

SOCI 1100: Introduction to Sociology

Classes (days/times): September 12, 2011 - April 5, 2012; Tuesday & Thursday, 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Location: AT1003

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

SOCI 1100 has two objectives: (1) to introduce students to a particular form of thinking that underlies the way sociologists conceptualize, ask questions, and ultimately come to understand the world in which we live; (2) to explore and explain society's most important socio-cultural, political and economic institutions, both as its constructive and problematic component parts. The course is thus divided into two parts: Part I will focus on the first objective, Part II on the second.

Overall, SOCI 1100 is not designed to offer 'hard facts' and 'undisputed sociological truths' about society but to provide a window into 'sociological mind' and reveal the essence of what it means to think sociologically. Each social scientific discipline is based on a particular form of thinking which opens up the possibilities of seeing life in a different light, and so is sociology. What makes one discipline different from another, in the end, is the nature of thinking that underlies it and the kinds of questions we are able to ask because of the way we conceptualized things through our thought. The discipline of sociology is particularly exciting in this regard because it is based in several distinct perspectives which offer the multiple ways of thinking about ourselves and our world. Throughout the course, we will explore these perspectives and try to understand their respective contributions to the nature of sociological thought. By the end, you should be fully initiated into the 'wonderful world of sociological mind' and be ready to understand all that makes sociology the discipline that it is.

Any form of social scientific thinking is centered on asking specific questions about ourselves and our world, and reflecting on the particular aspects of our 'human condition'. Sociology is no different. As we explore the sociological way of thinking in Part I of our course we will consider the questions foundational to the discipline and to the way sociologists come to conceptualize their understanding of who we are, how the world is, and how, in the end, the world ought to be. We will start by asking the question of 'what is sociology and what does it mean to study the world sociologically?', and follow it up with the questions of 'what's human about human beings?' and 'what is society?'. After that we will take up a set of questions that deal with the fundamental aspects of society and societal life: human freedom and society, society and social differences/inequalities, society and religion, and social world and (the possibility/necessity of) social change. We will conclude by posing the questions about the future of the world as a 'global village'.

Part II of SOCI 1100 builds on the foundational concepts and sociological categories covered in Part I. The focus of Part II, however, is on exploring and explaining society's most important socio-cultural, political and economic institutions, both as its constructive and problematic component parts. In examining different

societal institutions, we will draw upon the insights of all major sociological perspectives and try to understand how each perspective would define, understand and explain the nature and purpose of specific institutional elements of the contemporary Western society. The starting point for our exploration will be the definition of social institutions as “formally organized settings of interaction structured around fundamental societal values”. Thus, in examining society’s institutions we will try to explain ‘why do they exist as part of society?’, ‘why are they set up the way they are?’, and ‘what fundamental societal values do they try to reproduce, reinforce and/or challenge?’. The key assumption of SOCI 1100, Part II is that all institutions are necessary – if not necessarily always constructive -- building blocks of a society. Essentially, our task in examining different social institutions is to explain why this is so.

Since this is an introductory-level course, formal lectures will be our primary method of instruction. However, your willingness to come to class with an open mind, to read, think and provide meaningful input during our lecture time is absolutely indispensable for the success of the course. After all, sociology — as any other social science — is an art of critical and dialogical engagement with its specific subject-matter, and the quality of that engagement depends overwhelmingly on our willingness and ability to communicate with one another in a constructive and thoughtful manner.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In offering an introductory exploration of sociology, the course focuses on demonstrating the difference between sociological and common-sense thinking about ourselves, society and the world. Thus the central learning objectives of SOCI 1100 are: (1) to have students become familiar and comfortable with sociology’s core concepts and ideas, and become sensitive to the uniqueness of sociological ways of seeing, understanding, and explaining the nature of social life; (2) to have students apply their foundational knowledge of sociology towards understanding society’s real-life issues, as reflected through the key socio-cultural, political, and economic institutions. By the end of the course, the diligent student will have a thorough grasp of the sociological foundations and be fully prepared for the more advanced explorations of a wide range of conceptual and empirical issues in sociology.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

There are two required textbooks for the course, available at Lakehead University bookstore:

- *Ten Questions: A Sociological Perspective* (7th ed.), by Joel M. Charon. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. ISBN-10: 0495601306 | ISBN-13: 9780495601302.
- *Sociology: Your Compass for a New World* (3rd Canadian ed.), by Robert J. Brym *et al.* Toronto, Nelson. ISBN-10: 0176500626 | ISBN-13: 9780176500627.

You are expected to have read your reading assignments *before* coming to class.

All additional course resources will be available at: <http://go.to/sociology>

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Your performance in the course will be evaluated on the basis of four exams:

- Exam 1** (25%): Week 6 (Thursday, October 20, 2011)
- Exam 2** (25%): TBA
- Exam 3** (25%): Week 19 (Thursday, February 16, 2012)
- Exam 4** (25%): TBA

All four **exams** will be a combination of definitions and short essays. *There will not be any multiple-choice or true/false questions.* Exams will be non-cumulative. Material presented in both the textbooks and our class lectures will be part of all exams.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following grading scale will be applied in evaluating your course work:

90-100% (A+)

Outstanding Performance: superb mastery of the principles and materials treated in the course; exceptional fluency in communicating that mastery and a high degree of originality and independence in applying material and principles.

80-89% (A)

Excellent Performance: comprehensive in-depth knowledge of the principles and materials treated in the course; fluency in communicating that knowledge and originality and independence in applying material and principles.

70-79% (B)

Good Performance: thorough understanding of the breadth of materials and principles treated in the course and ability to apply and communicate that understanding effectively.

60-69% (C)

Satisfactory Performance: basic understanding of the breadth of principles and material treated in the course and an ability to apply and communicate that understanding competently.

50-59% (D)

Marginal Performance: adequate understanding of most principles and material treated in the course, but significant weakness in some areas and in the ability to apply and communicate that understanding.

40-49% (E)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

1-39% (F)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

0% (F)

Academic Dishonesty: demonstrable violation of the academic rules of conduct as defined by Lakehead University academic standards.

Your grade is a reflection of your performance in the course, which is the only criterion for your final mark. *There will be no rescaling of grades at the end of the course* and no adjustments except for legitimate clerical errors. Please take note of that.

According to Lakehead University defined standards, grade 0-49% constitutes unsatisfactory academic performance and means failing the course; 50-59% is a minimally accepted level of performance for passing the course, while 90-100% constitutes outstanding performance. For details on evaluation and grading see your Lakehead *University 2011-2012 Academic Calendar*, section University Regulations (V Standing).

If you wish to review your exam you can do so within *one week from the day exam marks* have been posted.

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Statement: Each student is asked to submit a brief statement about his or her academic background as it relates to the Sociology program in general and this course in particular. The statement should be accompanied by either your recent photograph or a photocopy of your Lakehead University student ID card.

Email: Emailing is to be regarded as an official form of communication. Only emails sent through Lakehead University account will be read and replied to. All other email messages will be ignored.

Cell phones: Cell phones are to be turned off during lectures and exams (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

Notebooks/portables: Use of notebook computers and/or portable devices during lectures is **not allowed** (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is not mandatory but is highly recommended. If you decide to attend, you are expected to arrive on time and be respectful to other students in class. Disruptive and otherwise inappropriate behaviour in the classroom will not be tolerated. Students engaged in such behaviour will be dealt with accordingly.

Disclaimer: The information in this Course Outline is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change; any changes will be announced in class)

<p>Week 1 (September 12-16)</p>	<p><i>COURSE INTRODUCTION; SYLLABUS WALKTHROUGH</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Why Go to University?”, on http://go.to/sociology • Chapter 11 in <i>Ten Questions</i>
<p>Week 2 (September 19-23)</p> <p>PART I</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 1: HOW DO SOCIOLOGISTS STUDY SOCIETY? (PART I)</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 1 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 3 (September 26-30)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 1: HOW DO SOCIOLOGISTS STUDY SOCIETY? (PART II)</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 2 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 4 (October 2-7)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 2: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN? (PART I)</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 4 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 5 (October 10-14)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 2: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN? (PART II)</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 3 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 6 (October 17-21)</p>	<p align="center">PRE-EXAM REVIEW</p> <p align="center">EXAM 1: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20</p>
<p>Week 7 (October 24-28)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 3: HOW IS SOCIETY POSSIBLE?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 5 & Chapter 6 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 8 (October 31-November 4)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 4: ARE HUMAN BEINGS FREE?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 14 in <i>Sociology</i>

<p>Week 9 (November 7-11)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 5: WHY CAN'T EVERYONE BE JUST LIKE US?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 10 & Chapter 11 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 10 (November 14-18)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 6: WHY ARE PEOPLE UNEQUAL IN SOCIETY?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 8 & Chapter 13 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 11 (November 21-25)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 7: WHY IS THERE MISERY IN THE WORLD?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 9 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 12 (November 28-December 2)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 8: IS ORGANIZED RELIGION NECESSARY FOR SOCIETY?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 16 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 13 (December 5)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>TERM REVIEW</i></p>
<p>Week 14 (January 9-13)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>FALL TERM REVIEW INTRODUCTION TO WINTER TERM</i></p>
<p>Week 15 (January 16-20)</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 9: DOES THE INDIVIDUAL REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 21 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 16 (January 23-27)</p> <p>PART II</p>	<p><i>QUESTION 10: IS THE WORLD BECOMING ONE SOCIETY?</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 in <i>Ten Questions</i> • Chapter 22 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 17 (January 30-February 3)</p>	<p><i>POPULATION AND URBANIZATION</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 20 in <i>Sociology</i>

<p>Week 18 (February 6-10)</p>	<p><i>EDUCATION</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 17 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 19 (February 13-17)</p>	<p>PRE-EXAM REVIEW</p> <p>EXAM 3: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16</p>
<p>Week 20 (February 20-24)</p>	<p>STUDY WEEK: NO CLASS</p>
<p>Week 21 (February 27-March 2)</p>	<p><i>THE FAMILY, WORK AND THE ECONOMY</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 15 & Chapter 13 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 22 (March 5-9)</p>	<p><i>HEALTHCARE, WELFARE, AND WELL-BEING</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 and Chapter 19 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 23 (March 12-16)</p>	<p><i>DEVIANCE AND CRIME</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 24 (March 19-23)</p>	<p><i>CULTURE AND MULTICULTURALISM</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 & Chapter 10 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 25 (March 26-30)</p>	<p><i>THE MASS MEDIA</i></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 18 in <i>Sociology</i>
<p>Week 26 (April 2-5)</p>	<p><i>COURSE REVIEW</i></p>