Introduction to Sociology

Sociology 111-04        Dr. Kesho Y. Scott
Spring 2006             Carnegie 106
MWF 9:00-9:50           269-4291
ARH 314                 Scottk1@grinnell.edu
Office Hours: M 1-2, Wed. 1-4:30 & F 1-2  DO NOT CALL ME AT HOME
                          Or by appointment

Course Overview:

Sociology is concerned with the inter-relationship between individuals and the social structures and groups to which they belong. As you become familiar with sociological inquiry, you will likely develop an appreciation for the complexity of social life. You will also come to see that individual behavior is not so individual; rather, how we think, act, and feel has a lot to do with the group norms and social structures around us.

During the semester you will find that our inquiry usually generates even more questions than answers. While we will answer as many questions as we can, the development of your critical thinking and analytical abilities are even more important ends than the answers we come up with.

Course Format:

Many of the important things you can learn in this class will come from listening and talking to other students, so the class is designed to promote interaction and exchange. Most class meetings will combine brief lectures with small- and large-group discussions. I expect everyone to contribute to discussion – which requires that you read carefully and think about the assigned material before every class. I also expect people to listen to each other, which require Patience, a sense of humor, and mutual respect.

Course Description:

Sociologists ask a lot of interesting questions about the social world and answer many of them. This course will introduce you to some of these questions, to some of the ways sociologists think about these questions (THEORY), and to the methods they use while trying to answer these questions (RESEARCH).

This course is organized around themes and specific questions:
1. How are we social animals?
2. How are social groups organized?
3. How do these groups influence our lives?
4. How do we create and change our society?
5. How do sociologists try to answer these questions?

We will try to answer these first two questions by analyzing case studies of successively larger groups. The four texts as case studies focus on comparatively small communities.
and the social institutions that impact them. In the process of analyzing these groups we will try to answer the third, fourth and fifth questions by examining the theoretical perspectives and research methods social scientists use to investigate group life through the paradigms of class, gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity.

Course Objectives:

A. To introduce students to the essential concepts, theories, and methods used in sociology to analyze phenomena.
B. To give students an awareness of sociological curricula and the linkage between sociological thought and other substantive areas.
C. To enable students to identify and examine sociologically relevant problems and issues.
D. To encourage critical thinking and writing skills that demonstrates the students’ abilities to understand and analyze social issues.
E. To enhance students’ understanding and appreciation of the complexity of social life.

Course Requirements:

A. Exams: There will be two class exams (a mid semester exam and a final exam) that will cover prior lectures and reading materials. The final exam is not comprehensive. Both exams are already scheduled in the course syllabus and students are expected to take the exams during class time on those days.
B. Assignments: In addition to the two exams, there will be two required written field assignments. These assignments are aimed at determining if you are able to apply material learned in class. Each assignments will be relatively short in length (3-4 pages), and instructions will be given at least a week prior to when they are due. Assignments should be typed and reflect thoughtful writing skills. Late assignments, if accepted, will be graded down.
C. Attendance and Participation: Your class participation is encouraged, and regular classroom attendance is expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Class participation includes in-class exercises, class discussions, and individual and group assigned homework.
D. Grading:
   15% Paper (Field assignments at the Mall)
   15% Class Participation (Homework, group assignments, presentations, etc.)
   40% Mid Exam (Part I and II)
   30% Final Exam (Essay: three of five questions)
   100%
E. The Writing Lab: Students are strongly encouraged to make appointments with staff at the writing Lab to discuss rough drafts of papers. If you use the Writing Lab, please acknowledge the staff person you worked with on your paper.
F. Academic Honesty: You must abide by the rules on plagiarism, outlined in the Student Handbook (p.53), which require that you “acknowledge explicitly any expressions, ideas, or observations that are not” your own. In the case of cooperatively produced work, you must indicate who produced which part of the data or product. If you are unsure of your obligations, please see me.
G. Instructor’s Email Policy: I believe email is a convenient privilege and a
technological wonder for enhancing learning but it is NOT a substitute for face-to-
face interactions with your instructor. Use the email for urgent class matters to
communication with your classmates about assignments. Otherwise, I expect frequent
visits during my office hours.

H. Please Note: There will be no extra credit work, no make-up assignments or late
paper accepted.

Course Required Readings:
The following books are available in the College Bookstore and on reserve in the Burling
Library:

Pine Forge Press.

In addition to the above books, there are a few required supplementary readings provided
by the instructor. Please keep up with the syllabus by reading the assigned articles or
chapters prior to the day that topic is discussed. The attached course schedule shows what
you are expected to have read each day of class. You should come to class prepared to
summarize, discuss, and do individual and group assignments.

Course Preparedness for Readings:

1. What is the author’s main point or argument?
2. What theories and research methods do the author’s use to demonstrate their
   point?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this argument?

Schedule- MWF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Jan. 23, 25, 27</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Mar. 18-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Jan. 30, Feb. 1, 3</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Apr. 3, 5, 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Feb 6, 8, 10</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Apr. 10, 12, 14</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Feb. 13, 15, 17</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Apr. 17, 19, 21</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Feb. 20, 22, 24</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Apr. 24, 26, 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Feb. 27, Mar. 1, 3</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>May 1, 3, 5</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Mar. 6, 8, 10</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>May 8, 10, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Mar. 13, 15, 17</td>
<td>FINALS WEEK</td>
<td>May 15-19</td>
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Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction to the course
Lecture: What is sociology? What is its historical context as a discipline? Who are the Founding Fathers, absent Mothers and Invisible People of Color?
From McIntyre: Introduction and Chapter 1, 2 and 3
From Ferguson: Mapping the Social Landscape
Mills, “The Promise”, #1

Week 2: Sociological Imagination, Theory and Research Methods
From Ferguson:
- Gains, “Teenage Wasteland,” #2
- Ramero, “Intersection of Biography and History”, #3
- Haney, Banks, and Zimbardo, “Interpersonal Dynamics in a Simulated Prison”, #5
- Kaplan, “Not Our Kind of Girl”, #6
From McIntyre: Chapter 4, 5 and 6

Week 3: Culture
From Ferguson:
- Kaw, “Opening Faces”, #9
- Trask, “Lovely Hula Hands,” #10
- Kanagy and Kraybill, “How Will the Internet Change Society?”, #57
- From McIntyre: Chapter 7

Week 4: Socialization
From Ferguson:
- Lorber, “Night to His Day,” #11
- Granfield, “Making it by Faking It,” #13
- Dyer, “Anybody’s Son Will Do,” #14
From McIntyre: Chapter 10

Week 5: Groups and Social Structure
From Ferguson:
- Adler & Adler, “Peer Power,” #15
- Jankowski, “Gang Business,” #16
Week 6: Deviance, Crime, and Social Control
From Ferguson:
- Rosenhan, “On Being Sane in Insane Places,” #19
- McLorg & Taub, “Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia,” #20
- Bourgois, “In Search of Respect,” #21
- Martin and Hummer, “Fraternities and Rape on Campus” #22
- Etzioni, “Community Building”, #59
From McIntyre: Chapter 8
Handout on Social Theory: Applying Theory

Week 7: Social Inequality: Social Class
From Ferguson:
- Davis, Moore, and Tumin, “Some Principles of Stratification”, #23
- Domhoff, “Who Rules America?”, #24
- Oliver and Shapiro, “Black Wealth/White Wealth”, #25
- Ehrenreich, “Nickel-and-Dimed”, #26
- Johnson, “What Can We Do?”, #60
From McIntyre: Chapter 11 and 12

Week 8: Gender, Race and Ethnicity
From Ferguson:
- Riseman, “Gender as Structure”, #27
- Williams, “The Glass Escalator”, #28
- Sadker and Sadker, “Failing at Fairness”, #30
- Omi and Winant, “Racial Formations in the United States”, #31
- Lee and Bean, “Beyond Black and White”, #32
- Rubin, “Is This a White Country or What?” #33
- Le Duff, “At a Slaughterhouse, Some Things Never Die”, #34
From McIntyre: Chapters 14

Mid-exam: Part II: In Class March 17th.

Week 9: Social Institutions: Power, Politics, and Media
- Mills, “The Power Elite”, #35
- Clawson, Neustadt, and Weller, “Dollars and Votes”, # 36
- Barlett and Steele, “Playing the Political Slots”, #37
- Marger, “The Mass Media as a Power Institution”, # 38
- Mantsios, “Media Magic”, #39
- Gitlin, “Media Unlimited”, #40
- Ritzer, “The McDonaldization of Society”, #56

From McIntyre: Chapter 9

**Week 10:** Social Institutions: Economy, Work, and Religion
From Ferguson:
- Marx and Engles, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”, # 41
- Wilson, “When Work Disappears”, # 42
- Leidner, “Over the Counter”, #43
- Chaves, “Abiding Faith”, #45
- Lowney, “Baring Our Souls”, #46

**Week 11:** Social Institutions: Health, Medicine, Education and Family
- Parsons, “The Social Structure of Medicine”, #47
- McGeary, “Death Stalks a Continent”, #48
- Karp, “Illness and Identity”, #49
- Crow Dog and Erdoes, “Civilize Them with a Stick”, #50
- Cookson, Jr. and Persell, “Preparing For Power”, #51
- Ferguson, “Bad Boys”, #52
- Stacey, “Gay and Lesbian Families are Here”, #53
- Crittenden, “The Mommy Tax”, #54
- Hochschild, “The Time Bind”, #55

Read: Ritzer’s book

**Week 12:** Case Study: Enchanting a Disenchanted World.
Discussion of the book
Field Assignment: Visit to the Mall (Saturday, April 29th, noon to 3pm. Write up due: May 1st.

Read: Rouch’s book
Preface, and Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Chapters 4, 5, and 6
Chapters 7 and 8
**Week 13:** Gay Marriage.
Discussion of the book
Film and guest speaker/s.
Introduction and Chapters 1, 2 and 3
Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7
Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11

**Week 14:** Making Sociology “Real”: It’s Uses in Everyday Life
Popular Culture Assignment
Photography Assignment
Newspaper Assignment
Sociology of the 21st Century: Projections and Reflections

**Final Exam: Soc. 111.04, Wednesday, May 17th, 9:00-Noon in ARH 314**