

Course Code and Title : **SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology (1st term 2009-2010)**

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Brief Course Description This is an introductory course in Sociology, starting with an overview of the nature of the discipline, followed by a survey of various aspects of the structures and dynamics of social life. General and specific examples are used to illustrate how thinking sociologically adds to our knowledge of the world around us.

Aims This course aims to introduce students to the methods, subject matter, and perspectives of sociology.

Learning Outcomes Upon completion of this course, successful students will be able to:

- (1) recall fundamental perspectives, methods, and concepts in sociology
- (2) understand readings in basic sociology texts
- (3) effectively consolidate and communicate course materials in class discussions and presentations as well as in the form of academic essays
- (4) apply sociological thinking to analyze everyday social life issues

Assessment and Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Four assessment components measure the learning outcomes (LOs) listed above:

1. Tutorial discussion and participation (20%) (measures LOs 1 - 4)
2. Writing assignments (20%) (measures LOs 1 - 4)
3. Mid-term Test (20%) (**13th October**) (measures LOs 1, 2)
4. Final exam (40%) (exam week) (measures LOs 1 – 4)

Assessment	Points	Level of attainment/assessment criteria
Leading a tutorial discussion, 10% (individual or group, depending on class size)	8-10%	Demonstrate excellent preparation and understanding of the topic, able to lead and stimulate discussion, able to incorporate relevant materials from lectures and the textbook, able to consolidate and summarize discussion from the class in a meaningful manner, able to critically reflect on the discussion
	6-8%	Demonstrate adequate preparation and understanding of the topic, able to steer class discussion in a focused manner, able to incorporate some materials from lectures and the textbook, some critical reflection on the discussion
	4-6%	Demonstrate some preparation and understanding of the topic, able to incorporate some materials from lectures and the textbook
	0-4%	Lack of preparation and understanding of the topic, unable to incorporate materials from lectures and the textbook in the discussion
Tutorial participation 10% (individual)	8-10%	Nearly always participate in class tutorial discussions, demonstrate good understanding of sociological thinking through questions and comments on the discussion
	6-8%	Regular contribution to tutorial discussion, demonstrate some understanding of sociological thinking through questions and comments on the discussion
	4-6%	Sometimes contribute to tutorial discussion, limiting mainly to questions about facts and/or asking for clarification of concepts

	0-4%	Rarely contribute to tutorial discussions, seldom ask questions, offer insights or give comments
Two papers on any tutorial topics 10% (at least one written individually)	8-10%	Demonstrate excellent understanding and application of contents covered in lectures and tutorials, clear and logical organization of paragraphs and contents, fluency of language use and conformity to styles of academic writing
	6-8%	Demonstrate good level of competence in the understanding and application of course contents, adequate consideration and effort in the organization and style of writing
	4-6%	Demonstrate some understanding and application of course contents, acceptable use of language and style
	0-4%	Demonstrate little understanding of course content and how they can be applied in daily life, careless in the organization of materials and below average ability in the use of language and conformity to academic writing style
Mid-term test 20% (multiple choice)	16-20%	Excellent ability to recall fundamental sociological perspectives, methods and concepts as covered in lectures, tutorials and the textbook
	11-16%	Good ability to recall fundamental sociological perspectives, methods and concepts as covered in lectures, tutorials and the textbook
	6-11%	Average ability to recall fundamental sociological perspectives, methods and concepts as covered in lectures, tutorials and the textbook
	0-6%	Poor ability to recall fundamental sociological perspectives, methods and concepts as covered in lectures, tutorials and the textbook
Final exam (multiple choice, short questions and/or long essay)	31-40	Demonstrate excellent level of accomplishment in all four learning outcomes under an exam environment
	21-31%	Demonstrate good level of accomplishment in all four learning outcomes under an exam environment
	11-21%	Demonstrate average level of accomplishment in all four learning outcomes under an exam environment
	0-11%	Demonstrate low level of accomplishment in all four learning outcomes under an exam environment

Indicative Content

1. The Sociological Imagination
2. The Sociological Perspective
3. Culture
4. Socialization
5. Social Interaction in Everyday Life
6. Groups and Social Organizations
7. Deviance, Conformity and Social Control
8. Social Stratification
9. Gender, Race and Ethnicity
10. Families
11. Religion

Required/Essential Readings:

Macionis, John J. 2008. *Sociology*. 12th edition. Pearson Education

You should read the relevant chapters in the textbook accompanying each lecture before coming to class.

Recommended/Supplementary Readings:

Berger, P. 1986. *Invitation to Sociology*. London: Penguin.

Cargan, Leonard and Jeanne H. Ballantine. 2000. *Sociological footprints : introductory readings in sociology*. Belmont, Calif. : Wadsworth Pub. Co

Charon, Joel M. 2004. *Ten Questions: A Sociological Perspective*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

Collins, Randall. 1992. *Sociological insight: an introduction to non-obvious sociology*. New York : Oxford University Press.

Giddens, Anthony. 1982. *Sociology: a brief but critical introduction*. London : Macmillan.

Lau Siu-kai et al (eds.) *Indicators of social development: Hong Kong : (various years)*. Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, (various years).

Levin, William C. 1991. *Sociological ideas: concepts and applications*. Belmont, Calif. : Wadsworth.

Mills, C. Wright. 1970. *The Sociological Imagination*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Ruggiero, Vincent Ryan. 1996. *A guide to sociological thinking*. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications.

An important learning objective of this course is to develop students' skills in applying sociological thinking to everyday life. Pay attention, therefore, to local and international news. Make it a habit to scan daily newspapers and read up on items which are of particular relevance to that week's lecture and tutorial topics. Use the internet to search for facts and figures on Hong Kong society (try <http://www.gov.hk>)

Course rules

- Lectures follow the textbook closely so please get a copy from the bookstore or use copies in the library; lecture outlines and notices will be posted on WebCT – lecture outlines are merely extractions from the textbook not its substitute.
- English is the medium of instruction for lectures, tutorials and all written work.
- Each unjustified absence from tutorials will result in a 5% deduction from your final grade – if you are unable to come to class for legitimate reasons, notify your instructor well in advance so that alternative arrangements could be made. If you miss class because of illness or other unforeseeable circumstances, you must notify the instructor within 24 hours of your absence. In case of illness, show the instructor a doctor's certificate; in case of other reasons, a written explanation together with any supporting documents must be given so as to avoid the 5% deduction.
- If you are late for a tutorial for 10 minutes or more, you will be considered absent
- Students should be aware of University regulations about dishonest practice in course work and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations.

Examples of dishonest practice include plagiarism (i.e. presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgment of the source), copying the work of other students or deliberately allowing other students to copy from you (whether from this or any other institution), submitting the same piece of work for more than one course.

- Supplementary mid-term test and final exam will only be granted if (1) an application is made at least one week before the test or exam date, or (2) in case of unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or emergencies, that an application is made within 24 hours after the missed test or exam. The course instructors are the final arbiters on whether there are legitimate grounds for a supplementary test or exam to be granted.
- During the week of the mid-term test you need to complete an on-line course teaching and learning evaluation. An email will be sent to you with instructions. It is important that you give adequate feedback to the instructors so as to enhance teaching and learning effectiveness.
- You need to write TWO essays for your writing assignments requirement (around 1,000 words each); the first will be on your tutorial discussion topic; you can choose to write it individually or as a joint effort with other students in your group. The second essay must be written individually, and can be on any other tutorial topic. Due date for both essays will be within ONE WEEK of the tutorial class where that topic is discussed.
- Essays will receive a 10% reduction in marks (cumulative) for each day past the due date. Essays received more than 5 days after the due date will not be marked.
- When submitting your essays, clearly state the following on the first page: your name(s) as on your student ID card(s), student ID number(s), time and day of your tutorial class (e.g. Wednesday 2:30pm), topic number and the topic itself in full, date of submission, and word count. You are encouraged to submit your essays via WebCT (more on this during the first tutorial meeting). If you use additional references these must be clearly and fully referenced. Number your pages, and do a spell-check before submitting your essay.

Tutorial discussion and topics

ALL students need to come to tutorials prepared, not only those assigned to leading the discussion. This means doing the specified reading and spending time thinking over the discussion questions so that you will have something to contribute in class.

Students responsible for leading each week's discussion are NOT asked to give a presentation – you need to actively engage the class in discussion instead of trying to do all the talking. You are encouraged to seek your instructor's advice when preparing for your discussion.

1. The Sociological Imagination

Read chapter 1 “The Sociological Perspective”, esp. p.7 “Seeing Sociology in Everyday Life”, which consists of an extended quotation from C. W. Mills' book, *The Sociological Imagination*.

Discuss the quote and share with the class what you think it means. Now, think of at least two personal experiences and try to analyse them from a sociological perspective, using the sociological imagination as described by Mills.

2. Sociological Perspectives – applying theory

To prepare for this class, bring one or more pieces of recent local or international news. You also need to read chapter 1 “The Sociological Perspective”, especially the section entitled “Sociological Theory”, p. 14-19.

Look at the box on p. 19 “Applying Theory” and make sure you understand it (ask the class or the tutor for clarification if you are unsure). Discuss which of the sociological perspectives described in the book can be best applied to understand the chosen news items.

3. Culture

Read chapter 3 “Culture”, esp. “Thinking Globally: Confronting the Yanomamo: the experience of culture shock” on p. 60.

Share with the class any experiences stemming from cultural differences or misunderstandings that you may have. Related your discussion to any of the concepts related to culture as described in chapter three (e.g. culture shock, ethnocentrism, cultural lag, counterculture etc.)

4. Socialization

Read chapter 5 “Socialization”, especially the box “Controversy & Debate: are we free within society?” on p. 135. Discuss the three questions at the end of the section.

5. Social Interaction in everyday life

Read chapter 6 “Social Interaction in Everyday Life”, especially the section “Dramaturgical Analysis: the ‘Presentation of Self’”, on p. 149. Discuss the concept “the presentation of self” and the related concepts of “front region” and “back region”.

6. Groups and social organizations

Read chapter 7 “Groups and Organizations”, especially the section “networks” on page 172-175 (including the *Times* article “In Your Facebook.com”).

Consider the various social groups that you belong to, and the social networks to which you have access, and discuss the following questions in relation to them. What are the factors that shape the groups to which we belong, and the networks that we can access? What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of being in groups and social networks?

7. Deviance

Read chapter 9 “Deviance”. Perform a non-criminal deviant act (e.g. stand facing the back of an elevator as you ride up or down, walk around campus backwards for a few minutes, shop out of someone else's shopping cart at the grocery store, order tea and scones in a bar, say goodbye when you should say hello, etc.). It is important that you discuss with your tutor on your intended act BEFORE you actually do it. As you perform this act, observe how other people react to you as well as how you feel in performing the act.

Take notes immediately after your act on:

- the non-criminal deviant act that you performed and where you performed it,
- *how* other people reacted to you and *why* you think they reacted that way, and
- *how* you felt when you acted in a socially deviant way and *why* you felt that way..

Come to class with your notes and share your experience with the class. What does this experience tell you about the nature of deviance? Which of the theories described in the text book (see p. 222 – 233) are useful in helping you understand your experience?

8. Social stratification

Read chapter 10 “Social Stratification”, especially the sections on class and caste in the United Kingdom, Japan, the Former Soviet Union, and China. (pp. 257-261)

Discuss your thoughts on social stratification in these societies. Do you find them familiar, or strange? How do these stratification systems compare to the one in Hong Kong or your home country? What do you think accounts for these differences?

9. Gender, Race and Ethnicity

You can choose to discuss gender OR race and ethnicity for this week's class.

Read chapter 13 “Gender stratification” or 14 “Race and ethnicity” before coming to class. Do some research to find out basic statistics on EITHER gender OR race and ethnicity in Hong Kong. Based on these statistics and your own experience/observation about living Hong Kong, to what extent would you say that gender stratification or racial/ethnic stratification exists in Hong Kong? To what extent is it a social problem?

Lectures

Tutorials

Date	Contents	Read	Tutorial discussion topic	Wed	Fri
1 Sept	Introduction to the course		Housekeeping	9 Sept	11 Sept
8 Sept	The Sociological Imagination	Ch 1	1. The Sociological Imagination	30 Sept	2 Oct
15 Sept	Sociological Perspectives	Ch 1	2. Sociological Perspectives	7 Oct	9 Oct
22 Sept	Culture	Ch 3	3. Culture	14 Oct	16 Oct
29 Oct	Socialization	Ch 5	4. Socialization	21 Oct	23 Oct
6 Oct	Social Interaction in Everyday Life	Ch 6	5. Social Interaction in Everyday Life	28 Oct	30 Oct
13 Oct	Mid-term test (1 hour) Groups & Organizations	Ch 7	6. Groups & Organization	4 Nov	6 Nov
20 Oct	Groups & Organizations Deviance	Ch 7 Ch 9	7. Deviance	11 Nov	13 Nov
27 Oct	Deviance Social Stratification	Ch 9 Ch 10	8. Social Stratification	18 Nov	20 Nov
3 Nov	Social Stratification Gender Stratification	Ch 10 Ch 13	9. Gender, Race & Ethnicity	25 Nov	27 Nov
10 Nov	Race and Ethnicity	Ch 14			
17 Nov	Families	Ch 18			
24 Nov	Religion	Ch 19			
1 Dec	CTLE and review				