

The University of British Columbia  
Sociology 240 (002)  
**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL INTERACTION**  
Fall Term 1  
2014

Buchanan A102 MWF 3:00-4:00

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**COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Sociology 240 is a course that provides a critical examination of contemporary issues and debates pertaining the social and individual dimensions of social interaction. Its main focus is to bring different material to analytically engage students with key questions about diverse forms of social interaction and the ways sociologists have studied it. Throughout the course, students will explore and critically think about the wide variety of social, cultural, institutional, structural, and personal aspects of social interaction. Some of the dimensions of social interactions that we will explore are gender, social class, and health and illness. The course will require students to draw conceptual connections between theoretical literature and empirical historical cases. We will examine one recent case study using a social interactionist approach in depth, that of a group of middle-class families in Los Angeles (US).

**COURSE EVALUATION:**

2 Midterms (2 x 25%)	50%
3 Small groups	10%
Final Exam:	40%

**Grading Guidelines:** <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,42,96,0>

90-100% = A+ 64-67% = C+

85-89% = A 60-63% = C

80-84% = A- 55-59% = C-

76-79% = B+ 50-54% = D

72-75% = B 00-49% = F

68-71% = B-

**Scaling of Grades:** Faculties, departments and schools reserve the right to scale grades in order to maintain equity among sections and conformity to university, faculty, department or school norms. Students should therefore note that an unofficial grade given by an instructor might be

changed by the faculty, department or school. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record.

*2 Midterm Exams (25% x 2):*

The midterm test will be on **Sept 24 and Oct 22**. Each test will be worth 25% of your grade and will require to answer multiple choices, and mid-range questions (half a page each). Midterm exams are non-cumulative.

*3 Small Groups (10%):*

During the term there will be 3 instances in which students will be divided into small groups to discuss questions and write a report.

*Final Exam (40%):*

The final exam will consist of multiple choices and mid-range questions that address content introduced throughout the course. Multiple choices will cover the last part of the material and mid-range questions will focus on all the material discussed throughout the course. It will include material discussed in lectures, required readings, and films. The final exam will be scheduled by the University during the Summer Exam Period.

### **Disability Accommodation**

Academic accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please, notify me during the first week of class of any accommodations that are required for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Centre.

### **Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism sometimes happens when students panic or feel overwhelmed. As your instructor, I am here to support your learning. Please, contact me to discuss your situation PRIOR to reaching the point where you feel yourself in a panic situation. Students are encouraged to review the publication *Plagiarism Avoided* on the UBC Faculty of Arts website, which includes helpful examples of, and practical strategies to avoid plagiarism. <http://www.arts.ubc.ca/faculty-mpstaff/resources/academic-integrity/resources/plagiarism-avoided.html>.

Students must abide by the academic integrity rules of the Faculty of Arts. The overarching theme of academic integrity is that your work must be, in fact, your own work. All students assume full responsibility for the content of the academic work that they submit. Plagiarism, using notes during a test, or copying from another student will result in a failed grade for the course. The UBC library maintains an excellent web-based resource on Academic Integrity and students should review the web site: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/clc/airc.html> ([www.students.ubc.ca/access](http://www.students.ubc.ca/access)).

**Student Needs:** This course welcomes and seeks to accommodate students with physical or learning disabilities or chronic illnesses. If you require any assistance or adaptation of teaching or evaluation, please feel free to discuss your needs with us. The Disability Resource Centre in Brock Hall is available for further consultation and resource provision.

**Exam Revisions:** If you want to ask for a revision of the grading of your exam we require you make a written letter pointing to the parts you consider need reconsideration and stating why. We will not make changes on the spot, but will take the exam and the letter and re-read your work. A final joint decision from the TA that marked your exam and instructor will be given one week later. Note that when you ask for a revision your mark may remain the same, drop or get increased.

**OTHER MISCELLANEOUS REQUESTS:**

1. If you have any questions or concerns about the course material or course requirements, please, contact me. I am here to act as a resource to guide you through the difficult terrain of sociology and help you improve your critical reading, thinking, and writing abilities.
2. Please, follow proper professional etiquette in all email communications. For instance, begin all email communication with a proper salutation.
3. Please, arrive to class on time and, whenever possible, limit the number of times you exit and re-enter the room during lectures.
4. Computers should only be used in the classroom for typing notes or, when necessary, accessing online reference information. The use of email, entertainment and social networking websites during class are prohibited. **I reserve the right to ban the use of computers in the classroom should this rule be repeatedly ignored.**
5. If you miss a class, please contact another student for the lecture notes. Below is a space for you to collect the email addresses of three of your classmates who will be able to provide you with the lecture notes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## READINGS:

The required textbook for this course are:

1) Sandstrom, K. L., Lively, K.J., Martin, D. D., & Fine, G. A. (2014). *Symbols, selves, and social reality: A symbolic interactionist approach to social psychology and sociology*. 4th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. (SSSR)

2) Ochs and Kremer-Sadlik (2013) *Fast-Forward Family: Home, Work, and Relationships in Middle-Class America*. Berkeley and LA: University of California Press (FFF); available for purchase at the UBC Bookstore or online at <http://www.ubc.ebib.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1092959>.

Other readings will be posted on Connect and must be completed prior to the assigned due date. Completing the required readings on time will significantly improve your chances of receiving a high grade in the course.

Outline of topics and readings – (I reserve the right to make modifications)

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

### **Week 1, Sept 3,5 Course Introduction**

Discussion of the Syllabus and introduction to the course.

*Required reading:*

- W) Introduction to the course, discussion of syllabus and expectations
- F) SSSR. Chapter 1: The Meaning of Symbolic Interactionism.

### **Week 2, Sept 8, 10, 12 Symbolic Interaction Theory**

Discussion of symbolic interactionism as a theory.

*Required readings:*

- (M) SSSR. Chapter 1: The Meaning of Symbolic Interactionism.
- (W) Goffman, Erving. The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life. Introduction and Chapter 1.
- (F) FFF. Introduction and Chapter 1: Coming Home.

### **Week 3, Sept 15, 17, 19 The interactionist toolkit**

Introduction to Symbolic Interactionism Theory

*Required readings:*

- (M) SSSR. Chapter 2: The Interactionist Toolkit: Methods, Strategies, and Relevant Perspectives.

(W) Goffman, Erving. 1986. Chapter 1: Stigma and Social Identity. In STIGMA – Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. New York: Simon and Schuster/Touchstone Books.

(F) FFF. Chapter 2: At home

#### **Week 4, Sept 22, 24, 26      Social Interaction and Language**

Role of language in the construction of reality.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 3: People as Symbol Makers and Users: Language and the Creation of Social Reality

(W) **\*\*\*MIDTERM EXAM 1\*\*\***

(F) FFF. Chapter 9: Stress.

#### **Week 5, Sept/Oct 29, 1, 3      Socialization**

Socialization, meaning and identity.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 4: Socialization: The Creation of Meaning and Identity.

(W) FFF. Chapter 6: Chores

(F) **\*\*\*Small Groups I\*\*\***

#### **Week 6, Oct 6, 8, 10      The Self**

Social interaction and creation of the Self.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 5: The Nature and Significance of the Self.

(W) Copes, H. 2005. "How Edge Are You?" Constructing Authentic Identities and Subcultural Boundaries in a Straightedge Internet Forum. *Symbolic Interaction*, 28(1), 67–89.

(F) FFF. Chapter 7: Homework and Recreation

#### **Week 7, Oct 20, 22, 24      Social roles and gender and sex**

Creation of social roles in relation to gender and sex.

*Required readings:*

(M) **Thanksgiving: NO CLASS**

(W) SSSR. Chapter 4: Socialization: The Creation of Meaning and Identity.

(F) FFF. Chapter 4: Mountains of Things and Chapter 5: Housework.

#### **Week 8, Oct 20, 22, 24      Social Roles**

Social roles taking/making, formation of conduct

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 6: Role Taking, Role Making, and the Coordination of Action

**(W) \*\*\*MIDTERM EXAM 2\*\*\***

(F) FFF. Chapter 12: The good enough family.

**Week 9, Oct 27, 29                      Role of Emotions**

Role of emotions in everyday life.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 7: Emotions in Everyday Life.

(W) FFF. Chapter 8: Nurturing.

**(F) Halloween: NO CLASS (Note: Think on symbols and emotions during Halloween!)**

**Week 10, Nov 3, 5, 7                      Social Deviation**

Social interaction and social deviation.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 8: The Politics of Social Reality: Constructing and Negotiating Deviance

(W) FFF. Chapter 11: Time for family.

(F) **\*\*\*Small Groups II\*\*\***

**Week 11, Nov 10, 12, 14                      Social Movements**

Collective behavior and social movements.

*Required readings:*

(M) SSSR. Chapter 9: Collective Behavior and Social Movements

(W) Schneider, C. J., & Trottier, D. 2012. The 2011 Vancouver Riot and the Role of Facebook in Crowd-Sourced Policing. *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly*, 0(175), 57–72.

(F) FFF. Chapter 12: The good enough family

**Week 12, Nov 17, 19, 21                      Social interaction, illness and health**

The impact of illness on social, family and personal life.

*Required readings:*

(M) Charmaz, K., & Belgrave, L. L. 2013. Modern Symbolic Interaction Theory and Health. In W. C. Cockerham (Ed.), *Medical Sociology on the Move* (pp. 11–39). Springer Netherlands.

(W) FFF Chapter 10: Health as a family matter.  
(F) \*\*\***Small Groups III**\*\*\*

**Week 13, Nov 24, 26, 28      Wrapping up the course**

Required readings:

(M) Vannini, Philip. 2008 The geography of disciplinary amnesia: Eleven scholars reflect on the international state of symbolic interactionism. In *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 32: 1-18. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

(W) Wrapping up Goffman

(F) Wrapping up FFF & Final Exam Review.

**FINAL EXAM:** Scheduled according to UBC Calendar (Dec 2-17)