

SOC-Sociology

SOC100 - Principles of Sociology

This survey course permits students to explore the rich variety of topics studied by sociologists. Central to all the topics are the structures and processes of human interaction. Emphasis is placed on the relationship of natural and social factors in human behavior. Attention also is given to topics such as the meaning and function of culture; the origin, function and characteristics of social institutions; and the genesis and nature of social pathology. Sociologists investigate groups, organizations, and societies, and how people interact within these contexts. It is an expanding field whose potential is increasingly tapped by those who craft policies and create and evaluate programs. Sociology is an active science: The concepts, theories, and research methods of sociology can be used in practical, concrete ways to create a better world, or simply a better corner of the world.

SOC205 - Contemporary Social Problems

This course encourages students to think critically and scientifically about a broad array of social problems that affect people throughout the world. These social problems, to name only a few, include those that concern inequality, conflict, and environmental issues. As we study these problems (e.g., assessing how extensive they are, what causes them, possible solutions and their implementation) we must go further than mere description and opinion-based analysis and reach a point where we understand them scientifically and can communicate this understanding to others. Our sociological understanding of social problems will be enhanced by our ability to apply the discipline's theoretical perspectives to them. Social issues of popular concern in America today, such as poverty, ecology, violence and homosexual rights, are discussed and analyzed from a sociological perspective. Attention is not only given to the content of the issues, but also to the place of statistics in data reporting and analysis; the objective data used in support of interest group claims; and the use of various theoretical schemes in providing alternative explanations for each issue being a social problem.

SOC210 - Social Inequality

We examine the distribution of key social resources--wealth, power, and status—to groups and individuals, as well as theoretical explanations of how unequal patterns of distribution are produced, maintained, and challenged. In addition to global inequalities, we give special consideration to how race, ethnicity, and gender intersect with social class to produce different life experiences for people in various groups in the United States.

SOC211 - Sociology Collective Behavior

This course is a descriptive and analytical inquiry into the relatively unstructured social responses to social change. War resistance movements, militia movements, stock market panics, popular fads and crazes are among the topics considered. Attention is given to the processes, emergent structures and theoretical explanations associated with various types of collective behavior.

SOC225 - Sociology of Aging

Theoretical and research methodological issues in the sociological study of human aging are considered. Special emphasis is placed upon the interaction of pertinent biological and sociological variables as they relate to a variety of topics, including work, retirement, leisure, institutionalization and death.

SOC230 - Chaos, Change, & Sustainability

This course is designed for students who have selected the applied program in sociology. The course provides an overview of program evaluation research, i.e., needs assessment, formative evaluations, process evaluations and outcome evaluations. Students will carry out a mock program evaluation as part of their course requirements.

SOC240 - Social Institutions

Designed as a descriptive study of the basic institutions of society (particularly family, religion, economic, government and education), the course uses a cross-cultural and comparative perspective. American institutions form the core of the comparative analysis.

SOC290 - Gender and Work

This course examines the gendered nature of paid and unpaid work from a socio-historical and comparative perspective. Students will explore the forms and varieties of gendered work in the developed and developing countries with an emphasis on how concepts of masculinity and femininity influence the organizational structure, occupational categories and job tasks associated with formal and informal work arrangements.

SOC300 - Sociology of Deviance

This course discusses the various forms of deviant behavior, public responses to such behavior and the causes of such behavior. Particular attention is given to the interactive processes that result in behavior being labeled as deviant. How the criminal justice system copes with deviant behavior also is considered.

SOC309 - Sociology of Sport

This course approaches the study of sport from a sociological perspective. Students will learn to utilize the various theoretical sociological perspectives to examine the nature of professional and recreational sports as they relate to social reality.

SOC311 - Sociology of Crime

This course is designed to give the student a brief overview of crime and criminality and to enable the student to understand the relationship between administrative structure of the criminal justice system and crime causation.

Course Descriptions

Included in this course is a description and analysis of various types of criminal behavior, the epidemiology of crime in the United States, the social basis of law and major etiological forces responsible for law breaking.

SOC312 - Sociology of Organizations

Sociologists have long documented that social life involves interaction with both informal and formal institutions. As such, human interaction with organizations forms the basis for this course study. Examples of these organizations include: churches, workplaces, universities, governments and communities in addition to primary group interaction. Throughout the semester, students will develop an understanding of organizational structure, influence, and empowerment. Activities and assignments during the semester will provide structured opportunities for the student to explore the sociological literature on organizations in contemporary society and to apply that knowledge critically. Specifically, the course material will engage the student with the concepts and tools necessary to analyze the physical and social structures of organizations, technology in organizations, organizational environments and cultural influence on organizations. Cultural focus will explain concepts of power, control, and conflict within organizations while enabling the student to become proficient in organizational competency as it relates to the group process. A variety of theoretical frameworks will be investigated in order to investigate multiple perspectives on any given issue.

SOC315 - Social Minorities

Students will analyze the dynamics of social minority status specific to ethnicity, racial classification, gender, disability, and sexual orientation, and how minority status is socially constructed. Students will also examine societal responses to minority status and attempts to change this status. Finally, students will select one minority group in another country and compare it to one in the United States. Historically, every group of immigrants to the U.S. that did not come from England has experienced some degree of exclusion, discrimination, or racism that temporarily (or permanently) transformed them into “minorities.” This course examines the racial and ethnic experiences of those groups (and various other minority groups that are based in sex and gender, social class, sexual orientation, and disability) to see how their experiences have shaped and changed U.S. society. We will

Course Descriptions

start by examining how we construct these categories of difference, then go on to how difference is experienced, what difference means, and finally how we might bridge these differences. Interspersed throughout these academic readings, we will read an urban ethnography that examines race relations in Philadelphia in order to practice applying our sociological concepts to a real-world setting. Students who take this course should gain a much better understanding of why various minority groups act as they do, allowing them to live and work effectively in different multicultural environments.

SOC316 - Urban Sociology

This course is an introduction to urban sociology with a focus on urban social problems. Topics covered include classic urban sociological theories, post-industrial urban economies, urban social networks, suburbanization, segregation, poverty, crime, subcultures, schooling, and public policy. Classes will be mostly discussion with occasional short lectures. The course will focus on U.S. cities with selected comparisons to Western Europe.

SOC317 - Substance Use and Abuse

The sociology of substance use and abuse, as well as the approaches for treatment are covered. Special emphasis is given to alcohol and the more commonly abused drugs (e.g., nicotine, marijuana, cocaine). The course focuses on the social processes that influence substance abuse and the societal costs and consequences.

SOC318 - Sociology of Addiction, Excess, and Exploitation

This course will examine societal addictions, exploitation, and excesses in relation to their specific defining variables, patterns and practices, and historical and contemporary influences, inhibitions, and acceptances. Particular attention to how socio-cultural forces influence use and participation, by using a wide array of sociological tools and theories. Students will engage in the critical analysis of social practice as it is governed and defined by norms and values. Topics will be situated within a larger sociological framework that is equally shaped by culture, environment, and individual characteristics and expectations.

SOC319 - Sociology of Technology

This course explores the ways in which society and its social structures shape the design and use of technology, and how technology in turn influences cultural and social experience. Students will examine the way in which technology is affected at a fundamental level by the social contexts in which it develops. The course will explore the sociological underpinnings of norms, values, class, status, power, gender, labor and time, as they relate to such topics and social institutions as employment, education, medicine, equality, virtual interactions, and community-organizational governing.

SOC320 - International Women's Movements

In this discussion-centered examination of women's movements throughout the world, students will analyze contemporary movements utilizing a case study approach. The course begins with an analysis of the contemporary movement in the United States and then follows selected movements in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

SOC324 - Child Abuse and Neglect: A Societal Perspective

This course will examine the socially constructed variables that contribute to both the socialization and abuse of children (adults, community, social, political, and cultural contexts). The meanings and perceptions of childhood, inequality, abuse and neglect will be discussed in relation to their historical and contemporary underpinnings. Specific content will address the socially constructed definitions and categories of child maltreatment and abuse, family preservation, substitute and foster care, and permanency planning.

SOC325 - Sociology of the Family

This course explores the family in the United States from both theoretical and personal perspectives. Multiple sociological theoretical perspectives on the family will be examined. Students will explore primary issues most families encounter, such as choices about partnering, having children, stresses and crises, multi-generational/

Course Descriptions

multi-identity perspective, aging, work and family, limitations of public policy, and many more. A multicultural/multi-identity perspective is used for analysis in the course.

SOC378 - Charismatic Leaders

This course examines the nature of the social relationship between charismatic leaders and their followers.

Charismatic leaders are selected from a wide variety of religious, social, economic and political contexts for study.

Charismatic authority, unlike traditional authority, is a revolutionary and unstable form of authority, especially if the leader cannot produce the changes promised or when confronted by the contradictory logic and demands of the other types of authority. Each leader is evaluated in terms of his/her charismatic qualities and success or failure in bringing about stated goals. Each leader is also evaluated in terms of his/her contribution to the concepts and theories of charismatic leadership.

SOC379 - Special Problems in Sociology

This course permits students to explore the rich variety of topics studied by sociologists. This course is offered when a topic germane to society arises and is discussed and agreed upon by the sociology faculty.

SOC380 - Society and the Sociopath

This course will examine the societal variables that serve as catalysts and consequences for the development of the sociopath. The sociopath will be analyzed in accordance with specific and malleable historical, cultural, and contemporary contexts, as well as in response to future social changes, challenges, and innovations. The spectrum and continuum of “bad” behavior will be scrutinized in relation to socially constructed definitions, perceptions, and contexts that range from immorality to malevolence to corruption.

SOC395 - Sociology of Elite Deviance

This course examines the concept of elite deviance from various sociological perspectives and isolates the structural aspects of political and economic systems as they relate to deviant behavior. Multiple examples of elite deviance will be identified including: political corruption, environmental pollution, organized crime, trafficking, insider trading, and other criminal acts which are by nature relegated to those in positions of power.

SOC400 - Structural and Institutional Violence: School, Workplace, and Eldercare

This course will examine violence as it impacts the social and structural institutions of school, workplace, and eldercare. The nature and extent, causes and consequences, and proposed remedies will be explored in relation to their social contexts and historical and contemporary, socially-defined, underpinnings. Specific content will include critical analysis of bullying, fighting, harassment, personal and social risk factors, institutional perceptions and values, inequality, and social status.

SOC405 - Resocializing the Deviant and the Marginalized

Entering a new community or returning to one's community is a complex transition for most people, as well as for their families and communities. A wide range of individuals face this social challenge, including but not limited to those learning English as a second language, military veterans, children transitioning out of the foster care system, those recovering from addictions to alcohol, gambling, and narcotics, those released from medical nursing facilities, released prison inmates, graduates of boarding schools, and consumers of services in MH/MR and meth clinics. Beginning with the sociological foundation of Erving Goffman's work on total institutions and resocialization, students will investigate the characteristics of these institutions and their impacts on the individuals in residence, especially when the individual returns to conventional society and community. Students will explore the challenges faced by individuals and communities in a variety of social contexts, evaluate

Course Descriptions

existing reintegration programs, and design a new reintegration plan in a context of their choosing that makes improvements over a previous design.

SOC410 - Social Theory and Society

This course considers the historical development of sociological theory as well as how theories are constructed and used to explain social phenomena. Special attention is given to understanding and analysis of classical and contemporary theorists including: Comte, Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Simmel, and the Chicago School Theorists. The student will illustrate proficiency in the critical analysis of theories by comparing and contrasting them to various social conditions and problems.

SOC411 - Symbolic Interaction

This course offers an in-depth study of one of the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology. We will examine the breadth and depth of this perspective, its major theorists and concepts. Students will keep personal journals with observations and analyses of everyday life, review and assess relevant academic literature, and evaluate the new directions this perspective is taking. We will apply the symbolic interactionist perspective to popular films and will also consider symbolic interactionism's relationship with social psychology. Students will compose a research design for an applied sociological study that integrates the symbolic interactionist approach and has the potential to lead to positive social change.

SOC415 - Social Science Research Methods

This course is designed to develop the technical and analytical skills necessary for conducting social science research. Upon completion of this course, students will develop the fundamental skills necessary to develop a research project using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Students will apply skills in framing research questions and appropriate methodology and will also differentiate between various types of statistical analyses

Course Descriptions

intended to assess and evaluate research data. As such, students will justify the reliability and validity of their research and support that in comprehensive research projects.

SOC417 - Field Research Methods

This is an advanced research methods course that emphasizes the process of gathering ethnographic data and writing an ethnographic report. Ethnography is an approach to research that enables researchers to look at the social world through the eyes of their informants and requires students to use inductive thinking and reasoning skills. The primary methods used are field interviewing and participant observation: the basic field methodologies of qualitative researchers in anthropology and sociology. Students study a micro-culture of their own choosing throughout the semester then prepare a written report and deliver an oral report on the major findings.

SOC429 - Sociology Internship

This Special Experience Component course provides students with opportunities to demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills developed through both the discipline of sociology and the General Education program. This course is characterized by reflective thinking and the ability to synthesize information and ideas, to integrate knowledge, and to express ideas acquired throughout the college experience. This course emphasizes the overall general education experience by emphasizing ethics, values and norms, and multicultural awareness as broadly defined. Designed to supplement the classroom studies of sociology majors with practical field experience, internships provide students not only with additional knowledge and skills, but with the opportunity to apply what was learned previously to onsite situations. Internships are intended to develop the major's professional competencies in observational, analytical and research skills.

SOC495 - Seminar in Sociology

As a capstone course for sociology and other majors, this course centers on a current theme in society. Students will analyze the theme, demonstrating the use of concepts, methods, and theories from sociology and other social

Course Descriptions

science disciplines. Involves review of the discipline of sociology and focuses on key issues, including review of the tools of the discipline and the role of sociology in the student's future roles as individual, employee, and citizen.