

Sociology

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This elective course is the study of man as a social being. Students will examine the discipline of Sociology, Sociological research, culture, socialization, the nature of the group, stratification, social change, and the five major institutions (family, religion, education, economic and political). This course provides a good introduction to Sociology for students anticipating taking social science courses in college. The course is open to juniors and seniors. Research or outside study required. It is one semester.

Sociology and Sociological Research

1. Understand and describe the development of Sociology as a social science.
2. Compare and contrast the theoretical paradigms through which sociologists define, explain and predict social behavior.
3. Analyze the extent to which groups and institutions meet individual needs and promote the common good in contemporary and historical settings.
4. Understand that social problems are larger than the individual.
5. Explain and apply ideas and modes of inquiry drawn from behavioral science and social theory in the examination of persistent issues and social problems.
6. Predict how data and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
7. Explain and evaluate the methodological tools and techniques used in the discipline of Sociology to determine the validity and reliability of using the scientific method to study social behavior.
8. Explain and apply ideas, theories, and modes of inquiry drawn from Sociology in the examination of persistent issues and social problems.

Culture and Society

1. Apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs, values and behavior patterns.
2. Describe and examine belief systems basic to specific norms, traditions and laws in culture.
3. Compare and analyze societal patterns for preserving and transmitting culture while adapting to environmental or social change.
4. Understand that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, human identity and human behavior.

5. Demonstrate the value of cultural diversity as well as cohesion within and across groups.
6. Interpret patterns of behavior reflecting values and attitudes that contribute or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.
7. Construct reasoned judgments about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues.
8. Explain how the United States has been affected politically, economically, and socially by its multicultural diversity (e.g. work force, new ideas and perspectives, and modifications to culture).

Socialization and Social Interaction

1. Examine the “Nature versus Nurture” argument concerning human development.
2. Understand the different theories of personality development.
3. Draw inferences about the various agents of socialization and their impact on the individual.
4. Trace the impact of socialization throughout the life of the individual.
5. Apply concepts such as role, status, and language in describing the connections and interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in society.

Groups

1. Analyze group and institutional influences on people, events and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings.
2. Understand various meanings of the social group, the general implications of group membership, and the different ways that groups function.
3. Identify the relationship of individuals to various types of social groups.
4. Identify and analyze examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and efforts used to promote social conformity by groups and institutions.
5. Understand the theory and methods of mediation, cooperation, and conflict resolution.

Deviance

1. Identify and explain the causes, types and impact of social deviance and how deviants both contribute and harm society.

2. Analyze the relationship between deviance and crime and the development of the criminal justice system.
3. Analyze ways institutions respond to conflicts between forces of unity and forces of diversity.

Social Stratification

1. Understand the concept of stratification and how it applies to the United States as well as globally.
2. Apply concepts such as social class, income, wealth, power and prestige in describing the connections and interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in society.
3. Understand that social inequalities based on a variety of factors - including gender, race, ethnicity and age - exist and have a range of effects on society
4. Identify causes of prejudice and discrimination and demonstrate ways in which legal protections prevent and reduce discrimination.
5. Compare and evaluate the impact of stereotyping, conformity, acts of altruism and other behaviors on individuals and groups.
6. Draw inferences about the impact of social inequality on the United States both in historical and contemporary settings.
7. Identify the perspectives of diverse cultural groups when analyzing current issues.
8. Analyze proposed solutions to current issues from the perspectives of diverse cultural groups.

Institutions

1. Describe the major institutions of family, economy, government, religion and education and how they develop and change over time.
2. Evaluate the role of institutions in guiding, transmitting, preserving and changing culture.
3. Analyze institutional influence on people, events, and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings
4. Understand the global diversity of various family forms, as well as kinship, in different societies with emphasis on American society.
5. Examine the concept of economy and work from a sociological perspective in historical and contemporary settings.
6. Describe the role of power and authority on the institution of government.
7. Examine the role of such political concepts as party identification, special interest groups and voting from a sociological perspective.
8. Analyze the role of religion in both historical and contemporary settings.
9. Explain the role of education and its relationship to socialization and stratification from an historical and contemporary setting.

Social Change

1. Understand and describe the factors of social change such as population trends, urbanization, and social movement.
2. Evaluate the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change.

Social Studies Skills and Methods

- 1. Obtain and evaluate information from public records and other resources related to a public policy issue*
 - a. Identify a current public policy issue and arguments relative to the issue.
 - b. Determine criteria by which arguments will be judged.
 - c. Identify advocacy groups and obtain public policy information they produce.
 - d. Adjust a research question or topic based on information obtained while conducting research.
- 2. Critique data and information to determine the adequacy of support for conclusions*
 - a. Choose a position on an issue and develop a rationale for that position.
 - b. Critique the conclusions drawn from survey and research data by questioning sample size, demographics, the sponsoring organization and the logic of the conclusion reached.
- 3. Develop a research project that identifies the various perspectives on an issue and explain a resolution of that issue*
 - a. Identify appropriate tools for communicating a position on an issue (e.g. electronic resources, newsletters, letters to editor, public displays and handouts).
- 4. Work in groups to analyze an issue and make decisions*
 - a. Apply the processes of persuasion, compromise and negotiation to the resolution of conflicts and differences.

Communication

1. *In Writing All Papers*

- a. Present a coherent thesis.
- b. Support the thesis with appropriate evidence.
- c. Organize ideas to achieve coherence in communication.
- d. Use correct grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.
- e. Synthesize information into logical sequence.
- f. Present a concise, clear closing when making an argument.

2. *Group Work*

- a. Analyze ethical and moral issues in the world today.
- b. Build a consensus within the group by finding points of agreement, making sure that all voices are heard, and attempting to understand the views of others.
- c. Research decisions by: identifying the problem; analyzing the interest, values and points of view; identifying the causes of the problem or dilemma; proposing alternative solutions; formulating a position; and evaluating the consequences of taking that position.

Impact of Technology

1. Examine changes in the culture and society due to technological innovations.
2. Predict changes in culture and society as a result of continued technological progress and evaluate the consequences.

Technology and Information Literacy

1. *Determine and apply an evaluative process to all information sources chosen for a project*

- a. Seek and evaluate information to answer both personal and curricular needs.
- b. Analyze the intent and authorship of information sources used for a curricular need.
- c. Determine valid information for an assignment from a variety of sources.

2. *Apply a research process model to conduct research and meet information needs*

- a. Select essential questions for research and use a recognized or personally developed model to conduct independent research.
- b. Identify and evaluate information and select relevant and pertinent information found in each source.
- c. Identify relevant factors, check for validity, and record appropriate information, keeping track of all sources.
- d. Analyze information and synthesize into a communicated product.
- e. Respect copyright laws and guidelines, and use standard bibliographic format to list sources.

- f. Critique and revise the informaton product.
 - g. Review the research process for efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3. *Formulate advanced search strategies, demonstrating understanding of the strengths and limitations of the Internet, and evaluate the quality and appropriate use of Internet resources.*

 - a. Demonstrate the use of parentheses for nesting search terms to alter retrieval strategies through multiple Internet resources.
 - b. Create a product on a specific curricular topic that includes annotated Web sites constructed according to a standard style manual.
 - c. Develop a systematic approach to judge that value of the retrieved Web information.
- 4. *Evaluate choices of electronic resources and determine their strengths and limitations.*

 - a. Modify a search through the use of different keywords and other techniques specific to an electronic resource (e.g., online database, Web-based index).
 - b. Integrate online subscription resources and other electronic media to meet needs for research and communication on a routine basis.
 - c. Differentiate coverage of electronic resources to select information needed.