I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to sociological analysis, writing and research. Sociology offers us crucial insight into vexing and intriguing social issues—for example, shifting sexual and gender norms, changing racial and ethnic demographics, an increasingly global economy and communications network, stark socioeconomic disparities, battles over national borders, and influential popular media. Sociologists examine the social world on many different levels and critically examine our taken for granted understandings of how society operates. Sociology offers a way of thinking about our lives and the world in which we live that is different from our “common sense” assumptions about society. Using the tools of academic sociology, we can analyze the largely invisible forces shaping individuals and society. To create this knowledge about society and the people in it, sociologists rely on professionally organized methodologies and theories. These methods are central to the sociological perspective, and can be used to better understand the world and create positive social change. This course uses sociological analyses of youth issues and youth cultures as a lens through which to explore key sociological perspectives and the value and logic of critical sociological research. We examine how sociology as a mode of inquiry can both reveal and challenge social inequalities facing youth in our contemporary world.

The primary objectives of the course are to improve students’ skills in: (a) analyzing sociological research, (b) writing sociological papers, and (c) discussing contemporary sociological issues. To do so, we will use readings, discussions, group exercises, and skills-building workshops. We have three main sections in the class:

- Section One: we set the foundations for our sociological minds, considering the personal, intellectual, and methodological foundations of sociological thinking.
- Section Two: we learn about and apply primary sociological concepts, asking and answering the question – what is a sociological perspective?
- Section Three: we employ the foundational concepts and perspectives from the first two sections to analyze research in substantive sociological areas including intersectionality, emotions, globalization, identity, and social change.

This section of Soc 300 differs from regular sections in that it fulfills the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) and is equivalent to taking and passing the Junior English Proficiency Exam (JEPET). Consequently, it is a writing intensive course that provides students with extensive writing practice and a high level of writing support.
II. PREREQUISITES

In order to take Soc 300, students must complete all Segment I, General Education requirements. This includes: Written and Oral Communication, Critical Thinking and Quantitative Reasoning, as well as English 214. You must be a registered sociology major, and have 60 units completed. If you have not taken English 214 (Sophomore English) or its equivalent at another college or university (and achieved a passing grade), you cannot take the course. This is a writing intensive course, and you will be graded on your spelling, grammar, organization, and ability to develop an overall argument in written form. These are the basics of the writing and research process, so it is imperative that you have taken Sophomore English. At the second course meeting, students will provide transcript evidence of completion of ENG 214. Students who have not completed this course will be dropped during the second week.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Text
Course Reader: Details on purchasing the reader will be announced at the first class meeting.

Assignments and Grading

Classroom Assignments

1) Classroom participation:
   • You are expected to attend all classes, read the assigned texts prior to class, and participate in classroom activities. Classroom activities will include small group discussions and written exercises, as well as large group discussions. We will have unannounced participation exercises from time to time, and your involvement in them will affect your overall participation grade.

2) Reading Quizzes:
   • We will have short, unannounced reading quizzes. For these quizzes, you will be asked to write analytical summaries of readings or answer multiple choice or fill in the blank questions. Sometimes the quiz for the day might be an in-class exercise, or take home assignment. You may use hand-written notes for these quizzes, but no copies of the readings. You may not make up reading quizzes due to lateness or absence.

3) Writing Groups:
   • We will have in-class peer writing groups twice during the semester. They will be during Week 9 and Week 15. For these days, you must bring in a draft of the assigned paper. You will receive points for your participation in the groups. We will do writing groups for Paper Two and the Final Paper (details below).
Writing Assignments

4) Paper 1: The Sociological Imagination
   • Length: 2-3 pages, double-spaced.
   • Focus: This paper will have two parts: 1) An explanation of Mills’ concept “the Sociological Imagination”; 2) A critical discussion of the importance of using the sociological imagination to examine youth issues, using illustrative examples from Schaffner’s article “So Called Girl-on-Girl Violence is Actually Adult-on-Girl Violence.”
   • Skills: This paper will require you to: (a) explain and apply sociological concepts, and (b) organize your ideas in written form.
   • Due: Week 3, Class 1

5) Homework Writing Assignment: Sociological Practices
   • Length: 3 pages double-spaced.
   • Focus: In this assignment, you will think and write about the difference between Lemert’s “practical sociology” (everyday sociological thinking) and professional sociology. It is not an essay assignment, but will require you to follow guiding questions provided, so as to explore the methods sociologists use when doing research about the social world, and consider sociology’s unique empirical perspective.
   • Skills: This assignment requires you to: (a) use proper sociological citation practices, (b) construct strong and concise paragraphs, and (c) assess sociological methods of inquiry.
   • Due: Week 6, Class 2.

6) Paper 2: The Sociological Perspective:
   • Length: 4-5 pages, double-spaced.
   • Focus: In this paper, you will answer the question: what are the major concepts and ideas underlying a sociological perspective? This paper will have two main parts: 1) You will explore the main components of sociology, and discuss the primary aspects of the sociological perspective; 2) You will analyze the value of using a sociological perspective to analyze youth issues relating to questions of power, relationships with social institutions, and structure / agency.
   • Skills: This assignment requires you to: (a) use proper sociological citation practices, (b) develop and support an analytical thesis, (c) apply sociological concepts to research studies, and (d) revise your written work in response to instructor feedback.
   • Due: Full Draft Version is due Week 9, Class 2; Revised Version is due Week 11, Class 2
7) **Final Paper:**
- *Length:* 6-7-pages, double-spaced.
- *Focus:* You will analyze the readings from Section Three in relation to the material from the previous sections of the course. You must determine what threads run through the articles. The focus of the paper will engage with the argument: these materials offer important sociological information about youth because… In responding to this question, you will devise an analytical focus and argument through which you explore the main contributions of these pieces in the construction of an empirical sociological perspective about youth.
- *Skills:* This assignment requires you to: (a) use proper sociological citation practices, (b) develop an original analytic thesis, (c) support your thesis using multiple sociological sources, (d) write strong, concise paragraphs, (e) organize material into a coherent essay, and (f) revise your written work in response to instructor feedback.
- *Due:* Full Draft Version is due Week 15, Class 2; Revised Version is due Finals Week (exact date will be announced in class).

Note: More detailed instructions on all writing assignments will be given out in class.

**Point Breakdown:**

a) Classroom participation: 10 points
b) Quizzes: 15 points
c) Writing Groups: 05 points (2.5 each)
d) Paper 1: 10 points
e) Homework Assignment: 15 points
f) Paper 2: 20 points
g) Final Paper: 25 points

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100 points
IV. EXPECTATIONS

The objectives of this course will be best achieved with full participation of both students and instructor. Full student participation includes attendance, as well as:

- Reading the assigned materials and coming to class prepared to pay attention and participate.
- Taking part in both large and small group discussions and exercises.
- Turning off and stowing cell phones and pagers when entering class.
- Anyone using a laptop must sit in the front of the class, and use the computer for note taking only.
- Listening to others, giving your own opinion, and showing respect to instructor and fellow students.
- Contacting instructor when you’re unclear about an assignment. Do this before the due date, as you will still be held to the timeline.
- Handing in all assignments on time. Late papers will have points removed each day (equivalent to half a grade point per day). I do not accept papers later than one week past the due date. I will NOT accept emailed papers.

SOC 300-GWAR is a writing intensive class. To help you develop your writing skills, we will have in-class writing workshops, we will share work with one another, and we will practice revising and editing. For additional help, contact the Learning Assistance Center (338-1993; www.sfsu.edu/~lac) for a schedule of their writing workshops and information about their tutorial services. Also talk with me and your classmates for help with your writing concerns and goals.

**Academic Integrity:**
Students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. All academic assignments are to be the work of the individual student. Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of the university. Academic dishonesty, in the form of cheating or plagiarism, represents an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and the San Francisco State University Student Code of Conduct expressly prohibits it. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and may result in a failing grade on an assignment, or failure and/or dismissal from the course.

You can get more information on avoiding plagiarism at http://online.sfsu.edu/~rone/StudentHelp/Plagiarism.html#what

Students are responsible for knowing the SFSU regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism, found in the Bulletin and online: http://www.sfsu.edu/%7Ehelpdesk/docs/rules/conduct.htm.

**Information for Multilingual Students:**
It is important that multilingual students get to make the best possible use of the course and the class materials and assignments. If you are a non-native English speaker, and think this will affect your reading pace or assignments, you are invited to communicate
with me about options and support. Information on the SFSU Composition for Multilingual Students Program, including ESL resources and courses, is available on the web at: http://www.sfsu.edu/~cmls/.

Accommodations:
It is my responsibility and interest to make this course accessible to all students. If you have any disability related needs, please communicate with me as soon as possible. You can also contact the Disability Resource Center at 338-2472 (voice / TTY), and information is available on the web at: http://www.sfsu.edu/~dprc/

Drop Deadlines: TBA

V. COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION

Class One. Syllabus, class members, and logistics

Reading
- None

Class Two. Seminar discussions: Strategies for rethinking conventional classroom roles

Reading

PART ONE:
SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

WEEK TWO: SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTMENTS AND IMAGINATIONS

Class One. Why are we sociologists?

Reading
- Lemert. “Introduction.” (Pp. xii-xviii) and Chapter 1, “Imagining Social Things, Competently” (pp. 3-15).
Class Two. Sociological imagination: What constitutes sociological mindfulness?

READING

WEEK THREE: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Class One. Sociological imagination: Asking critical questions about youth and social inequality

ASSIGNMENT DUE
• Paper One

READING

Class Two. Everyday Sociology and Barriers to the Sociological Imagination

READING

WEEK FOUR: SOCIOLOGICAL METHODOLOGIES I

Class One. Professional Sociology: The value of answering questions systematically

READING

Class Two. Curiosity and Academic Practice

READING
WEEK FIVE: SOCIOLOGICAL METHODOLOGIES II

Class One. Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

READING

Class Two. Workshop: Freewriting and the Writing Process

READING

PART TWO:
UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

WEEK SIX: STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

Class One. Workshop: Citation Practices

READING

Class Two. Individuals and Social Structures

ASSIGNMENT DUE
- Homework Writing Assignment

READING
WEEK SEVEN: CONTENDING WITH SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Class One. Structure and agency: Youth finding their way through historical and cultural legacies

READING
• Stack, Carol. 2001. “Coming of Age in Oakland” In Goode, Judith and Jeff Maskovsky (Eds.) The New Poverty Studies: The Ethnography of Power, Politics, and Impoverished People in the United States.

Class Two. Workshop: Developing and Supporting a Thesis

READING

WEEK EIGHT: STRUCTURING POWER

Class One. Power and Authority

READING
• Lemert. Chapter 7, “The Mysterious Power of Social Structures” (pp. 116-130).

Class Two. Power: Systems of status, authority, and prestige

READING

WEEK NINE: TRANSMITTING PRIVILEGE AND DISADVANTAGE

Class One. Workshop: Peer Writing Review #1 (Bring Draft of Paper 2)

READING
• None
Class Two. Class Power: Young people navigating a world of privilege and disadvantage

Assignment Due:
• Full Draft of Paper 2

Reading

WEEK TEN: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Class One. Social institutions: Youth experiencing cumulative social inequalities

Reading

Class Two. Workshop: Revising and Editing (Full Draft of Paper 2 Returned)

Reading

Part Three:
Practices and Principles in Action

WEEK ELEVEN: THE MATRIX OF OPPRESSION

Class One. Workshop: Sociology Major and Minor Requirements

Reading
• None
Class Two. Power, Difference, and Intersectionality

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:**
- Revised Version of Paper 2

**READING**
- Lemert. Chapter 9, “Well-Measured Lives in a World of Difference” (pp. 149-166).

**WEEK TWELVE: INTERSECTIONALITY**

Class One. In-Class Library Workshop

**READING**
- None

Class Two. Intersectionality: Understanding matrices of race, class, gender, and sexuality in young people’s lives

**READING**

**WEEK THIRTEEN: GLOBAL AND LOCAL AFFECTS ON SEXUALITY**

Class One. Emotions: How young people learn to desire

**READING**

Class Two. Globalization: Intersections of global politics, family, and young people’s sexuality

**READING**

**WEEK FOURTEEN: FALL BREAK**
WEEK FIFTEEN: IDENTITY FORMATION

Class One. Peer Writing Groups #2 (Bring Draft of Final Paper)

READING
• None

Class Two. Identity: Youth coming to a sense of self in the midst of social inequalities

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
• Full Draft of Final Paper

READING

WEEK SIXTEEN: CONCLUSIONS – YOUTH ORGANIZING

Class One. Social change: Youth and adults perpetuating and challenging injustice

READING

Class Two. Conclusions: our accomplishments this semester.

ASSIGNMENT:
• Full Draft of Final Paper Returned

READING
• None

FINALS WEEK

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
• Revised Draft of Final Paper