

# Introduction to Sociology 1

Fall 2012

American University Central Asia, Dept. of Sociology

On some level, many of us "do" sociology without ever even knowing it. This course will introduce you to the sociological perspective in examining our lives and social experiences, as well as many issues facing society today. In this respect, students should think of this course as a "sampler" on the sociological menu and to further illustrate this, at the end of each major section. Furthermore, through this course, students should come to realize how many aspects of their lives are influenced by the social world in which they live and, as a result, a student should obtain a better understanding of her/himself as social individuals and her/his place in society. Finally, learning to think and reason both critically and analytically are perhaps the most valuable skills students can acquire. Therefore, this course is also designed to begin teaching students how to make sense out of the masses of "facts", controversial issues, clashing opinions, two sides of one problem that they encounter in both life and the study of society.

## TEXTS:

1. *Giddens, A.* (1996 or any other edition) *Introduction to Sociology*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company (hereafter: GA). Or: Beth, B. Hess, Elizabeth W. Markson, Peter J. Stein. *Sociology*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. 1996 by Allyn & Bacon (hereafter:HMS) (both are available at AUCA library room 105)
2. *McIntyre J. Lisa.* *The Practical Sceptic: Readings in Sociology* (hereafter: PS) (also available at AUCA library room 105)
3. Some of the readings will be available in e-form in Moodle system or distributed in the form of handouts (hds).

## Additional Literature:

Macionis, John J. (2001) *Sociology*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

## SPECIFIC GOALS OF THE COURSE:

- To understand society's organization, purpose and characteristics.
- To be able to understand and evaluate the social issues facing the world today.
- To be able to apply sociological concepts, terms and theories to the processes of everyday life.
- To understand our place in society and how society influences all of our decisions and actions.
- To observe one problem, object, subject from all the possible angles.
- To encourage and help students examine their own social experiences from a scientifically inquisitive perspective.
- To help students broaden their view of society beyond their own immediate experience and understand how and why their own experiences may be similar or different to the experiences of others.
- To give students direct experience with "doing" sociology by study a characteristic of society in detail.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS (guides will be provided soon):

- Active participation (readings group presentations, + reports of class notes, in-class discussions) **10%**
- Midterm exam **20%**

- Presentation on proposed topic 10%
- Review on peers presentation 10%
- Argumentative essay 20%
- Final exam 30%

As you can see, there are many grading opportunities in this course. Therefore, one bad grade due to an "off" day will not necessarily influence your final grade! Furthermore, the grading is designed so that there is "a little for everyone" -- there is a niche in the course for those who are comfortable with writing, test taking and / or talking. So, there are **plenty** opportunities to get a good grade in this class **if** you are willing to do the work!

⇒ **Grading Scale**

A = 95-100; A- = 90-94; B+= 87- 89; B=81-86; B-=77-80; C+= 73-76; C= 68-72;  
C-= 67-62; D=59-61; F= 58 or below

**EXAMS (midterm and final):**

Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true / false and essay.

**READINGS:**

Readings are designed to prepare or prime the students for the upcoming lectures. In other words, it is students' responsibility to do the readings *on their own* so that they are familiar with the topic being discussed during a given class. This will also give them some time to think about points that will contribute to discussion. However, unfortunately in the past, I've found that students get very lax with the readings. Therefore, if I sense that a class is not doing the readings, I reserve the right to give pop quizzes based on the information in the readings (and which will focus on the main points of the readings).

During the semester I would like to practice such forms of students' feedbacks as diary and special reports. At the beginning of classes will be defined schedule - a duty roster of reporters and responsible for the diary notes students. Responsible students (according to schedule we will form) will report for 5-7 minutes at the beginning of each class in order to remind topics and discussions covered at the previous class. Diary has to be sent per e-mail to the teacher no later than next day to the class. Diary notes and reports will contribute to the grade of student for the course.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week 1, 2

**Course Introduction and Sociological Thinking**

**Readings:**

GA, "What is Sociology?" or: HMS, pp.2-6  
Mills C.Wright The Promise (PS);  
Berger L.Peter Invitation to Sociology (hd)

Week 3, 4

**Sociological perspectives. How we discover the society?**

**Readings:**

GA., Ch. 1, 21  
Harold Widdison & Richard Delaney. Social problems: definitions, theories and analysis. Social problems. 2000 #1 (hds)

Week 5, 6

**How we do Sociology? Why we do research?**

**Readings:**

GA., Ch. 20 + HDS (TBD)

Week 7, 8

**Culture and social structure. Socialization and Social interaction in everyday life.**

**Readings:**

GA, "Culture, Socialization, and the Individual" or: HMS, 51-71 pp., 99-120.  
GA, "Social Interaction and Everyday Life," or HMS, pp. 72-91  
Miner Horace. Body Ritual among Nacirema (PS)  
Edward T.Hall, Hidden Culture. (PS)  
Goffman E. The presentation of Self in Everyday life (PS)  
Elijah Anderson The Code of the Streets (PS)

Week 9, 10  
Midterm exam

**Social structures: systems, groups and organizations. Stratified community and society**

**Readings:**

GA, Groups & organizations. or: HMS (tbc)  
Simmel on social groups (hds) + Weber on bureaucracy (hds)

Week 11, 12

**Deviance. Social control. Normality of Crime**

**Readings:**

GA, "Conformity, Deviance, and Crime," or HMS, pp. 121-142  
Durkheim E. The Normality of Crime (PS)  
David L. Rosenhan. On Being Sane in Insane Places. (PS)

Week 13, 14  
Presentations  
submission

**Family, love, sexuality**

**Readings:**

GA, "Marriage and the Family"& "Gender and Sexuality"  
or: HMS, pp. 167-189, 274-299  
Stephany Coontz How history and Sociology can help today's Families (PS)  
Bron B. Ingoldsby. Mate Selection and Marriage around the World.  
Traditional families (hd)

Week 15

**Social stratification. The architacture of inequality – local, naional, global...**

GA, "Stratification, Class, and Inequality" or: HMS, pp.191-219  
Herbert J.Gans The Uses of Poverty: the Poor Pay All. (PS)  
K. Finesterbusch, G. Mc Kenna "Taking Sides clashing views on controversial Social Issues" Part 3. "Is Economic Inequality Beneficial to Society?" (hd)

Final exam –

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

The University has a classroom behavior policy, which can be found at the AUCA Catalog. Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in this policy document and to refrain from disrupting class. Both students and faculty are expected to abide by the University's honor code.

### ***Statement of Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is a very serious offence and is considered as cheating under University rules. Plagiarism includes the following:

- Submission of work that is identical or substantially similar for assessment in more than one course, whether in the same department or in other departments.
- Passing off work as yours that is really the work of others (whether other students, text from a web page you have found or from a published source).
- Duplicating sentences or paragraphs from other works in whole or in part without accurate citation of the text being quoted and proper referencing of the source in the bibliography.

In other words, the only time you should use the words of somebody else in your work is in the form of a direct quote. This should be either indented or should clearly be in quotation marks and should include a direct reference immediately after the quote ends (name, date; page number) e.g. (Harvey, 1989: 64). Direct quotes are accepted academic practice but should be used sparingly in your work. The reference from which the quote comes should then appear in your bibliography. e.g.

Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Plagiarism does not include:

- Summarizing the arguments of someone else in your own words and citing them as a reference
- Using published academic work to help you develop your own argument

In each case, though, you should still include a reference in your text to the things that you have read at the end of the relevant sentence or paragraph if you are referring directly to their work e.g. (Harvey, 1989).

### ***Penalties for Plagiarism***

First offence, minor (a few unconnected sentences). The lecturer will confront the student with the evidence and if an adequate explanation is not forthcoming they will deduct some marks (to be decided by the lecturer but normally up to 10% overall) from the piece of work in question and a note will be put on the student's file recording they have been caught plagiarizing.

First offence, major (substantial plagiarism of more than a few isolated sentences). The lecturer will confront the student with the evidence and if an adequate explanation is not forthcoming the matter will be referred to the Head of Department for action. This will normally result in the piece of work in question being given a mark of zero. A note will be put on the student's file explaining the actions taken and the reasons for them.

Second or further offence. Once evidence has been presented the matter will be referred to the Head of Department for disciplinary action to be taken under University Rules.