

SOC 202 – Principles of Sociology

3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Annika Wilcox (amwilcox@ncsu.edu)

Course Description and Objectives

This course offers an introduction to sociology. We will discuss key processes and institutions (including interaction, inequality, organizations, socialization, and social change), along with core sociological concepts, methods, and theories. My general goals for this course are that students will learn to think sociologically, make evidence-based arguments, become aware of key sociological concepts and issues, and make connections between course materials and their lived experiences.

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe and demonstrate knowledge of the sociological imagination.
2. Explain the differences between personal troubles and public issues.
3. Use quantitative and/or qualitative evidence to support arguments.
4. Identify social inequalities in day-to-day life.
5. Question taken-for-granted assumptions about ‘the way things are’.
6. Use course materials to make sense of personal experiences.

Course Materials

1. Textbook: Kerry Ferris and Jill Stein. *The Real World: An Introduction to Sociology*. 6th edition. W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN: 978-0393251036. (referred to as “RW” on course schedule)
2. Other reading materials, when required, will be posted on Moodle.

Instructional Methods

Class periods will typically begin with a brief, approximately 15-minute, interactive lecture. Following, the remaining majority of the class period will be devoted to a combination of discussion (small- and large-group), informal writing assignments, and interactive activities. We will conclude with large-group debriefing and a review of upcoming topics and assignments.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

1. Assigned readings: There will be assigned readings for most classes. These must be completed *before the class period for which they are assigned*. Completing assigned readings on schedule is crucial for your success in this course.
2. In-class participation (75 points): *In-class participation is required; you must read the assigned reading to prepare for in-class participation*. Discussion (small- and large-group) and informal writing assignments will be a regular part of each class period and will comprise your in-class participation grade. In order to get full credit for in-class participation, you must be prepared for class, attend class, and participate in class discussion and class activities (including informal writing assignments).
3. Data Workshop Assignment (100 points): You will choose one of two assignment options to further examine a topic that we cover in Unit 1. Each option entails collecting a small amount of data and writing a 3-4 page essay analysis. Instructions regarding the data workshop assignment can be found on Moodle.
4. Class Discussion Leadership (25 points): You will choose a class period during Unit 2 in which

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you will work with a group of 4 of your classmates to lead class discussion for 30-45 minutes. Instructions regarding class discussion leadership can be found on Moodle.

5. Midterm Exam (100 points): The midterm exam will center on information covered in the first half of the course and will consist of short-answer/essay questions.
6. Visual Essay Assignment (100 points): You will create a photo/visual essay in which you use 4 original photos or other visuals to illustrate and explain a social problem that occurs within a social institution in our society (building upon Unit 3 content). The social problem you focus on will be up to you. Instructions regarding the visual essay assignment will be distributed later in the semester.
7. Concept Map Activity (25 points): You will work in groups to complete this open-book and open-note activity during our final class period.
8. Final Exam (75 points): The final exam will center on information covered in the second half of the course and will consist of short-answer/essay questions.

Final grades are determined by the percentage of earned points out of the total points (500) available. Therefore, your grade is made up of

- In-class participation: 15%
- Data Workshop Assignment (Unit 1): 20%
- Class Discussion Leadership (Unit 2): 5%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Visual Essay Assignment (Unit 3): 20%
- Concept Map: 5%
- Final Exam: 15%

Course Policies

Attendance Policy: Attendance is necessary for success in this course. Student participation is required. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to collect notes and other materials that were missed. If you become ill and are unable to attend class meetings, absences will typically be considered excused, but you must communicate your situation with your instructor.

Technology Requirements: In order to succeed in this class, you will need regular access to a computer and a reliable internet connection. You will need to be able to check your email regularly. You also may want to sign up for reminders about due dates of major course assignments/assessments through remind.com (you can find instructions on Moodle).

Late Assignments: Late assignments are generally not accepted and will not earn any points; however, some exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. You are free to contact me personally by email if you would like to make the case for your submitting a late assignment for credit. I am more likely to grant you an extension if you contact me well in advance of the assignment deadline (as compared to if you contact me on the day of the deadline or after the deadline has passed).

Writing Policy: Effective writing is necessary for success in college. However, sometimes students do not gain basic writing skills prior to beginning college coursework. I reserve the right to ask you to visit the writing center for assistance if your writing is in need of improvement.

Academic Integrity and Honesty: I expect all of my students to comply with the university requirements regarding academic integrity and academic honesty. Please read further about these requirements in the Code of Student Conduct at (*insert link*).

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Course Schedule

Unit 1: Basic Concepts

- **Week 1:** Course Introduction; Sociological Imagination (read syllabus and RW p. 6-16)
- **Week 2:** Theoretical Perspectives (read RW p. 16-31); Methods & Evidence-Based Arguments (read RW ch. 2)
- **Week 3:** Culture & Ideology (Read RW ch. 3)
- **Week 4:** Socialization & Self (Read RW ch. 4)

Unit 2: Social Inequalities

- **Week 5:** Social Class (read RW ch. 7; *Data Workshop Assignment Due*)
- **Week 6-7:** Gender (read RW ch. 9, Johnson article, West and Zimmerman article)
- **Week 7-8:** Race (read RW ch. 8, Tatum article, Hartmann article)
- **Week 8-9:** Intersectionality (read Kaufman article, Yoder and Aniakudo article, listen to “Intersectionality Matters” Podcast)
- **Midterm exam**

Unit 3: Social Institutions

- **Week 10:** Politics and Education (read RW p. 286-313)
- **Week 11:** Religion (read RW p. 313-321); Work & Economy part 1 (read RW p. 324-335 and 343-351)
- **Week 12:** Work & Economy part 2 (read RW p. 335-343 and 351-357); Family (read RW ch. 12)
- **Week 13:** Mass Media (read RW p. 393-405)

Unit 4: Social Change and the “Big Picture”

- **Week 14:** Social Change & Reflection (read RW ch. 16; *Visual Essay Assignment Due*)
- **Week 15:** Review (*complete Concept Map in class*)
- **Final exam**