

SYLLABUS
SOCL 1133 INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY
fall 2025
Tues./Thurs. 9:30

Sociology is the scientific study of human social behavior and human groups. It is a foundation for any discipline or occupation that deals with human beings—and that includes almost all fields.

Professor: Dr. Beverly L. Stiles

OFFICE: O'Donohoe 124

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon. 10:00-12:00

Tues. 9:00-9:30

Wed. 10:00-12:00

Thurs. 9:00-9:30

Friday: By appointment

While I hold regular office hours, I am available to you outside of these times. However, it is best if you make an appointment to see me so that I am free when you stop by. If you do not have an appointment and I am free, I am more than willing to make some time to see you. However, if you just stop by, there will be times when I am unavailable or may be with another student. Do not take this personally

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TEXT: Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life, David M. Newman (14th Edition). ISBN: 978-1-0718-4955-2

The Employable Sociologist, by Martha A. Martinez. This is NOT a required text. Instead, I will provide one chapter from this book on D2L. You may decide to purchase this text if you are interested in majoring or minoring in Sociology. ISBN: 978-3-031-41322-3

COURSE OBJECTIVES—Students should develop the following skills

- Learn to apply sociological concepts and theories to help you use the sociological imagination to understand the connections between individuals and the broader social contexts in which you live.
- Learn to use these concepts and theories to better understand your own social experiences and events in the larger social world.
- This course will allow you to begin to “think” like a sociologist.
- The ability to use multiple perspectives in understanding and analyzing social issues and everyday problems in human living.

- You will learn how to conduct some basic sociological research and learn the variety of ways that sociologists conduct research.
- Critical thinking skills to interpret and analyze multiple media messages at the local, national, and global levels.
- You will learn to communicate well in a world of variation and change.
- You will develop “People skills” in recognizing the needs of different groups and interacting with them as well as identifying potential conflict and potential resolutions.
- The ability to recognize and assess inequality in social situations at work and within the community and existing political structures.

The student should acquire an understanding of the “sociological perspective.” This is an important term because it points to the fact that the discipline of sociology is more than just the facts that have been accumulated. Rather, it is a way of thinking about and viewing human behavior. The “common sense” knowledge of human behavior that we all acquire through living in society often contains a great deal of accurate information—it must if we are to survive in society. However, it also contains much that is erroneous—under rigorous investigation it simply turns out to be false. The sociological perspective goes beyond the level of common-sense knowledge by using scientifically sound procedures to understand human social behavior and human group life. This perspective involves an understanding of both how a sociologist does his or her work—the scientific method as it is utilized in sociology—as well as the knowledge that sociologists have acquired concerning the organization of groups and society.

READING HINTS:

A good textbook does not ensure learning. Textbooks must be used properly. I have found over the years that many students simply do not know how to use a textbook, so I am providing, as a part of this syllabus, some suggestions for reading your text.

- The first rule is to begin reading immediately, don’t postpone.
- Secondly, realize that reading a textbook is different than reading a newspaper, a magazine, a novel, or something on your electronic devices. Much of the latter is written to give you information quickly and at a glance and to entertain. A textbook is designed to instruct, to develop a position, and to support that position. It demands far more from its readers than all of the latter. While newspapers, magazines, novels, and the like are designed to be read only once, the author of a textbook expects that several readings may be required to fully understand the material. So, allow enough time to read the material several times. **One** strategy is to quickly read the material and grasp the general organization and major points, then carefully read a second time, making reading notes, and then reread quickly one more time immediately before an exam. The third time you should be able to quickly read some passages while concentrating on the more difficult ones. This strategy will also give you a good feeling for how the author writes and organizes material.
- Keep reading, even if you reach a passage or even pages that you find difficult and that you do not understand. At least read the words. You will find that while you may not understand one point, the next point may be considerably easier and you may understand it quite well.
- Make a schedule for reading and don’t deviate from it. Set a date to complete your first reading, second, and third. Schedule yourself for only a few pages at any one session.
- Underline and circle words. Mark and write in the margins. The beauty of a loose-leaf textbook is that if you can put your text in a notebook, you can three hole punch and add additional pages with your study notes and even notes from class. All in one tidy package!

ATTENDANCE:

You'll find a high correlation between attendance and class grade! A good portion of each exam will focus on lecture material that is not in the book. In addition, in-class exercises and/or pop quizzes will provide bonus points. Therefore, good attendance is a necessity.

YOU WILL BE DROPPED IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN 3 (THREE) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. I may drop a student for excessive excused absences as well, at my discretion. If your combined excused and unexcused absences add up to more than 3 (three) absences, I will deduct 5 points from your final grade for each additional absence.

An absence is considered officially excused ONLY if a student:

- Presents a written excuse from a physician, or MSU infirmary
- Presents written evidence of attending a mandatory university function (band, choir, sports, etc.)
- Presents a written excuse from a physician for a dependent child's illness, or
- Has a death in his/her immediate family (need proof)

EXAMS AND GRADING:

There will be four (4) exams, including the final (the final is not comprehensive). The first two exams will mostly consist of multiple-choice questions from the text, as well as questions from lecture, in-class exercises, and films. Bonus questions will come from lecture, in-class exercises, and films only. I may have a couple short-answer questions on exam #3. I will not curve grades so bonus questions can help your grade a great deal. This rewards those who come to class. The bonus questions are short answer/essay questions. The final exam will consist of 40 multiple choice questions, worth 80 points, as well as short answers and essays worth 20 points. If you miss an exam, you may have to take an **all essay make-up exam, or combination of multiple choice and essay on the last Thursday of classes, Dec. 4th at 2:00**. Make up exams are permitted when you provide proof of an excused absence. I will lower your grade one letter grade from what you actually score on the exam (I deduct 10 points). If you miss the make-up, you receive an automatic 0 for the exam and an F for the semester. **Having to work is not an excuse for missing class.** If you miss more than one exam on the day it is scheduled, I will automatically drop you from class. Please do not miss any exams.

There will also be 3 additional projects to equal 100 points (the equivalent of an exam grade). The first is a research project (World Bank Data Project or a World Health Project). The second project will consist of one of three possible culture projects in which you will view a YouTube video and answer 5 questions. You will not do well if you do not read the chapter prior to watching the video and answering the questions. The last project is an analysis of a current event, using text concepts and information for the analysis (more info. about this in class and on D2L).

AI: You may **NOT** use AI for class projects, or bonus assignments. This is considered cheating. I use an AI checker. If you use AI, you will receive a zero for the project and I will turn your name in to the university.

EXAMS AND PARTICIPATION	GRADING/POINTS
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points

EXAMS AND PARTICIPATION	GRADING/POINTS
Exam 4	100 points
Projects total 100 points	100 points

To average your grade, add up points and divide by 5 (unless you are exempt from taking the final exam, then you'll divide by 4).

Grades will be determined by the following scale:

A = 90-100
 B = 80-89
 C = 70-79
 D = 60-69
 F = below 60

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Office of Disability Accommodation. The telephone number is 397-4618.

EXAMS			
EXAM 1	Chap. 1: Taking a New Look at a Familiar World. Chap. 4: Community Building for Sociologists in The Employable Sociologist	Chap. 2: Seeing and Thinking Sociologically	Chap. 3: Building Reality: The Social Construction of knowledge
EXAM 2	Chap. 4: Building Order: Culture and History	Chap. 5: Building Identity: Socialization	Chap. 6: The Presentation of Self
EXAM 3	Chap. 7: Intimacy and Families	Chap. 8: Social Deviance	
EXAM 4 (Final). Tues. Dec. 9th, 9:00 am	Chap. 10: Social Class and Inequality	Chap. 11: Race and Ethnicity	Chap. 12: Sex and Gender

Projects	Point Value
Project 1: World Bank Research Project.	50
Project 2: Culture Assignment	25
Project 3: current event analysis, due Sat, Dec.6th at 11:00 pm	25

