

**Introduction to Sociology**  
SOC 108, Spring 2010, Section 09

**Instructor:** Nishanth Visagaratnam  
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**Class Location:** Lawson 201  
**Schedule:** M,W,F 9AM – 9:50AM  
**Office hrs:** Monday from 10AM – 2PM;  
Tuesday from 10AM – 12PM; and by  
appointments only

The best way to contact me is by email: nvisagar@siu.edu

**Overview:**

In this mixed format class involving lectures, videos, small group work, and discussions, students will be introduced to the major concepts and ideas that sociologists use as they study the social world. By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- a) demonstrate knowledge of basic sociological concepts about social processes (e.g., socialization, deviance, social control, and stratifications by class, gender, and race) and social institutions (e.g., the family, religion, education, and the state)
- b) be familiar with the four sociological perspective (conflict, symbolic interactionist, feminist, functionalist)
- c) summarize theoretical and explanatory arguments in sociology
- d) apply these arguments to contemporary events or personal experiences
- e) display knowledge of cultural, class, religious, and other differences within and between societies
- f) develop an understanding of the methods that sociologists use to answer their research questions and how to conduct basic analyses of data

Students will gain their knowledge from lectures and through course readings, writing, group work, practical applications using real data, and critical discussions. Furthermore, students will develop key skills that they can apply and use outside of the class, become critical thinkers by learning to think outside the box, and become self-directed learners.

**Required Material:**

1. Schaefer, R. *Sociology Matters*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw Hill.  
This book is concise, affordable, and the basics of sociology are covered as well. In addition, the publisher of this book offers great online resources for students to check their knowledge of sociology, and it is interactive (games and crossword puzzles).
2. Calculator (one that can do simple addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication, such as a TI-30X)

**Course and University Policies:**

1. Make up examinations may consist of all essay questions or an alternate set of multiple-choice questions. The exam will be given only to students with excused absences and who notifies the instructor prior to the examination. Attend all classes; “in class activity” points may not be made up for unexcused absence.

## 2. Student Code of Conduct:

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but also to the development of ethically sensitive and responsible persons. The university seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and policies governing individual conduct that encourages independence and maturity. By accepting membership in this university, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change. All rights and responsibilities exercised within this academic environment shall be compatible with these principles. Acts of Academic Dishonesty is a breach of a student code and will NOT be tolerated in this class. Dishonesty includes, but is not exclusive to: 1) Plagiarism, representing the work of another as one's own work; 2) preparing work for another that is to be used as that person's own work; 3) Cheating by any method or means; 4) Knowingly and willfully falsifying or manufacturing scientific or educational data and representing the same to be the result of scientific or scholarly experiment or research; 5) Knowingly furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters; 6) Soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code. Please consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic dishonesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

## 3) Classroom Behavior:

- Be on time to class
- **NO USE OF CELL PHONES OR LAPTOPS/COMPUTERS**
  - turn off cell phones (unless you are on call then you must inform the instructor first)
  - The instructor holds the right to take away cell phones or laptops/computer devices if a student uses it/them during lecture or examination period
- Students may NOT use the calculators on the cell phones or watches for class related activities or examinations
- Students may NOT engage in distracting and disrespectful behavior such as chatting, sleeping, leaving early, newspaper reading, texting, using cell phones, using laptops/computer devices and working on other course work.
- If the student is late coming to class, it is the responsibility of the student to make sure that he/she obtains any homework assignments after class and class notes from his/her peers; however, in class assignments may NOT be made up without an excused reason (doctor's appointment/school related activity- students must show proof prior to making up the missed work).
- Respect your peers in the class. No name-calling, no fighting of any sort, no disrespectful gestures (such as giving the finger, making rude face gestures, etc).
- The instructor reserves the right to report and remove students who continually engage in disruptive and disrespectful behaviors.

4) Reasonable accommodations will be available to students with disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must contact the SIU Disability Support Services (DSS) and then submit to me written documentation of the disability and necessary accommodations by the second week of the semester.

5) Class discussions should take place within a context of academic inquiry (you are here to learn) and in the spirit of understanding diverse perspectives and experiences. Students should not make negative comments about fellow classmates; demean, devalue, or put down people for their differing experiences, backgrounds, viewpoints, and statements; show general signs of disrespect for the course, instructors, professors or other students. If any student feels attacked, harassed, or otherwise disrespected, for any reason, that student is encouraged to set up a confidential meeting with the professor (e.g., send an email to set up an appointment, speak to the professor during office hours or after class).

6) Grading of the exam is purely objective. Grading of the homework and special activities will involve both objective and subjective assessments. All work will be evaluated in terms of accuracy (if relevant), effort, sophistication, clarity, and completeness.

Grade scale:

90% or more = A

80% - 89% = B

70% - 79% = C

60% - 69% = D

59% or less = F

**The total possible points for this class are 500; however, the total points may change depending on the number of homework and assignments completed.**

7) The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus. Only opportunities for extra credit will be offered in class; there are NO other opportunities for extra credit unless otherwise stated by the Instructor.

8) Blackboard:

Grades, assignments, and other class related materials will be posted on Blackboard. If there are class cancellations (due to weather, conference, sickness, etc), the announcement will be made on Blackboard. You may access the Blackboard by going to [mycourses.siu.edu](http://mycourses.siu.edu) and type in your campus Dawg Tag (siu123456789) and your password.

9) Emergency Procedures:

Emergency Procedures: Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on BERT's website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Safety's website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu), and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

The instructor will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The BERT will assist your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

## Student Responsibilities and Requirements:

Students: If you are going to be involved in school activities, such as athletic events, please provide proof of event so you may make up the exams, in-class assignments, and homework.

Three exams:

- Exam 1 (100 points) covering weeks 1 – 4
- Exam 2 (100 points) covering weeks 5 – 8
- Exam 3 (100 points) covering weeks 9 – 12
- Exam 4 (100 points) covering weeks 13 - 16

Homework exercises:

Instructions will be distributed in class. Students must complete four homework exercises for a maximum of 40 points.

In class activity:

Students must complete **unannounced** in-class activities for a total of 60 points (if you are absent or late, the work may NOT be made up without an approved excuse). If you complete an in-class assignment and then “skip” out on class that same day (fail to stay for the entire class period), you will NOT receive any credit for the in-class assignment.

Details:

*Exams:* There will be three exams (400 points total). Examination questions are multiple choices, true/false, and/or matching. Some material will require simple memorization from the material presented in class as well as from the text and readings from e-reserve. Some questions will require application of the learned material and critical thinking. The four exams are not cumulative, but to understand the material in the latter part of the term you will need to have a sufficient understanding of the material presented earlier in the term. All material (textbook readings, in-class readings, lectures, media, e-reserve readings, anything class related) are fair game for the examination.

*Homework exercises:* Students must complete four homework exercises (40 points total). Instructions will be provided in class for each exercise and the homework may be found on Blackboard. Exercises will be marked late and penalized if not turned in at the *beginning* of class when requested by the instructor. If for some reason you cannot make it to class on the day the assignment is due, it is your responsibility to get the assignment to me **prior to or at the start of the class on which they are due.**

*In-class activity:* Students must complete six **unannounced** in-class activities provided throughout the semester for 60 total points. You will turn in the in-class activities by the end of class, and it may be in the form of group activities, individual work, quiz, discussion questions, response paper (about 1-2 paragraphs), and other activities as deemed necessary by the instructor. In-class activities may NOT be made up without an instructor-approved excuse.

Students are advised to attend all classes and participant in class and group discussions. If you have any questions, interest, problems with the course material or the class, come to the office hours or make an appointment with the instructor. It is highly advised that students ask for help as soon as possible instead of waiting until the last minute. Check blackboard for any updates on the class, assignments, changes, class cancellations, and track your performance, etc.

## **Tentative Schedule**

*Instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus as needed  
Homework and in-class assignments will be announced in class*

### **Week 1: *The Sociological View* [01/18 – 01/22]**

1/18/2010 (Monday) MLK Holiday  
Introduction to sociology & Chapter 1  
    What is sociology?  
    The development of sociology  
    Introduction to major theoretical perspectives

### **Week 2: *The Sociological View & Culture* [01/25 – 01/29]**

Chapter 1:  
    Major theoretical perspectives  
    What is the scientific method?

### **Week 3: *Culture and Socialization* [02/01 – 02/05]**

    Major research design  
    Ethics of research  
    Applied and clinical sociology  
Chapter 2:  
    Development of culture around the world  
    Elements of culture  
    Cultural variations

### **Week 4: *Social Interaction, Groups, & Social Structure* [02/08 – 02/12]**

    Role of socialization  
    Self and socialization  
    Agents of socialization  
Chapter 3:  
    Elements of social structure  
    Social structure in global perspective  
    Understanding organizations  
    Exam I Review

### **Week 5 & 6: *Deviant and Social Control* [02/15 – 02/19]**

**Exam I (02/15/2010)**  
Chapter 4:  
    Social control  
    What is deviance?  
    Explaining deviance via sociological perspectives  
    Crime and deviance

**Week 6 & 7: *Stratification in the United States and Global Inequality* [02/22 – 02/26]**

Media

Chapter 5:

What is stratification?

Stratification by social class

**Week 7: *Inequality by Race and Ethnicity* [03/01 – 03/05]**

Chapter 5:

Social mobility

Global inequality

Chapter 6:

Social construction of race and ethnicity

Explaining race and ethnicity via sociological perspectives

Immigration and new ethnic groups

Prejudice and discrimination

Exam II Review

**Week 8 & 10: *Inequality by Gender* [03/08 – 03/12]**

**Exam II (Monday 03/08/2010)**

Chapter 7:

Social construction of gender

Explaining gender via sociological perspectives

Sexism, sex discrimination, sexual harassment

Women in the workforce (United States)

**Week 9: 03/13/09 – 03/21/09**

**SPRING VACATION**

**Week 10: *Social Institutions- Family and Religion* [03/22 – 03/26]**

Media

Chapter 8:

Social Institutions

Understanding social institutions via sociological perspectives

Sociological perspectives

Religion as an institutions and components of religion

**Week 11 & 12: *Social Institutions: Education, Government, & the Economy* [03/29 – 04/02]**

Chapter 9:

Education as an institution

Sociological perspectives on education

Schools as formal organizations

Government: authority & power

Types of economic systems

**Week 12: *Population, Community, Health, and the Environment* [04/05 – 04/09]**

Chapter 10:

- Elements of demography
- How did communities originate?
- Urbanization and its consequences
- Social epidemiology
- Human ecology & environmental issues

Review for Exam III

**Week 13 & 14: *Social Movements, Social Change, & Technology* [04/12 – 04/16]**

**Exam III [04/12/2010]**

Chapter 11:

- Social movements
- Theories of social change
- Resistance to social change
- Technology

**Week 15: *Intersectionality of gender, race, and class* [04/19 – 04/23]**

- Brief intro to feminist literature
- Brief intro to feminist methods

**Week 16: *Create a society* [04/26 – 04/30]**

- Biological & biochemical theories
- Globalization
- Human trafficking

**Week 17: *To be announced & Review for Final Exam* [05/03 – 05/07]**

- Instructions & rubric will be given in class
- Assignment due Friday 4/30/2010

Media (if time allows)

**Week 18: *Final Exam (covers Weeks 12 – 16)* [05/10 – 05/14]**

Exam IV is your Final Exam, which will take place on Wednesday, May 12, 2010, from 7:50AM – 9:50AM in Lawson 201. The exam will consist of multiple choice, matching, and/or true/false questions.

**The time, date, and location may change; so, it is the student's responsibility to check on the date, time, and location of the final exam the week before finals week.**

SIUC Final Exam Calendar Website: <http://registrar.siu.edu/records/exam.htm>