

Master Syllabus

1. Course Information

College: College of Liberal Arts
Department: Sociology and Anthropology
Course Title: The Sociological Imagination
Course Designation and Number: SOC 205
GE Areas:
III: Human Behavior – Sociology
VI: College Component

Writing Intensive: Yes ___ No

For WI Courses: All sections ___ Selected Sections are WI

Method(s) of Instruction: Lecture
 Discussion
 Web-enhanced
 Web-only
 Other

2. Objectives

GE Program Objectives:

- ...to develop skills and knowledge that will form the basis for lifelong learning.
- ...sharpen critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

GE Area Three Objectives

- a. use multiple approaches/perspectives to systematically analyze complex individual and institutional behavior culturally, subculturally, and/or cross-culturally
- b. recognize appropriate use of social scientific knowledge

GE Area Six Objectives

- a. communicate with individuals who are in the student's major, in allied fields and non-specialists
- b. understand important relationships and interdependencies between the student's major other academic disciplines, world events or life endeavors
- c. additionally meet the objectives of Area I, II, III, IV, or V.

Course Objectives and G.E. Learning Outcomes

The course critically exams four works by a diverse set of sociologists (in terms of ethnicity, race, gender and time period) that exemplify the critical approach to social knowledge and research that C. Wright Mills called "the sociological imagination." The student will develop an appreciation of a variety of ways in which humans form associations with one another and understand their and others' relationships. In addressing the texts the student will sharpen critical thinking skills; learn about moral, social and cultural dimensions needed for participation in the human community and increase knowledge and understanding of the past, the present world we live in and how both may impact on the future.

Area Three outcomes addressed:

Using multiple approaches of the four texts and their authors, students analyze complex individual and institutional behaviors culturally, subculturally, and cross-culturally. Students also confront questions in regard to the ethical use of social science raised in the books and class.

Area Six outcomes addressed:

Students in this class focus upon C.Wright Mills' "sociological Imagination" approach which was explicitly developed to help understand and reflect upon the relationship of the students major of sociology and both world events and life endeavors.

For WI Courses: WAC Objectives

-To improve students' writing proficiency-their ability to develop and transmit information for an appropriate audience in an organized, coherent fashion while writing with appropriate style and correct grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

-To encourage students to use writing as a learning tool to explore and structure ideas, to articulate thoughts and questions, and to discover what they know, thereby empowering students to use writing as a tool of discovery, self-discipline, and thought.

Students will meet the WAC objectives by keeping an on-going journal of their reflections on course materials and discussions which in turn will provide the foundation for a final position paper. The paper will be about 1500 words long. Students will be given the opportunity to revise the final paper after receiving written feedback from the instructor.

3. Suggested Course Materials

Four suggested books to be used in the course are:

Harriet Martineau, *How to observe morals and manners.*

Emile Durkheim, *Moral education: a study in the theory and application of the sociology of education.*

Erving Goffman, *Stigma, notes on the management of spoiled identity.*

Elijah Anderson, *Code of the street: decency, violence and the moral life of the inner city.*

4. Suggested Methods of Evaluation

Three to five multiple choice exams covering lecture material

An on-going writing assignment in which students record their own reflections on course materials and which forms the basis for a final position paper

Prepared participation in class discussions

5. Grading Policy

All GE courses are graded A-F.

WI component is graded Pass/Unsatisfactory.

6. Suggested Weekly Course Outline Including Typical Assignments

Week 1 - The sociological imagination

Discussion of the nature and purpose of this course is presented focusing on the concept of the sociological imagination as developed in the work of C. Wright Mills. Emphasis is on sociology as *both* a moral discipline and a social science that focuses on empirical material to illuminate the link between social conditions and the generation of individual troubles.

Week 2 - The language of sociology

Review of the basic terminology used in sociological discourse. Terms looked at include norm, role, socialization, value, culture, class, gender, ethnic group, deviance, empirical observation and so on.

Week 3 - Harriet Martineau's How to observe morals and manners: an introduction

Discussions of Martineau's intellectual background, the state of social science in her time, her prior sociological writings, her purpose in writing the book and her use of the language of utilitarian philosophy to present her ideas. (Read all of Martineau by end of week)

Week 4 - Harriet Martineau's How to observe morals and manners: its central arguments

Discussion of Martineau's understanding of empirical observation, her development of a cultural relativist orientation, her presentation of methodological "requisites," the difficulties she saw in achieving objective analysis, and the later influence of her ideas.

Week 5 - Emile Durkheim's Moral Education: an introduction

Discussion of the fundamental ideas and assumptions of Durkheim's general sociology including discussions of anomie and anomic suicide, the *sui generis* nature of society, and the use of sociology in planning social reform. (Read all of Durkheim by end of week)

Week 6 - Emile Durkheim's Moral Education: its central arguments

Discussion of Durkheim's conceptions of morality, human nature, socialization, the role of the teacher in society, the relationship of student to teacher and the future of education, and some of the influence of these ideas on later sociologists.

Week 7 - Erving Goffman's Stigma: an introduction

Discussion of background materials including Mead's and Cooley's respective ideas about socialization and self-identity and Lemert's and Becker's conceptions of deviant identities and interactions. (read all of Goffman by end of week)

Week 8 - Erving Goffman's Stigma: its central arguments

Discussion of the variety of ways that, according to Goffman, individuals manage deviant identities, marginal statuses and "damaged" self-identities in difficult and contradictory social settings and the influence of Goffman's ideas on contemporary sociology.

Week 9 - Elijah Anderson's Code of the Street: an introduction

Discussion of the development of urban ethnographic race and ethnic studies in the American sociology with an emphasis on the writings of Park and Burgess (and their students) and those of Herbert Gans. (read all of Anderson by end of week)

Week 10 - Elijah Anderson's Code of the Street: its central arguments

Discussions of the main themes of Anderson's book emphasizing the distinction between "the code of the street" and the "code of the decency" and the socio-economic forces that support the former and undermine the latter.

7. Other

Syllabus distributed to students should employ the format approved by UCAP and must include:

- Instructor name, office hours, and course information
- Office of disability service information
- Information on how grades will be determined
- Attendance policy

