

Sociology 1A06 C01: Introduction to Sociology, 2016-2017

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Class Times & Location:
Tues. & Fridays 9:30-10:20
TSH-120

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Course Objectives

In this course we will explore a range of topics studied by sociologists to help us better understand our social world and our place in it. Sociology allows us to connect our personal experiences to a broader social context and to understand the larger social forces that impact our lives. A sociological perspective illuminates how personal choices and individual destinies are shaped by larger social forces and sometimes constrained by the broader societal context. This course will engage and perhaps challenge your views on a wide range of issues that affect us all. The course will provide you with the tools to critically evaluate 'common-sense' understandings of society which are all too often rooted in myth and assumption rather than evidence. The course aims to develop important academic skills including library research, effective writing, critical thinking, and active reading. There are a range of topics covered in this course including sociological theory, methods, culture, socialization, inequality, family, globalization, crime and deviance, gender and sexuality, and work and the economy.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes of this course are consistent with McMaster's Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations. (see

<http://csl.mcmaster.ca/COU/pdf/Undergraduate%20Degree%20Level%20Expectations.pdf>).

In this course students will develop a comparative and critical analysis of a topic using peer-reviewed sociological articles and present this analysis in both a written and oral format. This connects to several of the undergraduate degree level expectations including developing a depth and breadth of knowledge and development of communication skills.

Avenue-to-Learn

Please check Avenue-to-Learn regularly for: announcements, marks, lecture slides and podcasts, practice multiple choice questions, and other resources. The Academic Integrity and Library Quiz is on Avenue, as are links to the online library modules and turnitin.com. Instructions for

using turnitin.com are on Avenue. Please do not email the instructor from Avenue. Please use colaves@mcmaster.ca to email me.

Required Readings

We are using three texts in the course. The following two textbooks are sold as a package:

Brym, Robert J. 2016. *New Society*. 8th Edition. Thomson Nelson.

Brym, Robert J. 2014. *Society in Question*. 7th Edition. Thomson Nelson.

Additionally, you will need to buy:

Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How To Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. 2nd Edition. University of Chicago Press.

Evaluation

Presentations (one per term, done in tutorial) Grading rubric posted on Avenue	10%
6 Quizzes (Multiple choice and True or False questions) Written during lecture time	Quiz 1: 10% Quiz 2-6: 8% each
Assignment #1: Grading rubric posted on Avenue Includes: 1. Completion of online library modules that provide instruction on searching Sociological Abstracts database. We will provide a link to these modules from Avenue. You must complete these modules as some of this material will be included on the Academic Integrity and Library Quiz. 2. Receiving a mark of at least 80% on the Academic Integrity and Library Quiz. (Paper copy submitted in lecture; electronic copy submitted to turnitin.com)	20%
Essay: Grading Rubric posted on Avenue (Paper copy submitted in lecture; electronic copy submitted to turnitin.com)	20%

Late Penalties: 5% per day for assignment#1 and the final essay. There are no make-up assignments to try to improve your mark in the event you do poorly on a quiz, assignment, or essay.

Tutorial

Students will prepare two presentations (one each term; each presentation is worth 5%) and a grading rubric will be posted on Avenue. The presentation is based on the student's written work (assignment #1 and essay).

Quizzes

Each quiz will be written during lecture time and will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Each quiz is NOT cumulative. You will only be tested on material covered since the previous quiz.

Assignment #1

Description: Select a topic that interests you and has been studied by sociologists. Find 5 peer-reviewed sociological articles. You will need to identify a specific issue or question to narrow your scope. For example, the general topic of families is too broad a topic, however a more specific topic of ‘boomerang’ children (adult children who return to live with their parents) would be doable. The general topic of crime is too broad, however a more specific topic of the overrepresentation of aboriginals in the Canadian criminal justice system is focused. The assignment will be the basis for the final essay due in March.

Includes:

1. Receiving a mark of at least 80% on the Academic Integrity and Library Quiz. This is an online quiz to help you learn about academic misconduct, plagiarism, and library research. You will receive a penalty of 20% for Assignment #1 if you do not complete the Academic Integrity and Library Quiz and receive a mark of 80%.
2. Submission of paper copy and electronic copy to turnitin.com. (If you require assistance with turnitin.com please contact our Instructional Assistant Gerald Bierling). You will receive a penalty of 20% for Assignment #1 if you do not submit to turnitin.com. If you do not wish to submit to turnitin.com you must give Dr. Colavecchia a second paper copy of your assignment.

Part A: Requirements for Selection of Sources (20 marks)

Requirement #1: All 5 articles must be closely-related reflecting a narrow focus. 10 marks

You must use Sociological Abstracts database to locate these articles.

Requirement #2: All 5 articles must be sociological. 10 marks

Not all articles within Sociological Abstracts database are sociological. There are various ways of determining whether your article is sociological. First, check the journal name. Sometimes these explicitly include “Sociology” or “Sociological”, however there are sociological journals that don’t have “sociology” in their name (i.e. Journal of Marriage and Families). Additionally, sometimes sociological research is published in related or interdisciplinary fields, such as criminology. Thus you shouldn’t necessarily exclude an article because it is published in a non-sociological journal. A second way of determining whether the article is sociological is to check the author’s institutional affiliation (whether they are working in a sociological department or not). The best way of ensuring that the article is sociological is to read the article and make this determination based on the content of the article. If you are uncertain about whether an article is sociological meet with your Teaching Assistant during their office hours and bring your article.

Requirement #3: All 5 articles must be peer-reviewed

Deduction of 5 marks for each non peer-reviewed article included. To ensure that your articles are peer-reviewed select the “peer-review” option when searching for articles.

Requirement #4: 2 out of the 5 articles must have been published after Jan 1 2006.

Deduction of 5 marks if one article is not recent. Deduction of an additional 5 marks if two articles are not recent.

Requirement #5: Length of articles must be acceptable.

Deduction of 5 marks for each article that is deemed to be of insufficient length. Do not include short research notes which tend to be less than 10 pages in length. Peer-reviewed articles tend to be 10-30 pages in length.

Part B (50 marks)

For **each** article, answer questions 1 and 2 below.

Answer each of the following questions in your own words and in sentence format. No point form is allowed. You are expected to paraphrase others’ words and are discouraged from using any direct quotations in each of the following answers (with the exception of short phrases or terms that may appear in quotations, ie., Colavecchia uses the term “moneywork” to describe the labour involved in managing family finances).

Answer Questions 1 and 2 for each of your 5 articles (10 marks per article * 5 articles=50 marks)

1. In 2 or 3 sentences outline the key research questions of this study. (5 marks)
2. In 4 to 6 sentences describe the key findings of the study. (5 marks)

Format: Provide full bibliographic information for the article using APA (author, year of publication, article title, journal name, volume number, page numbers) followed by your answers.

Part C (30 marks)

3. In 6-10 sentences compare the research questions that are pursued in your 5 articles. You need to make explicit connections across the 5 articles. You must use in-text citations to indicate the specific articles you are referring to, or comparing. Be very precise in your use of in-text citations. If you make a statement and the in-text citation lists 3 articles this means that the statement you have made only applies to the 3 articles. The in-text citations do not need to consistently include all 5 articles, however you need to show that you are making comparisons across as many of your 5 articles as possible.

4. In 6-10 sentences draw connections between the findings of your studies. Again, you must use in-text citations to indicate which articles you are referring to.

Please note: Questions 3 and 4 are asking you to draw connections across the articles in terms of their research questions and findings. You are encouraged to use this comparative analysis for your final essay and you are permitted to go beyond this and to draw connections across your articles in relation to other issues, including but not limited to: theory, social policy, and methodology.

Referencing: You must use APA (American Psychological Association) referencing format. It is important that you are careful about your referencing in order to avoid plagiarism. We will be using Turnitin.com to detect plagiarised assignments and essays. In the event that there is plagiarism the student will receive a zero for the essay. Further consequences might also arise as plagiarism constitutes academic misconduct at McMaster University. Presenting someone else's words as your own is plagiarism. Presenting someone else's ideas as your own is also plagiarism. When using someone else's words, the student must put the words in quotation marks and cite the source (author, year of publication, page reference). When using someone else's ideas (and the student's own words) the student must cite the source (author and year of publication). If you are unclear about what plagiarism is please speak to Professor Colavecchia.

Essay

Description: The essay will build on assignment #1 and will be a synthesis and critical and comparative analysis of your 5 articles. Another way of saying this is that you are showing the reader that you comprehend the complexity of the research and can engage with it in a thoughtful manner. You need to develop connections across your 5 articles without resorting to merely summarizing each article. The objective of the paper is to analyze the topic from a sociological perspective by drawing on sociological research. What does sociological research have to say about your topic? The essay will draw comparisons across your 5 articles in relation to:

- Central research questions pursued by researchers and significance of the questions
- Key findings (Address complexity here; avoid temptation to simplify findings)

Other suggested comparisons (not required to do any of these below) include:

- Theoretical approaches (Differences in theoretical approaches taken by the various researchers studying your topic)
- Methodological approaches (i.e., How might differences in methodology or sampling impact the findings?)
- Policy Implications (i.e., How might you explain variation in policy suggestions made by researchers studying the same topic?)
- Directions for future research (these should be grounded in the findings of your studies)

Format: 8 pages (excluding Title page and References). Do not exceed page limit. Double-spaced, 12-point font, number your pages.

Thesis Statements: Many of you have written position papers where you take one side of a debate and use selective evidence to support your position. This essay is NOT a position paper; it is a synthesis and critical analysis of sociological research. Rather than a one-sentence thesis where you take a position on an issue, the kind of thesis that you are writing for this essay is one where you will take a few sentences and be very specific about what sociological research has to say about your topic.

Here is an example of a thesis that is **incorrect** because it is based on opinion rather than being informed by research on the topic: In this paper I will argue that divorce has negative consequences for children's emotional, physical, social, and academic well-being and I will use sociological research to support this position.

Here is an example of a thesis that is **correct**, and the main reason that it is correct is that the thesis has been informed by sociological research rather than being based on personal opinion or experience: Research on the impact of divorce on children throughout the life course suggests that there is no singular uniform outcome for children (cite specific source). This research dispels the myth that divorce is devastating to all children. This essay will examine recent sociological studies on the role of non custodial fathers. It examines the ways that involvement with non-custodial fathers impact children's adjustment to parental divorce.

Sources: Same 5 peer-reviewed sources as Assignment #1. If your TA indicated on Assignment #1 that particular articles needed to be replaced you must do this for your essay.

Using Quotes:

- Do not use long quotations to fill space throughout your essay
- If you are going to use quotes, make sure they are short, be selective in what you decide to quote, and ensure that you have integrated the quote into your discussion (need to explicate quote).
- Do not just stick a quote into your essay without doing something with the quote.
- Limit the number of quotes you use by putting others' work into your own words. You must cite the original author's ideas even if you have put it into your own words.

Writing and Organization: How you structure your essay is important. Organization is not merely a reflection of writing style. An organized essay reflects clear logic and reasoning. Avoid summarizing each article in sequence. This reflects poor organization and an underdeveloped analysis. You must demonstrate that you have read and synthesized the research cited in your bibliography. Your essay should be organized around major ideas, themes, findings, or arguments, not by each individual article.

Many of you learned in high school that an essay has a one sentence thesis followed by three points, or three body paragraphs. This rule is not appropriate for university academic papers and should be disregarded. You will take several sentences to identify the specific issues that you will examine in the paper. This takes the place of a one-sentence thesis statement. You can have as many points as you want in the paper, keeping in mind that it is better to focus on fewer issues in greater depth than to cover numerous points superficially.

Subheadings: The student can use subheadings, however the use of subheadings does not necessarily mean that the paper is organized. Ensure that the material you have in each section under the subheading is organized. Group similar ideas in the same paragraph and use transitions when you are moving from one issue or idea to the next. The reader should know where the writer is headed and it is the writer's job to make this clear. Do not jump from one point to the next without adequate discussion or analysis. It is better to focus on fewer issues, and to examine them in greater depth, rather than touching on many issues in a superficial manner. There is no singular way to organize this paper as it is dependent on the specific issues that each student is addressing in their paper. Thus, no two papers will be organized in the same way.

Introduction: The essay must have an introduction where the student is explicit in highlighting the issues that will be addressed in the paper. Be as specific as possible in this introduction: what are you planning to address in your essay?

Conclusion: Include a conclusion at the end of the paper which highlights what was discussed. You might also point out directions for future research (which connects to ideas that were raised in the essay).

Common Areas of Weakness:

- Basing an essay on inappropriate sources (sources that are not sociological; or sources that are not closely related)
- Inadequate critical reading and reflection of articles; poor comprehension of articles
- Summary of articles rather than synthesis and analysis of articles
- Clarity of expression (often tied to problems with sentence construction and paragraph construction)
- Inappropriate use of quotes (too many/too long quotes that are not integrated into the discussion)
- Inclusion of unnecessary bibliographic information within text of discussion (author name and year of publication is sufficient, you do not need to include article title or journal name as this information appears in the References)
- Inadequate editing of work
- Essays that are too short
- Poor organization, discussions that address each article sequentially rather than having the discussion be organized by idea, theme, or finding

Suggestions:

- Go to the library for help if you need assistance with library research
- Write multiple drafts of your essay (as many as possible)
- Have others proofread and edit your work (i.e. to identify sentences/sections that are unclear)
- Invest time at the beginning in selecting articles that address similar issues. Don't just pick the first few sources you find
- Go to the Student Success Centre for assistance with your writing
- If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism speak to the Professor
- Start early, don't procrastinate!

Turnitin.com: In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and to submit a paper copy in lecture. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity. Instructions for using Turnitin.com will be provided.

Calendar of Topics and Readings

Date	Topic	Readings
Tuesday Sep 6	Introduction	No readings assigned
Friday Sep 9 Tuesday Sep 13	The Sociological Imagination Sociological Theories	Ch 1 New Society (NS) Ch 1 Society in Question (SIQ) Ch 5 SIQ Ch 1 Becker
Friday Sep 16 Tuesday Sep 20	Research Methods and Ethics	Ch 2 NS Ch 3 SIQ Ch 2 Becker
Friday Sep 23 Tuesday Sep 27	Culture	Ch 3 NS Ch 8 SIQ
Friday Sep 30: Deadline for Academic Integrity and Library Quiz	Assignment #1 Explained	Ch 3 Becker Ch 4 Becker
Tuesday Oct 4	Quiz #1 (questions will include lecture content and readings for: Sociological Imagination and Sociological Theories, Research Methods and Ethics, Culture. Questions will also include Becker.)	
Friday Oct 7	Socialization	Ch 4 NS Ch 16 SIQ Ch 5 Becker
Mon Oct 10-Oct 14	Mid-term Recess	
Tuesday Oct 18	Socialization	Ch 4 NS Ch 16 SIQ Ch 5 Becker
Friday Oct 21	Mass Media	Ch 6 NS Ch 9 SIQ Ch 6 SIQ

Date	Topic	Readings
Tuesday Oct 25: Assignment #1 Due in lecture; Electronic copy submitted to turnitin.com by midnight	Families	Ch 11 NS Ch 17 SIQ Ch 6 and 7 Becker
Friday Oct 28 Tuesday Nov 1	Families	Ch 11 NS Ch 17 SIQ Ch 6 and 7 Becker
Friday Nov 4	Education	Ch 13 NS Ch 2 SIQ Ch 8 Becker
Tuesday Nov 8	Quiz #2 (questions will include lecture content and readings for: Socialization, Mass Media, and Families. Questions will also include Becker.)	
Friday Nov 11	Education	Ch 13 NS Ch 2 SIQ Ch 8 Becker
Tuesday Nov 15 Friday Nov 18	Gender and Sexualities	Ch 5 NS Ch 15 SIQ
Tuesday Nov 22 Friday Nov 25	Gender Inequality	Ch 8 NS
Tuesday Nov 29	Quiz #3 (questions will include lecture content and readings for: Education, Gender and Sexualities, and Gender Inequality. Questions will also include Becker.)	
Friday Dec 2	Social Stratification and Global Inequality	Ch 7 NS Ch 10 NS Ch 11 SIQ
Tuesday Dec 6	Return of Assignment #1 in lecture	
Friday Jan 6 Tuesday Jan 10	Race and Ethnic Relations	Ch 9 NS Ch 12 SIQ
Friday Jan 13	Religion	Ch 14 NS
Tuesday Jan 17	Essay Explained	No readings

Date	Topic	Readings
Friday Jan 20	Globalization	Ch 20 NS
Tuesday Jan 24	Quiz #4 (questions will include lecture content and readings for: Social Stratification and Global Inequality, Race and Ethnic Relations, and Religion)	
Friday Jan 27	Globalization	Ch 20 NS
Tuesday Jan 31 Friday Feb 3	Work and The Economy	Ch 12 NS
Tuesday Feb 7 Friday Feb 10	Politics and Social Movements	Ch 19 NS Ch 19 SIQ
Tuesday Feb 14	Essays Due in Lecture; Electronic copy submitted to turnitin.com by midnight Deviance and Crime	Ch 15 NS Ch 13 SIQ Ch 22 SIQ
Friday Feb 17	Deviance and Crime	Ch 15 NS Ch 13 SIQ Ch 22 SIQ
Feb 20-24 Reading Week		
Tuesday Feb 28	Deviance and Crime	Ch 15 NS Ch 13 SIQ Ch 22 SIQ
Friday March 3	Population and Urbanization	Ch 16 NS
Tuesday March 7	Quiz #5 (questions will include lecture content and readings for: Globalization, Work and the Economy, Politics and Social Movements, and Deviance and Crime)	
Friday March 10	Population and Urbanization	Ch 16 NS

Date	Topic	Readings
Tuesday March 14 Friday March 17	Health and Aging	Ch 18 NS
Tuesday March 21 Friday March 24	Sociology and the Environment	Ch 17 NS Ch 24 SIQ
Tuesday March 28	Quiz #6 (questions will include lecture content and readings for Population and Urbanization, Health and Aging, and Sociology and the Environment)	
Friday March 31	Pick up of Graded Essays during lecture	
Tuesday April 4	Pick up of Graded Essays during lecture	

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, balloting, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.