

Introduction to Sociology
SOC 1a, Online Course
Summer 2018
June 4, 2018 – August 10 2018

Instructor: *Rebecca Barton*

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Office Hours: *10:30am-12pm*

M and Th & by appointment, via Zoom or Skype

Description: *Have you ever wondered why our society is the way it is, or why people act in certain ways? Have you ever considered how individual lives are connected and influenced by larger social forces? In this course, you will enhance your critical thinking skills in ways that will challenge you to think through social phenomena and question your world. You will develop your “sociological imagination” through the introduction of new concepts, theories, and research about social worlds and the organization of social life. Topics include: socialization, culture, inequality and stratification. These topics will be discussed by looking at gender, race, and class in the U.S. context, though there are countless topics that can be analyzed through a sociological frame. With the sociological imagination in your analytical toolbox, the choice is yours.*

Learning Goals:

- *To understand certain core concepts in sociology.*
- *Understand how one’s social location affects his/her experiences and life chances; understand the relationship between individual agency and social structures*
- *Recognize and apply key sociological concepts to everyday life*

- *Develop critical thinking skills with which to understand the world that you live in*

Course Policies:

Expectations: *Because this is a college-level course, you will be held to college-level standards—as will I. Together, we will meet the following expectations:*

a) Active Participation. Just as in a brick and mortar classroom, participation in online discussion is essential to making this class a success. You are expected to take ownership of the online space by posting in the discussion forum, responding to your classmates posts, and turning in assignments on time. I will go into more detail about what online participation in the discussion forum looks like. You are also expected to:

**Share your knowledge with others in a way that is comfortable to you, rather than hoard your knowledge for yourself, and*

**actively listen and communicate with your peers as they share their knowledge – together we will create guidelines and expectations for discussion/interaction online.*

b) Clear communication. The exchange of ideas and knowledge cannot occur without clear communication. Therefore, you are expected to:

**Complete assignments on time and according to paper formatting parameters (see below).*

**Provide the instructor with important information in a timely manner (life circumstances that affect the quality of assignment or the timeliness of assignments, etc.)*

Given the abbreviated nature of summer school, extensions will only be granted to those with extenuating circumstances. These

must be communicated to the instructor as soon as possible.

Assignments and Grading

Autobiographical Essay: (10%) (2-3 pages) *This paper will allow me to get to know you all better as well as gauge your pre-existing understanding of some sociological concepts. Please do not look up anything; operate off of your own understanding and experience.*

Writing prompt: Tell me about yourself. What year are you, what major, what are your future aspirations? Where are you from, where did you grow up? What is your race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status/class? (add anything else important about your life that you want to share) How do you think who you are has affected your life so far and your outlook on the future? In other words, how has your position in society impacted your life in the past, present, and possible future?

Revised Autobiography: (15%) *I will hand back your graded autobiographies by [date]. You will then have a week to revise these, based on my comments and suggestions. The revised papers should incorporate material covered in class, and use proper citations of course readings and lectures. They must be 5 pages long.*

Critical Response Memos: (15%) (3-5 pages) *Twice during this summer session (during the weeks of your choice), write a critical response memo on the week's readings. The response memo should be approximately 3-5 pages long. Your memo should summarize the major theoretical and empirical contributions of the readings as well as engage in a critical response to them. This may mean assessing the plausibility of the reading's findings according to sociological theory and/or methodological standards, comparing/contrasting the author's work to other readings, applying the concepts to various*

aspects of social life, and/or identifying gaps in or extensions to the theoretical or empirical contributions of the reading.

The critical response memo is due the Monday after the week you are writing for by 12 noon. Please submit the assignment in the link titled "Critical Response Memo" under the "Week 4" icon on the left side of this LATTE page by the due date and time.

Discussion Posts/Participation: (35%) *Participation in the discussion forum is essential to your success, and the success of the class as a whole. You will be required to post to the discussion forum three times per week. Your post should be between 250-500 words. These discussion will allow you the opportunity to show that you understand the material – or if you don't understand something, talk about that too – and that you can think critically about the readings. For each set of readings I will provide discussion questions for you to respond to.*

Final Paper: (25%) (5-7 pages) TBD

Extra Credit: *Choose one or more sociological concept(s) and use a television show, movie, book, song or music video, current news event to explain that concept in 3 pages.*

All assignments must be turned in on time and must adhere to paper formatting parameters (see below) for full credit.

☒ *Late assignments: 5 points per day late will be deducted from the assignment grade.*

☒ *Lack of adherence to formatting parameters: 10 points total will be deducted from the assignment grade. Any paper that does not meet ALL of the parameters below will have points deducted.*

Paper Formatting Parameters: *To help you communicate clearly and to ensure consistency across class participants, the following paper formatting parameters should be used for all of the above assignments:*

- ☐ *1 inch margins all around (top, bottom, left, right)*
- ☐ *Times New Roman, size 12 font*
- ☐ *Double-spaced*
- ☐ *Paginate*
- ☐ *Use a single, consistent citation format (ASA, APA, MLA, etc.)*
- ☐ *A maximum of 10 spelling or grammar errors. Use spellcheck.*

Academic Integrity: *You are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity. While the social exchange of ideas is, in fact, encouraged in and beyond the classroom, the assignments turned in under your name must be original and produced independent of others. When using words or ideas of others (this includes academic writers, anything found on the Internet, your classmates, your parents, etc.), you must acknowledge your source by using proper references (see Paper Formatting Parameters above) and quotation marks to delineate any direct use of others' words or ideas.*

Please refer to [Section 4, "Maintenance of Academic Integrity,"](#) of the Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities booklet. Violations of University policies on academic integrity may result in failure in the course or on the assignment and could end in suspension from the University. You are encouraged to speak with me for clarification on this policy and/or if you have any questions about course assignment

instructions.

Accommodations: If you are a student who needs accommodations because of a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please contact me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible.

Visiting students who have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, should contact Gwenn Smaxwill, Summer School Director (x63424) or smaxwill@brandeis.edu. Current Brandeis undergraduates should contact Academic Services (x63470) for assistance.

Letters of accommodation should be presented at the start of the semester to ensure timely and proper provision of accommodations. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively.

Week 1:

Introduction to the class: Social Theory and Research Methods

and

Culture and Socialization. Read (40 pgs): Henslin, "Eating Your Friends is the Hardest" and Caplow "Rule Enforcement Without Visible Means" and Thorne and Luria, "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds"

Networks and Social Class Read (31 pgs): Erickson "Social Networks: The Value of Variety;" Granfield "Making it by Faking it;" and Edelson "Basketball Safe Haven"*

Week 2:

Intersectionality Read Collins, Patricia Hill, Black Feminist Thought, second edition (Routledge, 2008)*

Watch: Crenshaw, Kimberly, "The Urgency of Intersectionality"

TED Talk:

https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?utm_source=te

[dcomshare&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=tedspread](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=tedspread)

Week 3:

Deviance Read (60 pgs total): Becker, "Becoming a Marihuana User;" Adams, "Marked Difference: Tattooing and its Association with Deviance in the United States;" Phillips, "Gallo's Body"*

Week 4:

Race and Ethnicity Read (52 pgs total): Bertrand and Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination;" LaBossiere "Race, Gender, and Prison Populations;" Wellburn and Pittman, "Stop Blaming the Man;" and Waters, "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?"*

Week 5:

Gender and Sexuality Read (35 pgs total): NY Times article; Lorber, "Night to His Day;" Pascoe, "'Dude, you're a fag': Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse"*

Week 6:

*Mass Media and Public Opinion. Read (49 pgs total):
Hammond "The Power Elite in the Media;" Croteau & Hoynes, pp.
374-390; Lee et al., "TV Viewing and Ethnic Stereotypes;"
O'Hehir, "Did TV Change America's Mind on Gay Marriage?;"
Baumgartner et al., "The Fey Effect"*

Week 7:

*Sociology of Religion, Read (42 pgs total): Smart, "Seven
Dimensions of Religion;" Wikibooks, "Intro to Soc/Religion;"
Lam, "Mac Devotion as Religion"*

Week 8:

*Political Economy and Work. Read (59 pgs total): Frisch
and Edelman articles on student athletes; Bernstein "Desire,
Demand, and the Commerce of Sex;" Wright & Rogers "Labor
Unions;" Yates "Why Unions?"*

Week 9:

Political Sociology and Social Movements Read (75 pgs):
Glasberg & Shannon, pp. 15-44; Croteau & Hoynes, pp. 484-491;
Moore & Roberts "DIY Mobilization: Punk and Social
Movements;" Barnard "Freegan Dumpster Divers"*

Week 10:

Wrap Up and Finish Final Papers