

Sociology 1000-006: Introduction to Sociology

Fall 2017

Department of Sociology

Memorial University

Class Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:00 noon – 12:50 pm

Class Location: SN3042

Instructor: Qian Wei

Office: AA4082

Office Hours: 1:15 pm – 2:15 pm Monday and Wednesday, or by appointment

Email: **Course mail** within the D2L for the SOCI-1000-006 course site: <https://online.mun.ca/>

“No one is an island, entire of itself” – John Donne

Course Description

Sociology is the scientific study of society, of the social frameworks in which we live our lives. Why one person is more likely to commit suicide than another? Why do youth join gangs? What do people mean when they say, “behave like a girl/like a guy”? Why are some countries rich and others poor? This sociology 1000 course provides useful insights to these questions through the sociological perspective – a unique perspective emphasizing the connection between our everyday experiences and problems and, on the other hand, social processes and structure. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Develop a special skill– which is called the sociological imagination by C.W. Mills – to see the connection between personal experience (private troubles) and social structures (public issues).
- Build critical thinking – an ability to challenge every “taken-for-granted” idea and to pursue the structural forces beneath these social phenomena.
- Apply a scientific approach to understanding and explaining real-world issues – from our daily life to current events.

Course Readings

Textbook:

Brym, Robert. 2014. *New Society* (8th Ed.) Toronto: Nelson Education. This book can be purchased from the MUN Book store (you may also be able to find used copies since it has been used by other instructors of sociology 1000 before).

Other sources:

There are additional readings for some chapters (see provisional schedules for more details). Books will be put on reserve in QE II library at the Circulation desk. Articles are available online through the QEII library.

Provisional Schedule

You are advised to read the assigned readings before coming to class.

Date	Topic	Reading
PART I: What is Sociology?		
Week 1	Sep 6, 8 Introduction to Sociology	Chapter 1
PART II: Major Social Processes that Shape US		
Week 2	Sep 11, 13 Culture	Chapter 3
	Sep 15 Socialization	Chapter 4
Week 3	Sep 18 Socialization	Chapter 4
	Sep 20, 22 Social networks, Groups, and Bureaucracies	Chapter 21 Recommended reading 1
Week 4	Sep 25 Social networks, Groups, and Bureaucracies	Chapter 21 Recommended reading 2
	Sep 27, 29 Deviance and Crimes	Chapter 15
Week 5	Oct 2 Deviance and Crimes	Chapter 15
PART III: Social Inequality		
Week 5	Oct 4 Social Stratification	Chapter 7
	Oct 6 Midterm 1	
Week 6	Oct 9 No lecture	
	Oct 11,13 Social Stratification (Oct 11: Lectures will follow the Monday schedule)	Chapter 7
Week 7	Oct 16, 18, 20 Gender and Sexuality	Chapter 5 Chapter 8
Week 8	Oct 23, 25, 27 Race and Ethnicity	Chapter 9
Part IV: Social Institutions		
Week 9	Oct 30, Nov 1, 3 Families and Marriages	Chapter 11 Recommended reading 3
Week 10	Nov 6, 8 Education	Chapter 13
	Nov 10 Midterm 2	
Part V: Social Movement, Globalizations and Development		
Week 11	Nov 13 No lecture	
	Nov 15, 17 Politics and Social Movements (Nov 17: Lectures will follow the Monday schedule)	Chapter 19
Week 12	Nov 20, 22, 24 Development	Chapter 10
Week 13	Nov 27, 29, Dec 1 Globalization	Chapter 15 Globalization and Social Change, by Liam Swiss, from "Tepperman, Lorne,

		Albanese, Parizia and Jim Curtis. 2014. Principles of Sociology: Canadian Perspectives (Third Edition)” Recommended reading 4
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Recommended reading list:

1. Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. “The strength of weak ties.” *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6):1360-80.
2. DiMaggio, Paul J., and Walter W. Powell. 1983. “The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields.” *American Sociological Review* 48(2):147-60.
3. Regnerus, Mark. 2012. “How different are the adult children of parents who have same-sex relationships? Findings from the New Family Structures Study.” *Social science research* 41(4):752-70.
**Most sociologists agree that this is a deeply flawed study – can you figure out why?
4. Meyer, John W. , John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez. 1997. “World Society and the Nation-State.” *American Journal of Sociology* 103(1):144-81.

Please note that these readings are more difficult than textbooks, so they are not mandatory but recommended. Most of them, however, are the seminal work which lays the foundation for some important areas of sociology, so I encourage you to read them and get a sense of how top sociologists think and write. Exams will not cover the recommended readings.

Method of Evaluation

Evaluation will be based on the following:

Method	Percentage	Content	Tentative Date	Format
Class attendance	10%			
Midterm #1	25%	Part I and Part II	October 6	True/False Multiple choice Short answer
Midterm #2	25%	Part III and Part IV	November 10	True/False Multiple choice Short answer
Final exam	40%	Cumulative, the entire course	TBD	True/False Multiple choice Short answer Essay

Missed Exam and Late Policies

If you are unable to write an exam due to sickness, bereavement, or other acceptable causes, please send an email to qian.wei@mun.ca before the exam. You will have one week after the original exam to request a make-up exam and please send a formal request to qian.wei@mun.ca – supporting documentation is required (e.g., health professional documentation of illness, death

certificate for bereavement). The date for the deferred exam will normally occur about a week following the date for the originally scheduled exam. Should you miss the originally scheduled **final exam**, you will also need to make a formal application to the Head of the Department of Sociology to write a deferred final exam. More information can be found from section 6.7.5 (<http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0601#REGS-0615>) and section 6.8.2 (<http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0628#REGS-0642>) of the General Academic Regulations (Undergraduate) in the University Calendar. I have copied section 6.7.5 below:

A student who is prevented from completing part of the course evaluation due to illness or medical condition(s) of less than 5 calendar days' duration may apply for an alternate evaluation of a similar nature. This requires declaring to the relevant instructor that the student has experienced such an illness or medical condition. The declaration should be made via telephone or in writing through the student's @mun.ca e-mail account. The declaration should be made in advance of the original date on which an in-class part of the evaluation is to be held or a take-home part of the evaluation is due, wherever possible, but no later than 48 hours after the original date of the part of the evaluation. If the declaration is made by telephone, written confirmation must then be received by the relevant instructor within 7 calendar days of the original date of the part of the evaluation.

A student who is prevented from completing a part of the evaluation by illness of at least 5 calendar days' duration, bereavement or other acceptable cause, duly authenticated in writing, may apply for an alternate evaluation, normally of a similar nature. This application should be made in advance of the original date on which an in-class part of the evaluation is to be held or a take-home part of the evaluation is due, wherever possible, but no later than 48 hours after the original date of the part of the evaluation. If application is made by telephone, written confirmation must then be received by the head of the appropriate academic unit within 7 calendar days of the original date of the part of the evaluation. The following supporting documentation is required:

- For illness or medical conditions, medical documentation from a health professional is required. Students should provide the health professional with a copy of the Student Medical Certificate (www.mun.ca/regoff/STUDENT_MEDICAL_CERTIFICATE.pdf)
- For bereavement or other acceptable cause, official documents or letters that support the reason for the request (e.g. death certificate, letter from employer, etc.) are required.

General Policies

- Regular attendance is important and class attendance will be part of the evaluation. This decision is based on studies showing that mandatory attendance could significantly improve student performance (<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3200/JECE.37.2.148-155>). Some of the material discussed in lectures will not be in the textbook. You are encouraged to participate in class discussion and ask questions. If you can't attend a lecture, you do not need to email me and I suggest you refer to a fellow student's notes. Lecture slides will also be posted on D2L after the lecture date but lecture notes will not be shared. Part of the

university experience is learning how to be responsible for your own work. I am happy to help you with any questions after you read all the material thoroughly.

- When in class your cell phone must be turned off and in your bag. The use of laptops, tablets and other electronic devices is also not permitted during class time. This policy is based on a wealth of evidence showing that (1) multitasking on a laptop poses a significant distraction to both users and fellow students and can be detrimental to comprehension of lecture content (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254>); (2) even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing. In other words, pens are more effective learning tools for note taking (<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0956797614524581>). As sociologists, we make most decisions based on scientific evidence rather than speculation.
- In a university classroom, you may encounter ideas that challenge some of your common sense, values and even beliefs. Discussion and debates are an important part of any intellectual undertaking and this process of deconstruction-reconstruction of worldviews is an important experience for developing your skills of critical thinking. Over the course of the semester, we will cover a variety of sensitive topics about which you may have strong feelings, such as sexuality, discrimination, crime, inequality, etc. You should always feel free to express your opinions, whether or not they are shared by other people in the class (including me). However, comments can only be made in a respectful way and personal attacks, or any racist, sexist, ageist, trans/homophobic remarks will not be tolerated in my class.
- Announcements regarding this course, such as course cancellation due to inclement weather, detailed instructions about exams, and all grades (except final grades) will be posted on D2L. In the event that class is cancelled on the date of an exam, the scheduled activity will take place in the next class. Please check the D2L site regularly.
- I will try to respond to your request within 24 hours. If you have questions about the course material, I encourage you to ask them in class since other students may have the same questions and could benefit from the answers. If you have more private or specific questions, please come to see me during my office hours.
- You need to earn your grades.

Accommodation of Students with Special Needs

I am committed to facilitating and promoting an accessible, inclusive, and mutually respectful learning environment. Students requiring special accommodation are asked to communicate first with the Glenn Roy Blundon Centre (www.mun.ca/blundon) at the earliest opportunity. University policies and procedures pertaining to accommodations for students with disabilities can be found at www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

It is strongly recommended that students read section 6.12.4 of the University Calendar on Academic Misconduct (www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0748). Plagiarism is the

act of presenting the ideas or works of another as one's own. This applies to all material such as essays, laboratory assignments, laboratory reports, work term reports, design projects, seminar presentations, statistical data, computer programs, research results, and theses. The properly acknowledged use of sources is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without acknowledgment is contrary to accepted norms of academic behaviour. Information regarding acceptable writing practices is available through the Writing Centre at www.mun.ca/writingcentre.

University Policies and Support

Memorial has a list of support services existing on campus designed to support students in a variety of ways. They include:

- The Commons (QEII library) provides access to print, electronic and technology resources.
- The Counselling Centre (UC-5000) helps students develop their personal capabilities, ranging from study strategies to assisting distressed students.
- The Glenn Roy Blundon Centre (UC-4007) serves students whose disabilities involve conditions affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning (disabilities), chronic illness, or mental health; support is also provided to students with documented temporary illnesses and injuries.
- Student Life (ASK, UC-3005) answers questions about such things as courses, housing, books, financial matters and health.
- The Writing Centre (SN-2053) is a free, drop-in facility for students and helps them become better writers and critical thinkers.