

**The University of British Columbia**  
**Sociology 240A 001: Social Interaction – Course Syllabus**

<b>Term 1:</b> Winter 2016, Sept.6 <sup>th</sup> to Dec. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Credits:</b> 3
<b>Time:</b> Tuesday/Thursday: 3:30-5:00 pm <b>Room:</b> Math Annex: 1100	<b>Prerequisites:</b> None
<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Donna Lester-Smith <b>Contact:</b> E: <a href="mailto:donnals.ubc@gmail.com">donnals.ubc@gmail.com</a> <b>Office:</b> Anso Blding #3108 <b>Hours:</b> M/W 12:00 pm-2:30 pm <b>TA:</b>	<b>Texts:</b> 1) Sandstrom, K. L., Lively, K.J., Martin, D. D., & Fine, G. A. (2014). <i>Symbols, selves, and social reality: A symbolic interactionist approach to social psychology and sociology</i> . 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. 2) Supplemental academic articles listed in this syllabus

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introduction to the study of the social and personal dimensions of social interaction. We will explore and critically consider a range of personal, social, cultural, institutional, and structural aspects of social interactionism such as gender, social class, health, with an emphasis on intercultural understandings. Students will learn to question their everyday perceptions and apply a symbolic interactionism perspective to their everyday interactions. A lot of social phenomena become so familiar that people fail to notice them. This course will provide students with analytical toolbox to make them see what is hidden in plain sight – in the realm of our everyday lives.

**LEARNING GOALS:**

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

- Identify and define key sociological symbolic theories and factors within interaction-processes affecting societal communities (mostly Canadian) from ideological, institutional, and interpersonal stances
- Apply critical thinking and self-reflective skills to the assessment of past and present everyday society
- Recognize and appraise various ways that perceptions, meanings, and culture impact one's expectations and experiences of the society in which we live and may seek to transform
- Develop a critical perspective that links course material with everyday current affairs
- Produce increasingly specific written communication of sociologically-based critical analysis

**COURSE FORMAT:**

Students learn in a variety of ways such as through the exchange of ideas and critical thinking. It is said that students retain 10% of what they read; 20% of what they hear; 30% of what they see; 50% of what they see and hear; 70% of what they say; and, 90% of that they say as they do something. Activities used to cover class material include lectures, films, guest speakers, and most importantly, class discussions. Although lectures may be used to introduce key concepts, they will be limited, informal, and very participatory. Periodically we will split-up into smaller discussion groups to review and analyze material more thoroughly. Students will occasionally be asked to reflect on films, classroom discussions, and readings in the form of on-line discussions. In order to achieve this cooperative learning experience, readings must be done as assigned and texts as well as notes brought to class.

**COURSE EVALUATIONS and ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:** See Connect (<http://connect.ubc.ca>) for all necessary assignment details. All assignment marks in this class are based on adding up to 100 percentage points, and are divided as follows:

1. Class and Online Engagement (15%)
2. Single Reading Analysis (15%)
3. Newspaper Critical Reflections (15% x 3 = 45%)
4. Final Exam (25%)

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**1. CLASS AND ONLINE PARTICIPATION (15%):** Class sessions and online discussions through Connect will provide students ample opportunity to actively participate through asking questions and making thoughtful contributions. Attentiveness is critical to student learning; effective preparation for class includes completing a thorough reading of the assigned texts, taking note of questions you have about the readings, and offering examples that could illustrate the concepts being articulated. You are encouraged to engage in classroom learning activities at all times. (i.e. group/class discussions, thoughtful discourse, critiquing research, sharing resources, and responding to online discussions). Engagement can also include sharing your ideas about course material with the instructor or TAs, which you can do by forwarding different news and popular culture texts that exemplify and illustrate the themes of the course. Those who do not prepare, attend, and participate will receive a lower engagement mark for this course.

**2. SINGLE READING ANALYSIS (15%):** Each student will sign-up for one class reading (a textbook chapter or supplemental article, and then be responsible for critiquing that reading in the below 2 ways. Post your reading analysis on Connect the Sunday evening before the class week in which the reading is listed as due (see “Course Schedule” on page 3-6 of this syllabus).

**1) Discuss in 2 paragraphs** (1-page, double-spaced maximum), the interactional symbols, selves, and social realities that you notice in the chapter or article reading, and any secondary sociological themes such as structural, functional, conflict, intersectional, or critical race (i.e. consider such prompts as ‘what, where, when, why, how’ analytical queries and/or perhaps related to the Ideological, Institutional, or the Interpersonal sociological considerations {the 3 I’s}).

**2) Provide 3 thoughtful questions** (1-page, double-spaced maximum), about your chosen chapter or article subject matter (i.e. perhaps related to the: what, where, when, why, or how analytical queries)—that may later be discussed among all students during class.

**3. NEWSPAPER CRITICAL REFLECTIONS (15% each):** Each student will submit a total of 3 online critical reflections (**15% each**) on Connect. For each reflection, students are to choose a recent newspaper article, cite it, and then summarize it and in one paragraph. In two-three more paragraphs, write your own critical reflection or opinion about the article. You may explore your personal sociological insights; offer a relevant lived-example; raise additional questions or points that you think are important; agree or disagree with the journalist’s arguments or conclusions; and draw analytical connections between the article and course readings and/or class discussions. Submission will be evaluated on your ability to use critical, sociological thinking and reflectively written concision and brevity skills as you examine a topic that interests you and is relevant to course content.

**4. FINAL EXAM (25%):** One final exam will evaluate your understanding of key concepts presented throughout this course in readings, films, discussions, and/or guest speakers (December exam period).

**Students should always carefully proofread your assignments before handing them in!** Also, students should always retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of technology difficulties or hard-copy paper loss).

**ASSIGNMENT GRADING:** All assignments will be graded on (1) Content; (2) Organization; (3) Style; (4) Critical Thinking; and, (5) Sociological Creativity. They will be evaluated on your ability to use critical, sociological thinking, and reflectively written concision and brevity skills as you examine a topic that interests you and is relevant to course content. Assignments may be submitted before or on the due date; however, late submissions will be penalized .5 of 1 mark per day late. Assignments handed in 5 days or more late, with no prior communication with the Instructor, will receive a mark of 0.