

SOCI 1000 910: Introduction to Sociology

Penn Summer Session I: May 22, 2023- Jun 28, 2023

(TENTATIVE- version 2/27/23)

Instructor: Raka Sen (she/her), PhD Student in Sociology Email:

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Class meetings: MW 5:15pm-9:06pm

Office Hours: TBD

Office Hour Zoom ID: TBD

Course Canvas Page: TBD

Course Zoom Meetings: TBD

Course Description:

SOCI 001-920 (Cross-listed as AFRC002-920): Introduction to Sociology is a survey course designed to orient students to the discipline of sociology. The sociological enterprise is concerned with human behavior and social interaction. Sociologists study the way people interact with each and the world around them. In this course, students will be exposed to several sub-topics within the discipline and be introduced to sociological research methods. Because sociology is concerned with the world in which we live, each student is more than welcome to bring their own experiences into the classroom. As a class, we will explore the social world, expand our sociological imaginations, and hopefully broaden our worldviews.

Students will learn through a variety of modalities including lectures, group discussions, writing, readings, videos/movies, podcasts, and other forms of media.

Course Goals:

Some of the topics we cover in class will be familiar to students and others less so. In that regard, the instructor expects students (and herself) to not make assumptions about anyone's exposure to course content through lived experience or prior academic work. In addition, the heart of sociological research is inequality; therefore, we will have difficult and honest conversations about the inequalities that exist across class, race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexuality, family background, etc. That being said, the major goals of this course are for students to gain experience in showing compassion and understanding, navigate difference, and to collaborate with peers.

Other course objectives include:

- Students should be exposed to the breadth of sociological research
- Students should understand the central theories and history of sociology
- Students should be able to connect theory to empirical research
- Students should gain experience in project management and learning across varying modalities
- Students should gain research and writing experience

Course Policies:

These course policies are meant to be a compact between the instructor and the entire class. Given the compressed schedule of this summer session, adherence to these policies will lead to an enriching learning experience for everyone.

- **Timeliness:** We are all busy people and therefore we must respect each other's time.
 - Late assignments without proper documentation (doctor's note/pre-approval from instructor) will not be expected.
 - Absences without proper documentation (doctor's note/pre-approval from instructor) will result in a 20% decrease in participation points. However, each student is allowed ONE excused absence during the summer term without a grade penalty.
 - Students should log into the course Zoom on time.
- **Academic Integrity**
 - While this course encourages collaborating with peers, all written work must be original work with researched work properly attributed with citations (ASA or APA formatting preferred).
 - Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If you have questions about attributions or citations, do not hesitate to ask to the instructor.
 - Please review Penn's plagiarism policy here: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>
- **Class Preparedness and Participation**
 - Students are expected to have read each class's assigned readings before class.
 - The instructor recognizes that speaking out loud (especially over Zoom) can be daunting, but the participation of each student is necessary for everyone's learning. The instructor will also provide multiple opportunities

for students to participate including but not limited to polls, pop quizzes, use of the breakout rooms, and the comment box.

- Students are expected to engage respectfully and to be mindful of the amount of space they are taking up.
- Accommodations
 - The University of Pennsylvania provides accommodations for students with disabilities. If you need accommodations, please request them through Student Disabilities Services. In addition, students can make appointments with Weingarten Learning Resources Center staff members for other forms of academic support including time-management, tutoring, and college reading tips.
 - If you are learning from a time zone more than 8 hours behind or ahead of EST, please contact instructor to reach an arrangement.

Course Materials:

As we've heard time and again, we are in unprecedented circumstances without access to our usual course support systems. Therefore, the instructor has tried to make sure that all course materials are located online at little to no cost to the student. If you have trouble accessing any course content, the instructor will help source the material. We will be using the sociology experiment (<https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/>) as our textbook and you may need to buy a few of the chapters from the website (up to \$10). Please let the instructor know if this is inaccessible for you. In addition to the assigned readings, the instructor will use a course YouTube playlist and a series of podcasts.

Assignments and Grading:

Participation & Attendance (30%):

See "Timeliness" section of Course Policies

Sociology in the News (10%):

Students will select a theme from the course schedule and find a reputable news article about the topic. Students will prepare a brief summary (1 paragraph) of how the week's course materials help us understand the news article and/or how the news article provides an example of the course material. For the week you prepare a 'Sociology in the News', you do not have to respond to the week's discussion question.

Discussion Posts (30%):

By 5pm the day before class (e.g. Sunday at 5pm for Monday class and Tuesday at 5pm for Wednesday Class), students are expected to respond to the discussion

questions on Canvas. Each post should be 200 words (+/- 20 words) and engage the course materials.

Final Project (30%):

The final project is meant to be an opportunity for students to culminate their learning. Students can write an original research paper, prepare a literature review, create a series of op-eds, develop a podcast, etc. The format of the project is open-ended, but students should use research skills and course materials to ground their arguments. With pre-approval, students may work in groups of no more than three students.

Grade Rubric:

94%-100%=A	90%-93%=A-	87%-89%=B+	83%-86%=B
80%-82%=B-	77%-79%=C+	73%-76%=C	70%-72%=C-
67%-69%=D+	63%-66%-=D	60%-62%=D-	<60%=F

Resources for Students/Helpful Links:

The following resources are meant to help students succeed in this course and beyond.

[Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#)

[Marks Family Center for Excellence in Writing](#)

[Penn Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Penn Libraries Sociology Research Guide](#)

[Penn Libraries Skills Workshops](#)

Course Schedule

Class 1: Monday, May 22 – The Sociological Imagination

Required:

Register as a student for A Sociology Experiment. Read the Introduction chapter.

Watch on Youtube: What Is Sociology?: Crash Course Sociology #1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio&ab_channel=CrashCourse

Recommended:

Mills, C.Wright. "Chapter 1: The Promise". *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press USA - OSO, 2000. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.upenn.edu/lib/upenn-ebooks/detail.action?docID=497661>.

Discussion Question:

- How is our behavior affected by being in a group?
- What does it mean to think sociologically?
- How did the Industrial Revolution and growth of cities influence the development of sociology?
- How did early thinkers view the role of conflict and cohesion in societies?
- What did each scholar see as the driving force in society?
- What did Jane Addams and W.E.B. Du Bois see that other sociologists missed?
- How does adding gender and race to our analysis help us better understand society?

Class 2: Wednesday May 24 –Theoretical Perspectives

Required:

WEB DuBois. 1936. Black Reconstruction in America. Selections. [PDFs will be posted to Canvas.]

Recommended:

Discussion Question:

Class 3: Wednesday, May 31 – Theoretical Perspectives II

Required:

Marx, Karl. *Communist Manifesto*, Electric Book Company, 2000. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.upenn.edu/lib/upenn-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3008638>.

Weber, M. (1930). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.upenn.edu/10.4324/9780203995808>
Selections.

Discussion Question:

Class 4: Monday, June 5 – Race and Ethnicity

Required:

A Sociology Experiment - Race and Ethnicity

Recommended:

Discussion Question:

Class 5: Wednesday, June 7 – Immigration and Urbanization

Required:

A Sociology Experiment - Immigration and Urbanization.

Recommended:

Class 6: Monday, June 12– Methods and Introducing the Final Project

FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE:

Required:

A Sociology Experiment - Research Methods

Recommended:

Give Methods a Chance, [“Amy Schalet on In-Depth Interviews”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“C.J. Pascoe on Ethnographic Research”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“Christopher Wildeman on Quantitative Data Analysis”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“Deborah Carr on Longitudinal Studies”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“Dale C. Spencer on Observant Participation and Becoming a Mixed Martial Artist”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“Melissa Wilde on Conducting Comparative Historical Research”](#)

Give Methods a Chance, [“Daniel Sui on the Methodological Advantages and Limitations of Big Data”](#)

Discussion Question: _____

- 1) Why are some methods more or less appropriate for certain research questions?
- 2) What method(s) do you think you'll use for the final project?

Class 7: Monday, July 19th -- Gender

Required:

A Sociology Experiment - Gender and Sexuality.

Recommended:

Discussion Question:

Class 8: Wednesday, June 14 – Gender II

Required:

Federici, Silvia. Caliban And The Witch: Women, The Body And Primitive Accumulation. Penguin Books, 2021. Selections.

Maria Mies. TTKK. Patriarchy and Accumulation On A World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour. 2nd Edition. Selections. [PDFs will be posted to Canvas.]

Recommended:

Discussion Question: _____

Class 9: Wednesday, June 21 – Intersectionality

Required

Collins, Hill Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Routledge, 2015.

Recommended:

Discussion Question:

Class 10: Monday, June 26th – Sociology of Climate Change

Required:

Mary Heglar. 2019. Climate Change Ain't the First Existential Threat. Medium. Feb 18.

Ranganathan, M. 2016. Thinking with Flint: Racial Liberalism and the Roots of an American Water Tragedy. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, 27(3), pp. 17–33.

Recommended:

Nick Estes. 2019. *Our History is Your Future*. New York: Verso.

Discussion Question:

Class 11: Wednesday, June 28th – Final Project Presentations