Introduction to Sociology

Course prefix: SOC

Course number: 1101

Section: C

CRN (you may add up to five):
31612

Instructor First Name: KEMAL

Instructor Last Name: BUDAK

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

The objective of this course is to provide a general survey of the field of sociology while also equipping you with a framework to think critically about the social world and your place within it. The lectures, readings, and assignments will focus on understanding basic social processes and applying them to everyday events. We will cover a range of topics, including but not limited to the economy, religion, politics, immigration, culture, inequality, race, and gender.

Course learning outcomes:

- Identify, adopt, and practice a sociological approach.
- Become familiar with the major theories, issues, and findings in sociology.
- Understand how social contexts influence human behavior and the sociological research process, including the types of evidence sociologists use to examine social life.
- Gather sociological evidence and construct arguments based on that evidence through written assignments.

Required course materials:

Henslin, James. 2007. *Down to Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings*, 14th Edition. **This book is available at the GT [Barnes & Noble Bookstore](#) and online.**

Grading policy:

Attendance and Participation (10%): It is crucial to attend every class to stay up to date with the course material. You are allowed only **TWO** absences (excused and unexcused combined) throughout the semester. Lectures, videos, and discussions are designed to complement the reading assignments by providing additional insights, rather than simply repeating the content.

Pre-Class Discussions (15%): Select **three** readings from the syllabus (if there are double or triple readings on a particular day, pick only one of them unless stated otherwise). Your assignment requires a combination of personal reflection and critical analysis of the readings. Here's how you might approach each paper:

1. *Identify Key Concepts*: For each reading, identify the most important concepts or ideas. This could be a central theme, a theoretical perspective, or a critical argument made by the author. Think about what makes these ideas significant and how they contribute to the broader discussions in your course.
2. *Critical Analysis*: Engage with these concepts by raising questions, critiquing the arguments, or drawing connections to other readings, current events, or personal experiences. Your analysis should go beyond summarizing the text and should reflect your own insights and perspectives.
3. *Personal Perspective*: Include your personal reactions to the readings. How do these ideas challenge your thinking? Do they align/conflict with your beliefs/experiences? This is your opportunity to bring your unique voice.
4. *Conclusion and Implications*: Consider the broader implications of the concepts you've discussed. How do they contribute to the understanding of the subject matter in your course? What questions do they raise for further discussion?

Each paper should be a minimum of one page, 1.5 spaced, and submitted by 8:00 p.m. the night before class.

Assignments (40%): You will be given two written assignments during the semester.

Assignment #1: **Breaking a Social Norm** – You will conduct a mini-experiment where you break a common social rule and observe the reactions of those around you. Afterward, you will write a reflection on your experience. Detailed instructions will be provided later in the semester.

Assignment #2: Worship Place Visit – You will select a place of worship from a religion, denomination, or congregation different from your own and observe their daily or weekly service. You will then write a paper detailing your observations and conversations. More instructions will be given as the semester progresses.

Midterm (15%): The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, true/false, and short essay questions based on the weekly readings and class material.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam will primarily focus on the content covered in the second half of the course and will include short answer questions, short essays, and one or

two long essays.

Attendance policy:

It is crucial to attend every class to stay up to date with the course material. You are allowed only **TWO** absences (excused and unexcused combined) throughout the semester. Lectures, videos, and discussions are designed to complement the reading assignments by providing additional insights, rather than simply repeating the content.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to adhere to the **Georgia Tech Honor Code**. Violations of the Honor Code will be addressed appropriately and may result in an "F" on the assignment or in the course. If you require special accommodation due to a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. You should also contact the **Office of Disability Services**. You may use generative AI programs, e.g. ChatGPT, to help generate ideas and brainstorm. You should be aware that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, biased or otherwise problematic. Also, use of these tools may stifle your own independent thinking and creativity. Per GaTech's Honor Code, you may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). When/if you use AI platforms in your assignments, please write a note to clarify where in your process you used AI, include the prompt used to generate the material, and which platform(s) you used. See this article for how to cite AI properly: How to cite ChatGPT: **https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt**. **That said, using any AI tools during a proctored exam or quiz is never permitted**.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This course is a Core IMPACTS course within the Social Sciences area, designed to provide students with essential knowledge in foundational academic disciplines. It aims to help students master course content while supporting their broader academic and career goals. The course is centered around the following guiding question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

By completing this course, students should achieve the following learning outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior and understand how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

The course content, activities, and exercises are designed to help students develop the following career-ready competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking

- Persuasion