

Course Code and Title : SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology (2nd 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 the foundation of social organization and social process
- (3) understand readings in basic sociology texts
- (4) effectively consolidate and communicate course materials in class discussions and presentations as well as in the form of academic essays
- (5) 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 2,3,4,5)
2. Writing assignments (20%) (measures LOs 2, 4,5)
3. Mid-term (20%) (**11th March**) (measures LOs 1, 2,3,5)
4. Final exam (40%) (exam week) (measures LOs 1,2,3,4,5)

Assessment	Points	Level of attainment/assessment criteria
Tutorial discussion and participation 20%	16-20%	Nearly always participate in class tutorial discussions, demonstrate good understanding of sociological thinking through questions and comments on the discussion
	12-16%	Regular contribution to tutorial discussion, demonstrate some understanding of sociological thinking through questions and comments on the discussion
	8-12%	Sometimes contribute to tutorial discussion, limiting mainly to questions about facts and/or asking for clarification of concepts
	0-8%	Rarely contribute to tutorial discussions, seldom ask questions, offer insights or give comments
Two essays on any tutorial topics 10% each	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 40% (multiple choice, and 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. What is Sociology?
2. Major Sociological Perspectives
3. Culture
4. Socialization
5. Groups and organizations
6. Social stratification and inequality
7. Social institutions: Family, Religion and Education
8. Deviance and Social Control
9. Social Change

Required/Essential Readings:

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

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

Recommended/Supplementary Readings:

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

Cargan, Leonard and Jeanne H. Ballantine. 2009. *Sociological Footprints: Introductory Readings in*

Sociology. Belmont, Calif.: Cengage Learning.

Charon, Joel M. 2007. *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. 1989. *Sociology: A Brief but Critical Introduction*. London: Macmillan.

Johnson, William A (et.al.) 2010. *The Sociology Writer's Manual*. Boston: Prentice Hall.

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. 1993. *Sociological Ideas: Concepts and Applications*. Belmont, Calif. : Wadsworth.

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

Roberts, Kenneth. 2009. *Key Concepts in Sociology*. N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan.

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 basically follow the textbook so please get a copy from the bookstore or use copies in the library; lecture notes are merely extractions from the textbook not its substitute.
- English is the medium of instruction for lectures.
- 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.

- You need to write TWO essays for your writing assignments requirement (around 1,000 words each) on any tutorial topic. Due date for both essays will be within TWO WEEKS of the tutorial class where that topic is discussed.
- Bonus marks, ranged from 1-5 marks (cumulative), may reward to you if you submit a third essay or come to lectures punctually.
- 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, please 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. Tuesday 1:30pm), topic number and the topic itself in full, date of submission, and word count. 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. This means doing the specified reading and spending time thinking over the discussion questions so that you will have something to contribute in class.

All students will be grouped into three small groups in tutorials. Each group has to answer at least one assigned question in each tutorial. Not more than 15 minutes may be given to you to allow you to share your views with your group-mates before answering the question.

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 analyze them from a sociological perspective, using the sociological imagination as described by Mills.

2. Major 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. Sociological investigation

Read chapter 2 “Sociological Investigation”. Try to design a simple research on the study of the hostel life in Lingnan. Specify the research question/hypothesis, measurement (2-3 variables) and method of data collection of your research.

4. Culture

Read chapter 3 “Culture”, esp. “Cultural Diversity: Many ways of Life in One World” on p. 70-75.

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, subculture, ethnocentrism, cultural lag, counterculture etc.)

5. 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.

6. Social stratification and inequality

Read chapter 13 “Gender stratification” before coming to class. Do some research to find out basic statistics on gender 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 exists in Hong Kong? To what extent is it a social problem?

7. Social institution: Family

Read chapter 18 “Controversy and debate: Should We Save the Traditional Family?” on p.482-483. Discuss the three questions at the end of the section.

8. Deviance and Social Control

Read chapter 9 “Deviance”. Bring one or more pieces of recent local news about any social problem in Hong Kong. Discuss which of the theory / perspectives of deviance described in the book can be best applied to understand the chosen news items.

Class schedule

Lectures

Tutorials

Date	Contents	Read	Tutorial discussion topic	Tue	Fri
14 Jan	Introduction to the course		1. Housekeeping	26 Jan	29 Jan
21 Jan	What is Sociology	Ch 1-2	2. The Sociological Imagination	2 Feb	5 Feb
28 Jan	Major sociological Perspectives: major paradigms in sociology	Ch 2,4	3. Major Sociological Perspectives	9 Feb	12 Feb
4 Feb	Sports Day		4. Sociological Investigation	23 Feb	26 Feb
11 Feb	Culture	Ch 3	5. Culture	2 Mar	5 Mar
25 Feb	Socialization	Ch 5	6. Socialization	9 Mar	12 Mar
4 Mar	Groups & Organizations	Ch6-7	7. Q and A	16 Mar	19 Mar
11 Mar	Mid-term		8. Social Stratification and Inequality	23 Mar	26 Mar
18 Mar	Social Stratification and Inequality	Ch 10-13	9. Social institution: Family	30 Mar	9 Apr
25 Mar	Social Institutions	Ch 18-20	10. Deviance and Social Control	13 Apr	16 Apr
1 Apr	Social Institutions/ Deviance and Social Control	Ch 9			
8 Apr	Deviance and Social Control	Ch 9			
15 Apr	Social Change	Ch 24			
22 Apr	Review				