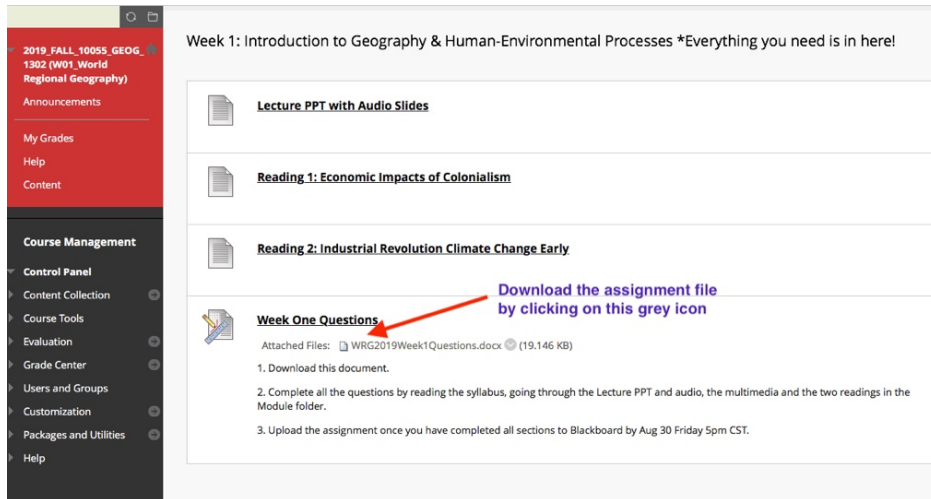
1. **Start by going through the lecture PPT for that topic area.** Use the red lined comments and notes under the slides to help elaborate on the concepts. There are multi-media links on the PPT to help expand your understanding of the topics. Go to each link, some content will be included on the weekly questions and exams.
2. **Read the required readings** (the listed chapters in Giddens, et al. and the additional readings for that week in the Blackboard folder for that week).
3. **Watch the films and/or multimedia links pertaining to that week's topic.**
4. **Answer and upload that week's reading questions to Blackboard site (directions follow).** You have until Friday every week by 5pm CST.
5. \*If it is an exam week, you will have a set amount of time to do that exam on Blackboard. Be sure to secure a quiet space and time, working internet access and enough time prior to the exam deadline. In other words, don't wait until 2 hours before the exam closes online. I will email the class when the Exam is available, how long it will be available and the time to complete the exam. I recommend using an internet server other than Explorer which seems to have the most issues. ***You can always communicate with me via email, call the BASS office or use the online support if you run into issues.***
6. \*\*If it is an original research project deadline week, upload that assignment by Fri 5pm CST.

**How to start on Blackboard:** Go to our course page. You will see the welcome announcement and on the **left side** of your screen, a few tabs including "Content" and "My Grades/Grade Center." Click on "Content" to see all 16 weeks of content folders. I will be posting your grades on Blackboard, after I have reviewed your assignments. This allows you to do a self-audit of your progress towards your final grade. You will also be taking your exams on Blackboard. They will be posted on the "Content" page and timed once you begin. \*\*I highly recommend using **Chrome** as your browser (**Safari** tends to shut down during an exam or have trouble loading attachments).

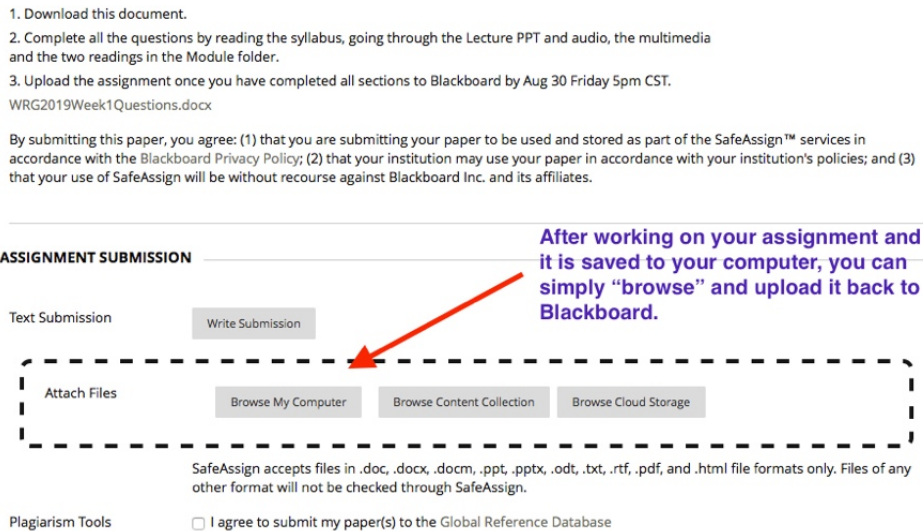
**Downloading and Uploading Assignments to Blackboard.** If you have never uploaded assignments to Blackboard, here is a helpful site:

<https://wiki.umbc.edu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=23658615>

- A. **Downloading Assignments:** In the Module folder for that week (on the "Content page) you will see the Assignments. You download the document, do the work and upload back on to Blackboard. Below is a screenshot from Module folder to see how and where to download the assignment file:



**Uploading Assignments:** After you have worked on your assignment and saved it to your computer, simply click the Assignment title and “browse your computer” for the file. Upload.



**Advice:** Use **Chrome** as your browser for download, uploading and taking exams. And do not wait until the last minute. Computers and technical issues exist, give yourself enough time to deal with problems.

### Class Policy

Sociology is a dynamic discipline and is based on controversial topics—that is human society! We will look at race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, crime, politics, religion, revolution and all the topics your grandmother told you not to talk about in order to make new friends. We won’t always agree and that is what makes this a critical thinking course. We owe each other and the scholars we read, basic respect of listening and articulating diverse viewpoints. For the online course, this is essential in your reading, writing and openness to new ideas.

## The Americans with Disabilities Act

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832, Telephone Number 432-837-8203.

## Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated at any level. Do not copy and paste from each other, the text or online sources in your writing or exams. I have seen this done and am quick to deal with it--and you are cheating yourself from the learning experience. These assignments are carefully constructed to help you in the professional world, where cheating can get you fired. Any plagiarism will result an immediate zero and conference with professor on course withdrawal.

## Textbook

The text is available for purchase at the Sul Ross State University Bookstore or online. Copies are as cheap as \$15 and can be rented online, and there is a copy in the SRSU library. Obtain the text immediately:

***Introduction to Sociology* by Giddens, Duneuer, Appelbaum and Carr. W.W. Norton & Co., 10<sup>th</sup> Ed., 2016.**

## Additional Readings

In addition to the textbook, this course will survey contributions to sociological thought. These readings will allow us to dig deeper in the theories, methods and/or relevant discussions in sociology. All readings are fair game for exams and quizzes, and the content should be utilized in student essays and group projects. The readings are listed on the schedule and uploaded to the class site on Blackboard.

## Grading and Assignments

### Grading Scale

600-660	A
550-599	B
500-549	C
450-499	D
0-449	F



- 1. Syllabus Agreement (10 points):** In the first week folder on Blackboard course page "Content", there is a word document to complete and submit by Friday, 5pm CST of the first week of the semester. This is a great way to connect with the professor and start off with 10 points. Download, complete, save a copy and upload to Blackboard.
- 2. Reading Questions (10 points each, 100 points total):** Answers to the weekly reading questions will be **due in writing on Friday 5pm CST of the designated week, uploaded to Blackboard.** Answers should be complete sentences and fully answer the question, usually 2-5 sentences. These questions will be a way for you to synthesize and stay on top of

the readings, as well prepare for upcoming exams and use ideas for your final project. Keep organized by using your syllabus schedule.

3. **Multimedia Guides (25 points each, 100 points total):** There are 4 multimedia viewing guides to fill out as you watch for those weeks ('Groups/Organizations', 'Gender', 'Ethnicity', and 'Family' weeks). I may add more for extra point accumulation, at my discretion. **The guides will be included in that week's folder and should be uploaded to Blackboard by Friday 5pm CST with the RQ.** We have a course Amazon website that you can log into to view the film, the instructions will be on the film guides. **After viewing, be sure to LOG OUT!**
4. **Exams (100 points each, 300\* points total; lowest test score dropped):** There will be a total of four exams offered in this course. The lowest grade of the four exams will be dropped from your final grade. You can also invest on maximum points on the first three in order to drop the final. It's a nice way to reward yourself for a semester of hard work, eliminating the last exam. **(Yes, this means if you score three As on the first three exams, you are exempt from the final!)** The exams will be available on Blackboard for a specific amount of time for that week. I will post the testing times for that week---you will have at least a 48-hour range in which to take the exam.
5. **Original Research Project and Report (150 points):** You will design an original research project, asking a **sociological** question. Using Ch 2 on Sociological Research Methods and the ASA Code of Ethics as your guide, you will compose a research question, conduct background research and devise either a survey, interviews, experiment or archival research project. At the end of the course, you will write up your report with the following components:
  1. Hypothesis/Research Question- what is your project about, what are you trying to explain
  2. Background Literature- cite at least 3 articles/sources that situate your project
  3. Details of research project-acquisition, interviews, experiment, etc.; location, number of participants, challenges, etc.
  4. Results-what did you find out?
  5. Analysis- what does your research mean---link this back to your question and background literature
  6. Works Cited Page in APA Format.

Length should be 6-8 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, using in-text citations and a works cited page in APA format. An online source for APA formatting is free from Purdue University at this website: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

#### **Iterative components of the original research paper**

- 1) **Fri. Feb. 21, 5pm CST: 30 Points-** Research Question, Methods and Three Background Literature Sources
- 2) **Fri. Mar. 20, 5pm CST: 20 Points-** Data Collection Progress Report (How is data collection going? What do you have so far?)
- 3) **Fri. Apr 24, 5pm CST: 100 points-** Final Paper Due

## Original Research Project Guide for Web-Based Students:

Using the different methods detailed in Week 2, you will compose a research question and select a method for data collection. You can use any methods (interviews, survey, ethnography, historical archives, media data), simply pick a method that will help you support your research question. And think about how each method has pros and cons (detailed in Ch 2 Giddens and that week's PPT).

You may select any topic connected to the areas of study in this course: groups and individuals, socialization, power and conformity, health and sexuality, religion, education, families, etc. Take a general topic area from our book and then look for angle that interests YOU and gives you an idea to do some original investigation---from your dorm, your workplace, your social life, or archival records. The objective is for you to compose an original question and collect NEW data.

For example, you can compare the benefits and challenges of an online course to a live action classroom. To do this, you could do a survey of other students and their thoughts to support your question. Or you could do an ethnography on your own experience by keeping a journal of how you feel every week with the online course. You would then analyze what this data says in response to your question and the background literature you detail giving your final report a full discussion from question, to place in existing research, to your new data, to how you read the data and your conclusions.

You support your argument with peer reviewed articles; and use a search engine like the SRSU Library or Google Scholar to find other projects that either asked similar questions or used similar methods to make their argument. You may include sources from the additional readings throughout the course. For example, if you want to extend the argument that schools are more focused on discipline than knowledge, you could use the Gatto reading in the Education week and add two more sources from your own research.

**Note: Do not submit a paper from another course. Do write a paper from a sociological basis, using our concepts and theories. You should show me your comprehension of how a sociological analysis operates. \*\*I will immediately flag a psychology, criminal justice or other disciplinary paper.**

### Schedule

\*subject to change at discretion of instructor

#### **Jan 13/Week 1: Introduction to Sociology**

Readings:

- A) Syllabus;
- B) Giddens, et al. Ch 1

#### **Fri: Syllabus Agreement Due 5pm CST Uploaded to Blackboard**

*\*This is the reading assignment but you will not have to answer questions for Ch 1 until week 2, giving you more time for textbook acquisition.*

#### **Jan 20/Week 2: Sociological Research**

Reading:

- A) Giddens, et al. Ch2;
- B) ASA Code of Ethics;



C) Pew Millennial Research

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #1 Due 5pm CST Uploaded to Blackboard**

*\*This reading question set will include chapters 1-2 from textbook.*

### **Jan 27/Week 3: Culture, Society and Socialization**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 3 AND Ch 4;

B) NPR Article on “Girls and Brilliance”

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #2 Due 5pm CST**

### **Feb 3/Week 4: Groups, Networks, and Organizations**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 6;

B) “Opinions and Social Pressure” (Asch)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #3 Due 5pm CST**

**Fri: MM Guide on *12 Angry Men* Due 5pm CST**

### **Feb 10/Week 5: Conformity, Deviance and Crime**

**Test 1 Posted**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 7;

B) “Lucifer Effect” (Zimbardo) (*Trigger warning: details of Abu Ghraib war crimes*)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #4 Due**

### **Feb 17/Week 6: Stratification, Class, and Inequality**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 8;

B) “Fetishism of Commodities” (Marx);

C) Animated Film “Poor Us” (no separate MM guide, just questions on film part of week questions)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #5 Due 5pm CST**

**Fri: Research Question, Methods and 3 Peer Reviewed Journal Articles Due 5pm CST**

### **Feb 24/Week 7: Gender Inequality**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 10;

B) “Born this Way” (Pang);

C) “Dear Ijeawele” (Adichie)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #6 Due 5pm CST**

**Fri: MM on “We Should All Be Feminists” (with Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche)**

### **Mar 2/Week 8: Ethnicity and Race**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 11;

B) “Race as Biology is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem is Real” (Smedley and Smedley);

C) “Why are people still racist?” (Wan and Kaplan);

D) “People who are different are not the problem in America” (Lankford and Scott)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #7 Due 5pm CST**

**Fri: MM Guide on “Mixed Race America and the Future of Health” (with Dr. Karen Tabb Dina) Due 5pm CST**

**Mar 9-13/Week 9: Spring Break**

**Mar 16/Week 10: The Sociology of the Body: Health, Illness, and Sexuality**

**Test 2 Posted**

Readings: Giddens, et al. Ch 18

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #8 Due 5pm CST**

**Fri: Data Collection Progress Report Due 5pm CST**

**Mar 23/Week 11: Government, Political Power and Social Movements**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 13;

B) “Military-Industrial Complex” (Eisenhower);

C) “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (King)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #9 Due 5pm CST**

**Mar 30/Week 12: Families and Intimate Relationships**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 15;

B) “The Born Identity: Does Birth Order Play a Part in Who We Are?” (Wilson)

Film: *Surfwise: The Amazing True Odyssey of the Paskowitz Family*

**Fri: MM on *Surfwise* Due 5pm CST**

*\*No additional questions due this week, only the MM guide.*

**Apr 6/Week 13: Education**

Readings:

A) Giddens, et al. Ch 16;

B) “Against School” (Gatto)

**Fri: Reading Question Answers #10 Due 5pm CST**

**Apr 13/Week 14: Religion**

**Test 3 Posted**

A) Readings: Giddens, et al. Ch 17;

B) “Islam in America”;

C) “How Much Discrimination Do Muslims Face in America?” (Green), with video “Americans See Discrimination in Radically Different Ways”;

D) “U.S. Muslims raise more than \$120,000 for families of Pittsburgh shooting victims” (Sherwood)

**Fri: BONUS Reading Question Answers Due 5pm CST**

**Apr: 20/Week 15:**

**Fri: Final Paper Due 5pm CST**

**Apr 27/Week 16: Final Review**

**May 4/Finals Week: Final TBA**