



Sociology 1301.331 IN
Introduction to Sociology
Fall 2023
Online Course

Instructor: Will Bryerton, Ph.D. wbryerton@com.edu 409.933.8954 (office)

Instructor Access, Student Hours, and Location

Your success in this class is important to me and I am happy to answer questions and offer guidance toward your improved performance in the course. The best way to contact me is via e-mail at wbryerton@com.edu. Generally speaking, you can expect a response from me within a few hours as long as your e-mail is sent during standard business hours (9 am - 5 pm on weekdays). E-mails sent outside of these hours will still be tended to but may result in a longer response time.

My student hours (also known as “office hours”) for this class are from 11:00 am until noon on Tuesday and from 2:30 to 3:30 pm on Thursday in room A-223 of the Learning Resource Center. If you’d like to meet at a time outside of these hours or virtually, please send an e-mail stating when you would like to meet. If there is an urgent concern, you may call or text me at (847) 525-2283.

Textbook

Society in Focus: An Introduction to Sociology, 9th Edition, by William E. Thompson, Hickey, Joseph V., and Thompson, Mica L. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. (ISBN-13: 978-1538116227)

Course Description

This class examines the scientific study of human society, including ways in which groups, social institutions, and individuals affect each other. Causes of social stability and social change are explored through the application of various theoretical perspectives, key concepts, and related research methods of sociology. Analysis of social issues in their institutional context may include topics such as social stratification, gender, race/ ethnicity, and deviance.

As an online course, all course material – i.e., lectures, readings, activities, and assessments – will be accessible on D2L Brightspace (com.brightspace.com).

Course requirements

- 10 quizzes: Students will take quizzes that assess comprehension of material from the previous week (or, in some quizzes, the previous two weeks). Students may use their

notes and course materials during the quizzes. The quizzes are comprised almost entirely of multiple-choice questions, although true-or-false and matching questions may appear as well.

- 5 response papers: Students will respond to a prompt and write a 1.5 – 2-page (double- or 1.5-spaced) response paper. Each response paper is due on a Friday.

*** Further details, instructions, and due dates for each of these requirements can be found in the Start Here module in D2L Brightspace.

Determination of Course Grade / Grading Formula

Quizzes: 50 points (10 quizzes accounting for 5 points apiece)

Response Papers: 50 points (5 papers accounting for 10 points apiece)

Maximum overall point value: 100

A = 90-100; B = 80-89.9; C = 70-79.9; D = 60-69.9; F = 0-59.9

Syllabus Modifications

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus and course calendar during the course. Should any modifications be made, the instructor will notify students in writing (via an announcement in D2L Brightspace) of the changes.

Late Work and Quiz Make-Ups

Late Response Papers

Students who do not submit a response paper by the deadline (posted in D2L Brightspace) can submit it late for a 50% reduction in points. A *Complete with Deficiencies* paper, for instance, will receive 3.5 points instead of 7. A *Complete* paper will receive 5 points instead of 10. An *incomplete* paper will receive 1 point instead of 2.

Quiz Make-Ups

Quizzes must be completed by the deadline (always 11:59 pm on a Sunday). Late quizzes will only be allowed if there is an unforeseen circumstance beyond the student's control that prevents the completion of the quiz before the deadline. In such instances, the student should e-mail the instructor, explaining the circumstance and requesting to make-up the quiz.

Extra Credit

Opportunities to earn extra credit will be offered throughout the semester. Extra credit opportunities / assignments are optional and may consist of watching a documentary or video clip and contributing to a discussion board or writing a short essay in response to a prompt. Discussion posts for extra credit are due on the date corresponding with the end of the module (i.e., 11:59 pm on the Sunday when the module quiz is due). The due dates of other extra credit opportunities (i.e., the extra credit that does not involve discussion posts) will be posted in D2L

Brightspace. Extra credit assignments submitted after the due date will not be eligible to receive any points. The instructor reserves the right to forestall granting credit extra credit until a student has completed response papers or quizzes that have not been submitted (This is to prevent students from neglecting the course’s required work and using extra credit as a way to “cushion” their grade.)

Attendance Policy

As a fully online course, there are no class meetings that students are required to attend. Even so, regular engagement in D2L Brightspace will be needed in order to master course objectives and stay on schedule with the class modules and required quizzes and assignments. Students who have not submitted either the Start Here Module quiz or the Weeks 1 and 2 quiz before the Wednesday, Sept. 13 Census Date will be dropped from the course.

I recommend logging-in to D2L Brightspace and entering the course daily (at least on weekdays) to check announcements and view upcoming due dates.

Communicating with your instructor

All electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via D2L Brightspace.)

Course Learning Outcomes

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via...
1. Compare and contrast the basic theoretical perspectives of sociology	Critical Thinking Skills (CT)	Weeks 1 and 2 Quiz, and revisited in subsequent quizzes throughout the course
2. Identify the various methodological approaches to the collection and analysis of data in sociology	Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)	Week 15 Quiz
3. Describe key concepts in sociology	Critical Thinking Skills (CT)	All quizzes and response papers
4. Describe the empirical findings in various subfields in sociology	Communication Skills (CS) and Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)	All quizzes and response papers
5. Explain the complex links between individual experiences and broader institutional forces	Social Responsibility (SR)	Response papers on social structure, socialization, education, culture, and inequality
6. Develop, interpret, and express ideas on a SOCI 1301-	Communication Skills (CS) (Writing)	All response papers

related topic through written communication		
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Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on a test / quiz, plagiarizing, stealing or dishonestly accessing the instructor’s materials, and colluding with other students. If you engage in any form of academic dishonesty, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the COM Student Handbook and Office of Student Conduct. Plagiarism, at a minimum, will result in a 0 on the plagiarized assignment.

Student Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please do not hesitate to contact me using the contact information on the first page. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions or believe that I have not addressed the matter fairly, please contact Dr. Shinya Wakao, the Social & Behavioral Sciences Department Chair, at 409.933.8107 and swakao@com.edu.

Course Outline

- Week 1: Start Here Module, An Introduction to Sociology
- Week 2: An Introduction to Sociology (cont.)
- Week 3: Culture
- Week 4: Socialization
- Week 5: Deviance, Crime, and Social Control
- Week 6: Social Structure
- Week 7: Social Structure (Cont.) and Media
- Week 8: Social Stratification
- Week 9: Social Stratification (Cont.)
- Week 10: Race and Ethnicity
- Week 11: Gender, Sex, Sexuality, Marriage, and Family
- Week 12: Gender, Sex, Sexuality, Marriage, and Family (Cont.)
- Week 13: Education
- Week 14: Education (Cont.)
- Week 15: Sociological Research and Religion
- Week 16: Additional Sub-Fields (i.e., Sociology of Government and Politics, the Environment, and Health and Medicine)

***Due dates for response papers and quizzes, as well as corresponding lecture clips and text book readings for each week are listed in the Weekly Agenda in each module in D2L Brightspace.

Incomplete Grades (The “I” Grade)

The Incomplete Grade (“I”) is a temporary grade given when a student has experienced unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control which results in the student being unable to successfully complete the course within the timeframe of the semester.

Per the COM Course Catalog, an “I” may be assigned only when the following conditions are met:

1. No more than 25% of the points possible in the class are still outstanding.
2. The student is passing the course with a 70% or better.

Exceptions to these circumstances can be made at the discretion of the appropriate instructional dean.

It is the responsibility of the student to request an incomplete grade. I will grant such requests if the student meets the two conditions listed above and has submitted all quizzes and response papers through the first 12 weeks of class. If these conditions are met, I will draft an “I Contract Form” to be signed by the student, the instructor (me), the department chair, and the Dean. This form will specify (a) the course requirements (assignments) that must be completed and (b) a due date. On (or before) the specified due date, the student must submit the assignments listed in the contract for the incomplete grade (“I”) to be changed to a permanent grade of A, B, C, D, or F. If the student does not submit the required assignments by the specified due date, the student will receive a permanent grade consistent with the points the student has earned in the course (See “Determination of Course Grade,” p. 2).

Speaking frankly, incomplete grades are not common in my classes. I understand why they are sometimes necessary and I will grant requests for them when the conditions outlined above are met. However, I’ve found that doing work on time and maintaining communication with me when you encounter difficulties can resolve most of the problems that give rise to requests for incomplete grades.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process

Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor’s professional judgment of the quality of the student’s work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services

College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement

Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or klachney@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement

A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy

Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is October 11. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 28. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is December 7.

FN Grading

The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program

The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.