

Introduction to Sociology

Last Updated: Tue, 07/29/2025

Course prefix: SOC

Course number: 1101

Section: HP

CRN (you may add up to five):
93171

Instructor First Name: Amy

Instructor Last Name: D'Unger

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

This class applies basic sociological concepts to a range of issues that are of current interest in the public imagination in order to view them in a new light. *More importantly, this course aims to provide you with a way to think about and understand the social world and your place in it.* Therefore, the lectures and readings will focus on understanding basic social processes and how you can apply them to everyday events, both small and large, and both personal and political. With this in mind, we will begin the course by focusing on the importance of sociological theory and methods, the “self” and identity, the importance of culture, as well as the rules that guide interaction between individuals. We will then explore major social “fault lines” around race, class, gender, and sexuality, as well as the major institutions that shape our lives (the family, education, etc.). Finally, we will look at health in the US and in the modern world.

Course learning outcomes:

- Students will define major concepts in the discipline of sociology.
- Students will compare and contrast the major theoretical perspectives and methodological techniques in sociology.
- Students will analyze how society is structured by social institutions and social stratification, as well as how the social structure shapes behavior.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the historical context in which major social institutions such as the economy and the family have developed and changed.

Required course materials:

- Duneier, Mitchell. 2000. *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. **ISBN# 978-0374527259**
- Conley, Dalton. 2021. *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist, Core Seventh Edition*. New York: W.W. Norton. **ISBN# 978-0393537789**

Grading policy:

(1) Assignments: Students will complete three short assignments, with due dates noted on the syllabus. The assignments involve an activity in which you need to participate or text you need to read, followed by the completion of a brief reflection/assessment of the activity. Assignments will be posted and turned in via Canvas. Make sure to pay attention to the syllabus for upcoming assignment due dates! **Late assignments will not be accepted.** The assignments each count for **10%** of your final grade. **(30% total)**

(2) Examinations: There will be three exams for this course, taken online via Canvas during class time. Students with accommodations from the Office of Disability Services will be given the extra time on their exams, per their accommodation letters, and should take the exam at ODS because it cannot be guaranteed that the classroom will be available after the end of class at 10:45 AM.

Each of these exams will require students to draw on lectures AND course readings. They will be a combination of different question formats: multiple choice, short answer, essay, etc. The exams each count for **15%** of your final grade. **(45% total)**

(3) Group Project: Students will be assigned to groups to produce an in-class presentation about a selected sociological issue. Each presentation is to be 15 minutes in length followed by an additional five minutes for questions from the class audience (20 minutes total). **Detailed instructions and guidelines for completing the group project will be posted in Canvas.** Students will receive a grade that includes self-assessment, assessment by their group peers, and assessment by the instructor. The group project will count for **20%** of your grade.

(4) Attendance and Class Participation: There is a schedule of the readings required for the course and **you are expected to have read the assigned material prior to the class.** Discussion will correspond to the material in the readings, but may not review it in detail. Some days may include guest speakers or films and will not cover the readings at all, so both reading and attendance are important. Class participation includes two elements: **ATTENDANCE** and **PARTICIPATING IN CLASS DISCUSSION.**

I will take attendance most class periods. Excused absences will not be counted against you. Excused absences will be granted if there is documentation of attendance at an academic event, participation in an athletic event, illness, or family emergency. *Other excused absences will be granted at my discretion.*

In addition to attending class, you must participate in class discussion. Using attendance as the baseline grade (e.g., a student who attends 75% of the class sessions will have a 75% base grade), good class discussion participation can adjust the final participation grade **upward** by up to 5%. For example, a student with a 75% base attendance grade who consistently has informed things to say in class could improve their participation grade to 80%. The final class participation grade (attendance + class discussion) will count for **5%** of your final grade.

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Academic honesty/integrity statement:

All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the policies of the Georgia Tech Honor Code with respect to behavior and academic honesty. Anyone engaging in acts that violate these policies, such as cheating, will be penalized.

For more information on the Honor Code, see the Office of Student Integrity website at www.osi.gatech.edu and the text of the honor code at www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code. ***If you are not familiar with what constitutes plagiarism, ASK! Being uninformed of the policies does not absolve you from the responsibility of following them!***

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the social sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad orienting question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following learning outcome:

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

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following career-ready competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion