SOC-101: Introduction to Sociology

Department of Sociology

Medgar Evers College

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Travis R Sweatte	Term:	Fall 2023
Office:	n/a	Class Meeting Days:	M/W
Phone:	n/a	Class Meeting Hours:	2:30pm- 3:45pm
E-Mail:	tsweatte@mec.cuny.edu	Class Location:	Carrol M7
Website:	n/a	Lab Location:	n/a
Office Hours:	12pm-3 pm Tu/Th		

I. Welcome!

This semester you will be introduced to the academic discipline of Sociology. We will learn the basic research methods used by sociologists as well as the history of the discipline and a basic outline of some of the many sub-fields within the discipline. An emphasis will be placed on sharpening critical and analytical skills used in understanding the study of society.

II. University Course Catalog Description

This course will familiarize the student with the basic concepts in sociology and develop their appreciation of the nature and scope of the discipline. Emphasis will be centered on the critical importance of human interaction, inter-and intra-group relations, cultural relativity, the process of socialization, race, caste and class stratification, and on sex, age, and other bases of differentiation. The structure of social organizations and of institutions and the nature of power, authority, and status as well as the problem of social change will be analyzed.

Co-requisite: ENGL 112

III. This course fulfills the following General Education Requirements: ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, respond to Section III. If no, go to Section IV.)

☐ Foundation Cluster ☐ Required Core

☐ General Knowledge Cluster ☐ Flexible Core

College Option:

Socio-Cultural, and Diversity Cluster ☐

Integrated Knowledge Cluster: ☐ Social Sciences

☐ Humanities & the Arts
☐ Natural Sciences & Mathematics

IV. Course Objectives / Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

COURSE TITLE & Number : SOC101		Developer: Sweatte
SLO BEING ADDRESSED:	FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT (Low-stakes):	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT (High-Stakes):
1. Students will gain and be able to communicate a foundational understanding of the academic field of Sociology	Weekly Discussion Questions	N/A
2. Students will be able to analyze, interpret, and critique both quantitative and qualitative sociological research	Weekly reading assignments	Mid-Term/Final Project
3. Students will be able to apply three major Sociological theories (Functionalism, Conflict Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism) to current social events	Weekly Discussion Questions/In Class Quizzes	Mid-TermFinal Project
4. Students will be able to create and communicate their own original analysis of current social events	Weekly Discussion Questions/In Class Quizzes	Final Project
5. Students will be able to apply the tools and concepts of Sociology to their particular field of academic/career interest	Weekly Discussion Questions/In Class Quizzes	Final Project

V. Course Prerequisites

College-level reading/writing skills

VI. Course Credits

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VII. Required Texts and Materials

Introduction to Sociology 2nd*Ed.* By OpenStax

Textbook can be found on course Blackboard, there is no need to purchase a text for this course

Additional readings will all be posted on BlackBoard.

For each weekly topic I will post a Powerpoint (also in pdf form if you do not have access to Microsoft Office) that is meant to serve as an outline that supplements the reading.. The Powerpoints, as well as the readings for the week will all be posted under "content" on Blackboard.

VIII. Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

I will post other, generally more in-depth reading, on certain topics. These readings will not be mandatory, but are simply for students who are interested in particular topics to have access to more material. Often, the supplementary reading will be more introductory than the assigned reading. Students who are struggling with the assigned readings are encouraged to look at the optional readings for more foundational material.

IX. Basis for Final Grade

In the second class, you will vote as a group on what the final grading rubric will be. The following is simply my proposal for the grading rubric, you should feel encouraged to propose your own.

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Attendance/Participation	20%
Weekly Reading Responses	20%
Midterm Exam	30%

Final Project	30%
	100%

Grading Scale (%)	
97 - 100	A+
93 - 96.9	A
90 - 92.9	A-
87.1 - 89.9	B+
83 - 87	B
80 - 82.9	B-
77 - 77.9	C+
70 - 76.9	C
67.1 - 69.9	D+
63 - 67	D
60 - 62.9	D-
0 - 59.9	F

X. Grade Dissemination

Participation will be based on students' submitted work. There will be no credit given just for attendance, full participation is expected for each class session from every student enrolled in the course. Students who wish to discuss their final project before the grades are posted are encouraged to schedule office hours with the professor. Students wishing to know their current standing in the course are highly encouraged to schedule office hours with the professor. Students' current grade will always be available in writing upon request.

XI. Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy: Late work will be accepted with prior approval from any student experiencing adverse setbacks. Please reach out to me as soon as possible about any circumstances that may affect your ability to meet the course deadlines.

Extra Credit Policy: I will give 2 percentage points extra credit for submitting a short summary to every reading (including optional readings) posted on the syllabus. These responses only need to be a paragraph minimum, you need to tell me:

1. What the main idea(s) of the writing is/are, using your own words

2. What questions do you still have after the reading. These can be vocabulary ("I still don't know what anomie means") or conceptual ("Why does Weber think there's such a big difference between Protestants and Catholics?")

   I will accept extra credit reading responses at any point in the semester. Please note, I will not give you the extra credit if I conclude that the response does not show that you actually did the reading.

Grades of "Incomplete": Incomplete grades will be assigned per Medgar Evers policy.

XII. Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: Email will be used for all communication outside of the classroom. I will check my email daily M-F, but will attempt to have some semblance of a life so will try to not check my email after 6pm M-F, and will only sporadically check email on weekends..

XIII. Course Policies: Student Expectations

Disability Access: **ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:** Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Accommodations. Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of a student's eligibility from the OAS which can be reached at 718-270-5039. It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the office and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend each class session. I will not offer make-up work for attendance, instead students are encouraged to boost their grade through the extra-credit reading responses.

Professionalism Policy: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous manner in all classroom interactions. I ask everyone to show full respect to each other in all classroom discussions. We will be discussing topics that hit very close to home for many of us, and that carry a lot of controversy and strong feelings. Passions are welcomed and encouraged; insults and demeaning statements towards other students will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to conduct themselves in a respectful manner will not be allowed to participate in class activities.

Academic Conduct Policy: Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.
It is the student's responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation. **A student who plagiarizes on any assignment will receive a failing grade for the assignment and will risk failing the entire course and being reported to the university channels for class misconduct.**

Statement of Classroom Sanctuary

As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, and I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality. Furthermore, I am committed to making CUNY a sanctuary campus for undocumented immigrants, not just in word but in deed – through the campus community refusing to allow ICE to enter our campus and refusing to cooperate with and struggling to prevent any government attempts to ascertain the immigration status of members of our community or to detain or deport undocumented immigrants.

Students who are threatened by the the illegal and unconstitutional actions of the current administration regarding country of origin and/or religious affiliation should contact CUNY CLEAR at (718) 340-4558 cunyclear@law.cuny.edu.

Course Notice: Sociology is a course that may occasionally delve into issues that may be uncomfortable and/or controversial for some of us to discuss. I ask that everyone be respectful of one another's viewpoints and that everyone adheres to the university's expectation for student conduct.
This course is designed to help all of us become more aware of social constructs and how they affect us, as well as to gain an open mind toward individual differences. Ethnic slurs, anti-immigrant, classist, sexist, transphobic and homophobic remarks, and religious diatribes/hate speech, are not acceptable commentary for this course. We will talk about how and why this language is so common in our society, and how language helps maintain categories of oppression and discrimination.

Given the prevalence of violence in our society, it is highly likely that students in this class are victims, survivors, witnesses, and/or perpetrators of interpersonal violence, other forms of violence, and "micro-aggressions." Consequently, it is important that we be sensitive to each other and ensure that each individual is respected and supported. Also, if you need my help in making discussion of any of the topics safe for you, please let me know in advance so that we can work out a way to make the course personally safe and intellectually rewarding for you.

XIV. Schedule

In order to keep up with the class discussions, finish the required readings by the start of the Wednesday class each week. **Weekly Reading responses are due by 11:59 pm each Sunday night**. **As you decided in class, weekly reading responses will all be submitted to me via email – tsweatte@mec.cuny.edu.** Optional readings are just that; textbook chapters will give a broader understanding of that week's topic, they might be useful if you find yourself lost in the articles or book chapters. Both required and optional readings will be found in that week's folder on Blackboard, the textbook is a separate file that you can either download or read online. Please reach out to me as soon as possible if you are having any difficulties accessing any of the readings.

Date	Finish This Homework Before Class	Topics for Discussion
Week 1 8/28 8/30	Introduction to the Course **Syllabus Quiz at start of class Wednesday 8/30**	Class Expectations What is Sociology?
Week 2 9/6	**No Class Monday 9/4 – Labor Day** Read "My Dungeon Shook" (First half of the Fire Next Time) on BB by start of class on Wednesday Sep 6) **Identity and Society Response due by 11:59pm Sunday Sep 10**	Race and Society History's Impact on Contemporary Life Sociology and real life issues
Week 3 9/11 9/13	Read "The Sociological Imagination" on **BB** by start of class on Wednesday 9/13 **Sociological Imagination Response due by 11:59pm Sunday Sep 17**	How Sociology uses theory Sociological Imagination in 2023 How to apply the sociological imagination to your own lived experiences
Week 4 9/18 9/20	Read textbook Chapter 1 by start of class on Wednesday 9/20	History of Sociology Major Theories of Sociology
Week 5 **9/27**	**No Class Monday 9/25** Read Textbook Chapter 2 by start of class on Wednesday 9/27 (Optional reading "The Tearoom Trade on BB) **Ch 1 and Ch 2 Response due by 11:59 pm Sunday Oct 1**	**Social Science and the Scientific Method** **Sociological Research Methods**

Week 6 **10/2** **10/4**	Read "Popular Culture as Oppositional Culture" on BB by start of class Wednesday 10/4 (Optional Reading Textbook Chapter 3) **Pop Culture and Social Change Response due by 11:59 pm Sunday Oct 8**	**Culture and Sociology** **Popular Culture and Social Change**
Week 7 **10/10** **10/11**	**No Class Monday 10/9** **Tues 10/10 Medgar Evers will follow the Monday schedule- We will watch a film in class (The Stanford Prison Experiment) – link will be posted on Blackboard** Read "The Saints and the Roughnecks" on BB by start of class Wednesday 10/11 (Optional Reading Textbook Chapter 7) **Social Class and Deviance Response due by 11:59pm Sunday Oct 15**	**Social Class, Crime and Deviance**
Week 8 **10/16** **10/18**	Watch *The Corporation* (link provided on BB) during class time (Optional Reading "Occupy Wall Street" on BB) **Response to *The Corporation* due by 11:59pm Sunday Oct 22**	**Structure, Capitalism and Inequality**
Week 9 **10/23** **10/25**	**Midterm posted on Blackboard before class Monday 10/23** Read "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" on BB by start of class on Wednesday 10/25 (Optional Reading Textbook Chapter 11)	**Sociology of Race**
Week 10 **10/30** **11/1**	Read "Ain't I a Woman?" on BB by start of class on Wednesday 11/1	**Sociology of Gender and Sexuality**
Week 11 **11/6**	**Midterms Due before start of class on Monday 11/6**	**Social Identity and Social Change**

11/8	Read Combahee River Collective Statement and *Assata* Ch. 2 (pgs 18-43) on BB by start of class on Wednesday **Response to Social identity and Social Change due by 11:59pm Sunday 11/12**	
Week 12 **11/13** **11/15**	Read "Intersectionality's Binding Agent" on BB by start of class on Wednesday 11/15 **Response to "Intersectionality's Binding Agent" due by 11:59pm Sunday 11/19**	**Intersectional Theory** **Class Politics and Class Mobilization**
Week 13 **11/20**	**Final Project Proposals Due by start of Class Monday 11/20** **No Class Wednesday 11/22**	**Final Projects**
Week 14 **11/27** **11/29**	Watch Black Panther Party documentary (link on BB) during class time (Optional Readings *Seize the Time* and *Revolutionary Suicide* on BB) **Response to *Black Panther: Vanguard of the Revolution* due by 11:59pm Sunday Dec 3rd**	**Social Movements and Social Change**
Week 15 **12/4** **12/6**	Read "The Struggle for CUNY" on BB by start of class on **Wednesday 12/6** (Optional Reading Textbook Chapter 21)	**Education and Inequality** **Free CUNY**
Week 16 **12/11**	**Final Class Meeting Monday 12/11** **Final Project Introductions (10% of total grade on Final Project)**	
Finals Week **12/20**	**There will be no in-class Final Examination for this Course – use this time to work on your final projects**	

	Final Projects Due by 11:59pm Dec 20th **Projects will be emailed to tsweatte@mec.cuny.edu** **Final projects will not be accepted past the deadline**	

* Note: The Schedule is subject to revision

XV. Midterm

The Midterm will be a short-answer, take-home exam. Students will have two weeks to work on the midterm, you are highly encouraged to use the entire period. Midterm questions will come from the readings and class discussions. There are no "correct" answers to the questions, instead you will be required to provide your own informed and unique perspectives on important concepts, theories, and ideas from sociology. I will be free to discuss any of the midterm questions during office hours for the two weeks the exam is posted. **Midterms are due no later than the start of class on Monday November 6th.** Midterms may be submitted via email to tsweatte@mec.cuny.edu (make sure to put your full name (as it appears on CUNY First) in the subject line) or in person at the start of class.

XVI.

XVII. Final Project

A major application of sociology is to scientifically analyze the society we live in and put forward hypotheses as to how institutions, structural mechanisms, and patterns of behavior cause harm to members of our society. In the final project for this course, you will be addressing a facet of our society that you perceive as harmful and offer a solution as to how we could reduce or eliminate this harm.

Your final project is an example of what we call public sociology. This means to take the ideas, theories, and concepts of the discipline and share them outside of the classroom. Your final project will be based on academic research, but should be presented in a way that most members of our society would easily understand it. We constantly experience people communicating to us in a way that is meant to change our perceptions or alter our behaviors; on social media, in advertising, through mass media, and so on. This is your opportunity to do the same; what is one way you wish you could impact our society and make a meaningful change?

I am very open to what form the final project can take; Sociology can be used in a multitude of ways. Here are some examples of ways the final project can be done:

Create your own social movement organization. Make a pamphlet that you would hand out to people to get them interested in joining your social movement.

Create your own Sociological lesson plan for your children or younger family members. How would you teach the social construction of gender to an 8 year old?

Write a song about a pressing social concern. Think how Billie Holliday tackled the dreadful social problem of lynching in her song "Strange Fruit"

Write a poem about your social identity. Maya Angelou's poem "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" conveys her experiences as a black woman better than an article or essay could in many ways.

Make a meme that brings awareness to a current social inequality. Memes are a very important cultural artifact in our current society, they are constantly used to communicate, persuade, or simply bring awareness to a concern or issue.

Write and perform a podcast that brings light to a critical social issue and advocates for social change.

These are just a few suggestions. Think of your own ideas, it is very likely that you can come up with a great way of applying sociology that nobody else would think of. There are examples of different types of final projects posted on Blackboard under content.

Final projects can be submitted by a group. Each individual group member will have to submit their own unique Thesis Statement, Literature Review, and Proposal (which should clearly summarize what their specific contribution to the group project will be).

Final Project Instructions and Grading Rubric

Final Project

A. **Proposal for Final Project.** How could you best communicate the importance of your social problem and advocate for your solution? What specific skills and talents do you have that could be highlighted in the project? What would be the most fun to work on? What would be the most challenging? What would be the most helpful for you to practice towards your future career path?

B. **Final Project Presentations.** In the final class meeting, each student will present their ideas for the final project (presentations should be around 3 minutes). Students will provide feedback and constructive criticism to presenters.

Completed Final Projects must be submitted no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday Dec 20th . Projects must be emailed to tsweatte@mec.cuny.edu. Make sure to put your full name (as it appears on CUNY First) in the subject line of the email

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Project successfully conveys importance of social problem. Literature review seamlessly incorporated into project. Project offers concrete solution to social problem. Project expresses a high level of creativity and original thinking.			**Project clearly addresses social problem. Literature review used to support arguments but not fully incorporated into project. Project offers concrete solution to social problem. Project is appealing and would capture the attention of a general audience.**				**Project does not clearly define social problem. Literature review missing or not incorporated into body of project. Project offers vague or unclear solutions to social problem. Project does not capture attention and would not appeal to a general audience.**		