Course Syllabus

**SYG2000: Introduction to Sociology**

Professor Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Matthew Marr

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Course Description and Purpose

Sociology is the scientific study of human action and interaction. Sociologists argue that individual and group action and experiences are shaped by the social context in which they occur, and in turn, that social context is shaped by individual and group activities and experiences. Sociology, very broadly, aims to understand this interaction. This course will introduce students to various sociological perspectives on issues in contemporary society, as well as how sociologists use research to develop these perspectives. We will cover a variety of broad issues studied by sociologists including social structure, inequality, race, gender, class, families, deviance, work, institutions, and culture. An active “sociological imagination” is
important in professional fields as diverse as education, social work, health, safety, politics, business, economics, and engineering.

**Course Objectives**

This course seeks to enable students to understand their interrelationships with society in critical and global perspectives.

Students will learn to understand the "sociological imagination" and other basic concepts/methods of sociology and apply these concepts/methods to:

- identify the features of society and their interrelationships, especially those related to race, class, and gender;
- analyze interrelationships between society and self;
- explain the foundations of global inequalities; and
- develop viewpoints on how to promote constructive change in societies at the local, national/regional, and global levels.

**Global Learning Outcomes**

This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts towards your FIU Global Learning graduation requirement.

**Global Awareness**: Students will be able to explain how globally diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors are influenced by social forces.

**Global Perspective**: Students will be able to examine social processes from diverse perspectives (e.g. conflict, functionalist, and symbolic interactionist approaches).

**Global Engagement**: Students will be able to propose solutions to a global problem taking into account multiple perspectives.

**Important Information**

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- Policies
- Netiquette  
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Accessibility and Accommodation
- Academic Misconduct Statement
Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

VERY IMPORTANT: If you have any technical problems, do not contact the instructor, immediately contact FIU Canvas Help (https://fiuhelp.force.com/canvas/s/categories-student). They are available to assist via email, phone, chat or walk-in. Visit their website for hours of operation.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Textbook and Course Materials

In this course, we will be using textbook chapters and course materials from "A Sociological Experiment." This is an initiative by leading sociologists to provide high quality introductory materials in an accessible manner. All required materials will be available for purchase on their website (https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/). You can purchase the chapters ($1 a piece) on their website. If that still poses a financial challenge, you can email them to work something out.

Useful Websites

- Countries and Regions (https://data.worldbank.org/country)
- World Bank Development Data and Statistics (http://www.worldbank.org/data/)
- International Monetary Fund (http://www.imf.org)
- United Nations Development Program (http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home.html)

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, meaning that all of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- review the Getting Started module located in the course content;
introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum;

- take the Syllabus Quiz (you need to take the Syllabus Quiz and receive a perfect score in order to gain access to all the modules, including discussions and exams, in the course);

- interact online with instructor and peers;
- review and follow the course calendar; and

- check the course website 3-4 times per week for any updates and notification from the instructor or T.A.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place within Canvas. See the Canvas Guide (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10574-421710325) on communicating with course users for more information.

Visit the FIU Center for Excellence in Writing resources page (https://writingcenter.fiu.edu/resources/index.html) for more information on professional writing and technical communication skills.

Discussions Forums

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

Discussion Forum Posts: 60 possible semester points

Students are required to post to the discussion forum in response to the instructor's discussion questions. These can be accessed by clicking on the “Reply” tab in the “Discussion” link in each weekly module. You will post your response to the questions for that particular week. You will need to read the assigned chapter readings before posting. Use these postings to maximize discussion with your classmates and instructors.

As described below, each post will be graded pass/fail. This means that there will be no partial credit. If your post does not meet all of the criteria below, it will receive zero points. These are “all or nothing” grading procedures. A student's semester grade for the discussion forum will be based on the percentage of the discussion assignments that the student posts and passes.

Students are encouraged to post multiple commentaries for each discussion forum topic: only the first post that each student makes for an assignment will be evaluated according to the
discussion forum rubrics, as presented below. Each student's initial post will be graded pass/fail according to these rubrics:

- Relevance to assigned material: the posted ideas indicate that the student has read the assigned material.
- Clarity, coherence: the ideas are stated clearly and coherently.
- Critical thinking: there is evidence that the student has adequately analyzed, synthesized, and evaluated the assigned material.
- Poses a discussion question about the assigned material or draws a connection between a current event and the assigned material
- Spelling, grammar: the posting must meet university-level standards of spelling and grammar. This is extremely important. I will be very strict about this so proofread your posts!
- Length: the initial posting for each weekly module must be no less than 500 words. I will also be very strict about this. Be sure to do a word count before submitting it.

After posting in response to a discussion forum question, students are encouraged to continue posting informally to continue the dialog with each other and with the instructor.

There will be 6 assigned discussion forum posts. Each post will be graded pass/fail, according to the above criteria. Each student's semester grade for discussion participation will be based on the percentage of the semester's 6 discussion assignments that the student posts and passes: 6=60 points; 5=50 points; 4=40 points; 3=30 points; 2=20 points; 0-1=0 points.

Discussion forum posts are due by Sunday, 11:59 pm the week/module assigned unless otherwise indicated in the course syllabus/calendar. Discussion prompts will be available for the duration of each module.

Exams

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Syllabus Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. You need to receive a perfect score in order to gain access to all the modules, including discussions and exams, in the course.

Multiple-choice/true-false exams & final grade:

- 40 possible points each; 240 possible semester points
- The 6 exams will be based entirely on the textbook A Sociology Experiment.
- Each exam will consist of multiple-choice questions; will cover the textbook's assigned
readings; and will have 20 questions, worth 2 points each. Thus, each exam will count up to a possible 40 points. **The exams will be available within the modules.**

To prepare for each exam, **FIRST READ EACH CHAPTER CAREFULLY.** The following tips will also help you study.

- Look over the lecture slides and videos in the appropriate module for review.
- Emphasize broad concepts and examples of such concepts, rather than narrow facts.
- Look over and complete any other supplemental materials available in the modules or on the [A Sociological Experiment](https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/) website.

Unless otherwise indicated, exams will be available from Thursday to Sunday, 11:59 pm, at the end of each module.

**Group Engagement Assignment**

In this assignment, you will work with a few classmates to gather online sources that provide data and propose policies to address a specific social issue. Then, as individuals, you will compose a letter or an online petition to send to local, state, and/or national representatives in support of a particular policy or approach. Through this assignment you will sharpen your sociological imagination and, by applying it, you will put into practice sociology's principle that the personal is political.

There will be three total submissions for this assignment. First, your group will submit a draft of the sources to receive feedback from the instructor (10 points). Second, your group will re-submit its revised annotated list (10 points). Third, you will submit an individual letter or online petition (20 points).

**Extra Credit and Make-Up Assignments**

There will be no make-up assignments without documented justification.

There will ONLY be one extra-credit assignment on Canvas worth 10 points.

**Grading**

Note: All required assignments must be completed to be eligible to earn a passing grade.

The graded assignments will be 6 multiple-choice/true-false exams (40 possible points each; 240 possible semester points), 6 discussion forum posts (10 possible points each; 60 possible semester points), and a group engagement assignment (40 possible points) adding up to 340 total possible semester points.
Course Summary:

Final grades will be computed by the percentage of 300 total possible semester points earned:
315-350 points (90+%)=A; 280-314 points (80-89%)=B; 245-279 points (70-79%)=C; 210-244 points (60-69%)=D; 209 points or less=F.

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<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>280 - 314 (80-89%)</td>
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<td>209 or less (&lt;60%)</td>
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https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/86945/assignments/syllabus

Do not copy without the express written consent of the instructor.
Course readings:

Part 1: Thinking Like Sociologists

A Sociology Experiment

Shamus Khan, Columbia University; Patrick Sharkey, Princeton University; Gwen Sharp, Nevada State College

Research Methods

Shamus Khan, Columbia University; Gwen Sharp, Nevada State College

Social Structure and the Individual

Judith Halasz, State University of New York at New Paltz; Peter Kaufman, State University of New York at New Paltz

Part 2: The Organization of Society

Social Class, Inequality, and Poverty

Peter Kaufman, State University of New York at New Paltz; Todd Schoepflin, Niagara University

Culture

Jonathan Wynn, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Gender and Sexuality

Angela Barlow, Cardinal Stritch University; Todd Schoepflin, Niagara University

Race and Ethnicity

Rashawn Ray, University of Maryland; Patrick Sharkey, Princeton University
Part 3: Our Social Worlds

Sociology of Families
Angela Barian

Sociology of Education
Maia Cucchiara, Temple University

Sociology of Religion
Melissa J. Wilde, University of Pennsylvania; Patricia Tevington, Montclair State University

Political Sociology
Fabio Rojas, Indiana University

Immigration and Urbanization
Patrick Sharkey, Princeton University; Jody Vallejo, University of Southern California

Deviance, Crime and Violence
Angela Barian; Patrick Sharkey, Princeton University

Economic Sociology
Fabio Rojas, Indiana University

Health and Illness
Margaret T. Hicken, University of Michigan; Hedwig Lee, Washington University in St. Louis

Environmental Sociology
Dana Fisher, University of Maryland; Andrew Jorgenson, Boston College