

Bridgewater State University

SOCI 102 Introduction to Sociology

Summer 2020, 3 Credits

Instructor: Aseem Hasnain

Class Days: M/T/W/Th/F

Class duration: May 25 – June 19

Instructor's Email ID: ahasnain@bridgew.edu

Course Background

This course introduces students to the discipline of sociology. It will provide a glimpse into theories, approaches, methods, and ways of thinking and analysis that sociologists use to understand the world. We will read about and discuss concepts, processes and institutions that are fundamental to the social world. This course also aims to help participants question their understanding about themselves, their immediate groups and networks, and their situation within the larger world. Class activities and discussions are also aimed at cultivating a 'sociological imagination' - the ability to place oneself, and our experiences, within the larger social and historical context.

Course Outcomes

- Ability for critical thinking¹.
- Capacity for critical reading and analytic thinking that examines assumptions and evidence, in both scholarly texts and journalistic writing.
- Awakening one's sociological imagination.
- Familiarity with the basic terminology of sociology.
- Awareness of selected sociological concepts, definitions, and theories.
- Understanding selected sociological processes, their drivers and consequences.
- Ability to contribute meaningfully to conversations about society through sociologically informed perspectives.

Course Design

This course is based on the active learning method where students play the primary role in the learning process. Pedagogy will be a combination of group work, class discussions, review of assigned texts & audio-visual materials, and lectures. Assigned materials should be reviewed before class so that participants can contribute actively to class discussions.

Adjustments for Students with Disabilities

BSU provides equal learning opportunity to all its students irrespective of their abilities and challenges. If you believe you have any challenge that puts you at a learning disadvantage, please discuss it with the instructor immediately. You must also register with the Office of Disability Resources promptly, so that necessary arrangements can be put into place early on.

Instructor's Commitments

- Communicate course requirements, assignments and other expectations clearly and timely
- Facilitate understanding of assigned readings and class themes
- Complement assigned readings with other relevant material
- Grade and return quizzes/assignments/projects with relevant comments within a reasonable time
- Be available outside class hours to accommodate any questions, concerns and clarifications regarding the course

Student Commitments

• Academic Integrity

All of us are bound by the BSU code of academic integrity and classroom conduct. If you haven't read it, take time to read it at your earliest. Take extra time to read the protocol and conventions for quoting, paraphrasing and referencing work done by others. Violations of this code will be promptly reported.

¹ It is thinking that is conscious of itself. In other words, you think about how/why you are thinking in a specific way. For a more detailed discussion, see: <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/our-concept-of-critical-thinking/411>

The code is here: (<http://catalog.bridgew.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=970>).

In particular be mindful of BSU' values and policy about **Academic dishonesty**. It is an attempt to misrepresent one's efforts on any academic assignment or exercise submitted for evaluation. These attempts and examples may be defined as, but are not limited to:

- **Plagiarism:** Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc., are common knowledge.
- **Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use prohibited materials or information in any academic exercise. This definition includes prohibited communication of information during or after an academic exercise.
- **Fabrication and falsification:** Intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic matter. Falsification is a matter of altering information, while fabrication is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- **Abuse of academic materials:** Intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material.
- **Multiple submissions:** The submission of the same work (including oral reports) in more than one course without prior permission of both instructors.
- **Complicity in academic dishonesty:** Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to misrepresent their efforts on any academic assignment or exercise submitted for evaluation.

- **Classroom Conduct**

The classroom is supposed to be a place where the students and instructor can discuss course topics, opinions, and related experiences freely and without fear of being judged. This is possible only if we ensure that we are always respectful towards everyone in the classroom. Please remind yourself that any opinion or argument made in the classroom may not simply be right or wrong, but may represent one of many perspectives. Be on time.

- **Contribution to classroom learning**

We can make this course productive and worth our time only if we actively participate in it. Participation does not mean that one has to be perfect and accurate all the time. Participation means being present in class, raising relevant questions, providing arguments, counterarguments, and examples which help the class better understand concepts and themes under discussion. Remind yourself that almost no issue, concept, definition or idea in this course can be broken down into right or wrong. Remember, grey is a beautiful shade, and all knowledge is shifting and can be contested. To be able to participate constructively- complete reading tasks, be attentive towards your peers, draw from your own experiences and practice critical thinking.

- **Attendance**

It is your obligation to be present in each class session. In case of an unavoidable absence, let the instructor know in advance along with necessary paperwork. The instructor will allow unavoidable absences at his discretion. Quizzes missed due to an unexcused absence will NOT be made up. You are entitled to one unexcused absence in the semester without any penalty. Beyond this absence, each unexcused absence will result in points deducted from your total score. Please make sure you know what was discussed during a missed class, ask your colleagues or the instructor. Also, please be respectful of your colleagues and be on time to class.

- **Reading Responses**

Assigned materials are usually texts meant for reading or audio-visual material for watching online. These will be uploaded onto Blackboard under the section- 'Course Contents.' For each class session where a reading response is due, students will write a response based on their reading/viewing of the assigned material. Please paste your response in the thread that I will create on Blackboard under 'Discussions.' Responses are due before midnight the day before class. The response should not be a simple summary of the readings but should include key points from the readings (with page reference where relevant) as well as your own thoughts, comments and questions about those key points. You may choose to apply what you learnt from the reading to a real life example that is relevant to you. There is no prescribed length for the response as long as you demonstrate that you have read the assigned text, have engaged with it intellectually, and have prepared comments or questions based on the reading. Late responses are not acceptable.

- **Quiz**

Throughout the semester, surprise quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. These will be fairly quick to answer and have to be submitted back to the instructor immediately. Each of these quizzes will cover themes covered up to the day of the respective quiz, cumulatively. They will include assigned materials and/or class discussions.

- **Electronic device use in the classroom**

Use of all devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets etc) in the classroom should be for academic purposes only. All other uses are unacceptable. Please make sure your handling of devices in the classroom does not distract yourself, other students or the instructor.

Mid-Term Exam

A midterm exam will be administered/due on XYZ. Its format will be discussed in advance.

Final Exam

At the end of the course a final exam will be conducted in accordance with the BSU academic calendar. We will discuss the exact format of the final exam in advance.

Grading Policy

You can earn a maximum of 100 points in this course. Point breakup is as follows:

Reading response: 13 responses, maximum of 1 point each = 13 maximum points

Quiz: All quizzes together will be worth 12 points maximum.

Contribution to classroom learning: maximum of 25 points based on attendance and the quality of your contribution towards classroom learning. This grade will cover participation over the complete semester.

Mid-Term Exam: 25 points maximum

Final Exam: 25 points maximum

Total: 100 points.

Letter grades will be issued based on these scores and BSU grading policy.

Session Plan

The following table includes the session plan and a date list of assigned materials. Session plan is subject to changes based on the instructor's discretion. However, all changes will be communicated in advance.

Session	Theme	Assigned Materials
1	Introductions & Expectations	No assigned readings
2	Sociological Imagination	C. Wright Mills: Sociological Imagination- Chapter 1: The promise. Pages 1-5
3	Social Constructionism & Socialization	Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann: The social construction of reality- Pp. 33-48.
4	Sociological Methods	No assigned readings
5	Culture	Dalton Conley- You May Ask Yourself: Chapter 3- Culture & media. Pages 73-112
6	Culture	No assigned readings
7	Social Interactions and Performance	Erving Goffman: The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life- Introduction, Pages 1-9
8	Social Interactions and Performance	No assigned readings

9	Groups, Networks, and Organizations	Dalton Conley- You May Ask Yourself: Chapter 5- Groups and Networks. Pages 149-181
10	Groups, Networks, and Organizations	No assigned readings
11	Deviance & Control	Dalton Conley- You May Ask Yourself: Chapter 6- Social Control & Deviance. Pages 185-229
12	Deviance & Control	No assigned readings
13	Gender & Sexuality	George Ritzer- Essentials of Sociology: Chapter 9- Gender and Sexuality. Pages 201-226
14	Gender & Sexuality	No assigned readings
15	Family	George Ritzer- Essentials of Sociology: Chapter 10- Families. Pages 227-252
16	Family	No assigned readings
17	Economy	John Macionis- Society, The Basics- Chapter 12 Economics and Politics. Pages 331-372
18	Economy	John Macionis- Society, The Basics- Chapter 12 Economics and Politics. Pages 331-372
19	Economy	John Macionis- Society, The Basics- Chapter 12 Economics and Politics. Pages 331-372
20	Final Review	No assigned readings