Syllabus

Introduction to Sociology - SOAN 111

Instructor: Elizabeth Trudeau
etrudeau@carleton.edu
Carleton College, Leighton Hall 233
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 3 PM-5PM*

*To ensure that I am available a the time you need to speak with me please schedule a time slot:
https://calendly.com/proftrudeau/30min

Overview:

What are the influences that shape who we are and how we think? Why do people act the way they do? How can we better understand why people’s lives take certain paths? The answers to these questions are central to our well-being as individuals and as a society. In this course, you will learn how sociologists approach and answer these questions. During the semester, you will explore our society through a variety of lines of inquiry. What is the link between individuals and their culture? How is social interaction structured and how does this affect our behavior? What is inequality? How do institutions influence our lives? The overarching purpose of the course is to cultivate your “sociological imagination,” which can then be used to better understand yourself and your place in the larger world.

Objectives:

In this course we will cover the foundational concepts of the field of sociology. Students will understand the origins of sociological inquiry and the main types of questions and methods that sociologists employ.

Required Materials:

This course has two required books. Other required readings will be available on Moodle, the library, online, or emailed by the professor (how to access the readings will be listed in the syllabus).

*Unequal Childhoods* 2nd Edition by Annette Lareau (available online through the library)

Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World. By Cecilia Ridgeway
Class Policies

Discrimination

The goal of this course is to create a constructive learning environment for everyone. We will follow Carleton’s non-discriminatory policies which in summary state: “Carleton College is committed to the principle that its educational facilities, activities and employment opportunities shall be offered without regard to race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, gender, national origin, marital status, veteran status, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, status with regard to public assistance, disability or age.” Further details about this policy can be found at: https://apps.carleton.edu/handbook/governance/?policy_id=955843#:~:text=Carleton%20College%20prohibits%20discrimination%20against%20status%20with%20regard%20to%20public

Accommodations

Carleton has resources for you if specialized accommodations of some kind would enable you to be and do your best in this course and all other courses. The most important thing to remember is that these accommodations cannot be applied retroactively. So, even if you are unsure whether accommodations might be available, reach out and ask the Office of Accessibility Resources sooner rather than later.

https://www.carleton.edu/accessibility-resources/accommodations/academic-accommodations/

Academic Integrity. As with all Carleton courses, students in this course are expected to conduct themselves according to the College’s Undergraduate Academic Honor Code. In sum, abide by the course policies, and complete and offer your own work or intellectual property. Full details can be found at https://apps.carleton.edu/handbook/academics/?policy_id=21359

Potential COVID or other Accommodations. Please note that any potential isolation or quarantine due to COVID or COVID exposure is exempt from normal absence and attendance policies. If you need to isolate or quarantine we will work together to do our best to accommodate you (for example having you zoom into class). If for some reason I or a large number of the class need to isolate we should be prepared to move class onto zoom temporarily. We are all in this together- figuring out how to cope with COVID. Please feel free to talk to me about any on-going concerns and we will do our best to work together and have the best course experience possible this semester. As of now I will not require students to mask in class but reserve the right to revisit this policy. If you want to mask please do so. If you would like to socially distance please let me know and we will do our best to work it out.

In the event that a class session needs to be canceled, students will be expected to complete an “out of class assignment” in lieu of attending and participating in class (the details for these assignments can be found below). These out of class assignments are subject to the same
attendance policies as normal class sessions (i.e. if you complete an OOCA it will count as your attendance for the day. If you choose to skip the assignment it will count as an absence). OOCA assignments may only be completed for participation and attendance points if class has been canceled or if approved by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance.

Other than for COVID or other documented illness (according to college policy) you may have up to two missed class periods before you incur any grade penalties.

Guidelines for Class Discussions

**Personal Information.** In a course that covers topics which directly tie into our lived experiences, it is particularly paramount that we strive to respect each other. At times in our discussion, we may share personal information relevant to the topics we study but students should never be singled out by the instructor (myself), or fellow students, or *required* to divulge information about their personal identities and experiences that they are not freely willing to share. You may be required to make observations about the world around you and what you have seen about society generally but you will never be penalized for not sharing personal information. If at any point you feel this standard has not been met, please let me know. Additionally, know that as a professor I commit to not sharing any personal details with identifying information with outside parties other than in the case of an extreme legal or safety issue.

As you see below, I will require you to engage in discussion and other modes of active participation quite a bit. I want to encourage you to be challenged. However if you are asked a question or follow-up question about a personal thing you have shared or on a topic that is very difficult for you for some reason you may simply say “I'd like to take a pass on that” and we as a class will respect it. This option is meant for unusual or unforeseen circumstances so if we find as a group we have to use it a lot we will revisit our discussion and participation parameters.

**Respect.** This course seeks to grow our understanding. The aim is to create a challenging but safe learning environment. I expect all students and the professor to be addressed the way they ask to be addressed, and to be treated as experts of their own experiences. I expect students to have respectful discussions with each other and with me. We can disagree but there will be no personal attacks or explicit or foul language aimed at another person or people tolerated. Further there is no need to describe graphic sexual or violent behavior in detail.

**Difficult Topics.** I have made clear on the syllabus what topics we will be discussing on each day- some of which can be difficult such as inequality or violence. We will talk about and learn about them because they are important but if you have a concern about a particular discussion and how it might affect you, please come speak with me ahead of time. We will work together to
devise a learning solution. Additionally, if you are taken by surprise by something you may exit class and follow up with me later.

Grading and Assignments

Participation in Class Discussion. This class will be a mixture of lecture and discussion and students should come every day prepared to participate in class discussions based on the day’s readings. This includes actively sharing and answering questions, and paying attention while others are speaking. Since readings are online and people often like to take notes electronically, laptops and tablets will be allowed. However, I reserve the right to ban electronic devices from class discussions if they are abused.

Discussion Questions. Unless otherwise specified, each week, each student will be required to submit a discussion question based on a reading assignment (or assignments). Students may choose either a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday discussion (unless we find we need to assign days later) as long as the question they submit is relevant to the discussion happening on the day they submit it. Questions are due at 8 PM on the night before class. If there is a short week with only two class days, students must still submit a discussion question for one of the class days available. Each student may have a free week where they do not submit a question. Discussion questions and participation are worth ⅓ of your course grade.

Reading & Discussion Reflections. Throughout the trimester, students will submit 5 1-2 page written reflections on a week’s readings and discussion. Reflections should cover topic(s) that particularly stuck out to the student, and how that topic(s) has/have made them think critically or differently about the world around them. Reflections should be written in 11 pt. Calibri or 12 pt Times New Roman with 1 inch margins. They may be double spaced. Please note, titles, names and headings etc. should be included in the document but will not count towards filling page requirements. I need at least a full page of written content directly fulfilling the reflection requirements in order to give full credit. Reflections are due by 12AM on the Saturday evening directly following the week to which they refer. For example, if you want to write a reflection on our introductory day, or readings on Marx, it will be due on September 17th at 11:59 PM. Reflections are worth ⅓ of your course grade.

If students choose to complete more than the required reading reflections or discussion questions, I will replace previous grades with any assignment that receives a higher score.

Papers: There will be two required papers for this course. One roughly midterm in which you plan a sociological study and a final in which you will analyze a piece of media for sociological themes. Details for each paper will be available on the course moodle page. These papers are collectively worth ⅓ of your course grade.
Part 1: Sociological Foundations

Week 1 Sep 12

Monday September 12
Introduction and Course Overview: Sociological Imagination

Wednesday September 14
The beginnings of Sociology: Durkheim, Functionalism, Anomie
Read: “What is a Social Fact” and “Rules for the Explanation of Social Facts” section of University of Chicago’s “The Durkheim Pages: The Rules of Sociological Method.”
https://durkheim.uchicago.edu/Summaries/rules.html
Watch: “Sociology - Emile Durkheim”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9WoGQvONKc

Friday September 16
Marx, Materialism, and Social Conflict
Read: “Marx’s Contributions and their Relevance Today.” The American Economic Review 54(2). (pay special attention to the first two pages)
https://www.jstor.org/stable/1816339#metadata_info_tab_contents
Watch: “Political Theory-Karl Marx”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSQgCy_iIcc

Due Saturday Night: Reading Reflection

Week 2 Sep 19

Monday September 19
Weber, Bureaucracy and the Power of Ideas
Read: “Max Weber’s Key Contributions to Sociology” by Charlotte Nickerson - Simply Sociology
https://simplysociology.com/Max-Weber-German-sociologist.html
Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qVF7mT4nRU

Wednesday September 21
Mead, Cooley, Freud: “Self & Society”
https://doi.org/10.2307/2572829 (available through Gould Library)
Watch: “George Herbert Mead: the I and the Me”
https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/individuals-and-society/s
elf-identity/v/george-herbert-mead-the-i-and-the-me

Friday September 23
Available online at:
https://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm#chap01

Due Saturday Night: Reading Reflection

Week 3 Sep 26

Monday September 26
Asking Sociological Questions & the “Scientific” Method
Read: “Sociological Research” Chapter 2 in Introduction to Sociology by Conberly et al. available online at Openstax:
https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e

Wednesday September 28
Sociological Research in Academia
Read: “Organizing Your Social Science Research Paper: Reading Research Effectively” - Texas State University Libraries. Available Online at:
https://guides.library.txstate.edu/c.php?g=959645&p=6960405
Read: “How to Read a Research Article” by Frederique Laubepin, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Available online at:
https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/files/instructors/How_to_Read_a_Journal_Article.pdf

Friday September 30
Sociology beyond Academia.
Read: “Public Sociology” by Laura Nicols available online at:
https://scholarcommons.scu.edu/soc/49/

Due Saturday Night: Reading Reflection

Part 2: Inequalities

Week 4 Oct 3

Monday October 3
Read: Chapters 1-2 of Unequal Childhoods

Wednesday October 5
Read: Pick chapter 3, 4, or 5 of Unequal Childhoods to read, skim/quick read the other two

Friday October 7
Read: Pick chapter 6 or 7 of Unequal Childhoods to read thoroughly, skim/quick read the other.

NO REFLECTION THIS WEEK
Sociological Inquiry Paper Due by Sunday 12PM

Week 5 Oct 10

Monday October 10
Read: Chapter 12 and 14 of Unequal Childhoods

Wednesday October 12
Read: Duboise

Friday October 14
Listen: class votes on episode of Code Switch

Due Saturday Night: Reading Reflection

Week 6 Oct 17

Monday October 17 BREAK

Wednesday October 19
Read: Chapters 1,2,3 of Framed by Gender

Friday October 21
Read: Pick Chapter 4 or 5 of Framed by Gender, skim the other

February 16, Wednesday
Read: Pick Chapter 6 or 7 of Framed by Gender, skim the other

Due Saturday Night: Reading Reflection

Week 7 Oct 24
Monday October 24

Wednesday October 26
Listen: Class votes on episode of “Intersectionality Matters”

Friday October 28
Topic: Climate Change
Read: TBA

**Due Saturday Night:** Reading Reflection

Part 3: Contemporary Sociological Issues

**Week 8 Oct 31**

Monday October 31
Topic: Sexuality
Read: TBA

Wednesday November 2
Topic: Criminology
Read: TBA

Friday November 4
Topic: Mass Incarceration
Read: TBA

**Due Saturday Night:** Reading Reflection

**Week 9 Nov 7 - Technology, Social Movements & Media, Social Problems**

Monday November 7
Topic: Social Movements
Read: TBA

Wednesday November 9
Topic: Social Problems
Read: TBA
Friday November 11
  Topic: Media & Technology

**Due Saturday Night:** Reading Reflection

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**Week 10 Nov 14-16**

Monday November 14
  Topic: Globalization
  Read: TBA

Wednesday November 16
  Topic: Class Votes!

Friday READING DAY

Final Paper Due: November 20th