

SOC 100B: **Introduction to Sociology**

Professor: Catherine Corrigan-Brown, Ph.D

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Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:30

Class Room: West Mall Swing Space 122

Class Description:

In modern Canadian society, most people believe that individuals shape their own destiny. To a certain extent that is true – we, as individuals, make decisions every day that shape the kind of life we lead. You made a decision about if you would attend university, how hard to work in your classes, where to live when attending school, and the type of summer job you want. But, of course, you do not get to make those decisions just as you chose. In this class, we will learn about how individual choices (sometimes called agency) are structured in society. We have the ability to make decisions, but our choices are often shaped by larger social forces such as the families in which we grow up, the schools we attend, and the neighbourhood in which we live.

C. Wright Mills tried to tackle these complicated issues with what he called the Sociological Imagination. Mills calls on us to see the connections between our individual lives and the larger society in which we live. He argues that we can only really understand our own lives and biographies if we understand the larger history of society as a whole. Once we make these connections, we will be able to see the relationship between our own personal troubles, problems that we face as individuals, and larger public issues, social problems that arise in society as a whole. In this class, we will develop our sociological imaginations and focus on three core parts of sociology: social inequality, social institutions, and social change.

The class is divided into four main sections:

- The Sociological Imagination and the Discipline of Sociology
- Dimensions of Inequality: Race, Class, Gender and Beyond
- Institutions of Society: Education, Work, The Family, and Health
- Social Change: The State, Public Policy, and Social Movements

Learning objectives and outcomes:

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain and apply the main sociological theories and concepts used in class.
2. Use their sociological imagination and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between social structure and individual agency.
3. Understand the main dimensions of social inequality and their origins in society.
4. Critically examine the role of institutions in society and their relationship to social inequality.
5. Describe the major routes of social change and apply these ideas to specific changes that have occurred in Canadian society.
6. Develop clear critical reading, thinking, and analytical skills.

Course Evaluation:

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| Midterm | 30% |
| Final Exam | 40% |
| Discussion Section Participation | 15% |
| In Class Quizzes | 15% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Examinations will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Course Readings:

The readings are in two places. First, there is a selection of readings on the course website. Second, we will be reading chapters from the class textbook available in the bookstore.

Steckley, John and Guy Kirby Letts. 2013. *Elements of Sociology, 3rd Edition*. Oxford University Press.

A list of the readings from the textbook and other sources appears on the final page of this syllabus with the dates by which the readings should be completed.

Accommodation

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with Access and Diversity at Student Services. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let me know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such. If you cheat or plagiarize, you will be formally reported to the Academic Integrity Program. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. If you are unsure, please consult the following site:

<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/>

Missed Exams and Late Assignments

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with me at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved by myself and Student Services, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam.

If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor or Student Health on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. Academic concessions are granted only by the dean or director (or their delegate) and are a privilege, not a right. If you request an academic concession, you may be asked to provide additional information. For more information, see the Academic Concession section of the Academic Calendar.

Grade Appeals

Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments and should also retain all their marked exams in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to review their exams and other materials with me, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades.

Please understand that I take grading very seriously, and make every effort to provide you with a grade that honestly reflects the quality of your work. If you believe the grade does not adequately reflect the quality of your work, return the assignment to me with short, specific, written comments explaining why you think you deserve a higher grade. It is best to do this within a week of the time the test/assignment is returned.

Readings and Class Schedule

| Date | Section | Topic | Reading | |
|----------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| January 6 | The Sociological Imagination and Discipline | Introduction | ----- | |
| January 8 | | The Sociological Imagination | *C. Wright Mills “The Sociological Imagination – Chapter 1” | |
| January 13 | | Becoming a Member of Society | Steckley – Chapter 1 | |
| January 15 | Inequality in Society | Social Class | Steckley – Chapter 7 | |
| January 20 | | Social Status | *Karl Marx “The Communist Manifesto” | |
| January 22 | | Poverty and Homelessness | *Barbara Ehrenreich “Nickel and Dimed” | |
| January 27 | | Global Inequality | *Daina Sukulis Eglitis “The Uses of Global Poverty” | |
| January 29 | | Social Construction | Steckley – Chapter 8 | |
| February 3 | | Race and Ethnicity | *Mary Waters “Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?” | |
| February 5 | | Immigration and the Vertical Mosaic | *Anderson – Imagined Communities | |
| February 10 | | | Review | |
| February 12 | | | EXAM | |
| February 16-20 | | NO CLASS – READING WEEK | | |
| February 24 | | Gender | Steckley – Chapter 9 | |
| Feb 26 | | Sexuality | *Simon Davis “Men as Success Object, Women as Sex Objects” | |

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| March 3 | | NO CLASS | |
| March 5 | | Age and Aging | *Frank F. Furstenburg “Growing Up is Harder to Do” |
| March 10 | Institutions | The Family | Steckley – Chapter 10 |
| March 12 | | Education | Steckley – Chapter 12 |
| March 17 | | Work | *George Ritzer “The McDonaldization of Society” |
| March 19 | | Health | Steckley – Chapter 13 |
| March 24 | | Social Change | The State |
| March 31 | Social Policy | | *Dalton Conley “Forty Acres and a Mule: What if American Pays Reparations?” |
| April 2 | Social Movements I | | Steckley – Chapter 15 |
| April 7 | Social Movements II | | *Gamson “Defining Movement Success” |
| April 9 | | | Review |
| TBA | | Final EXAM | |

* Indicates that readings are posted on the course website