

**Western Michigan University**  
**SOC 2000: Principals of Sociology**  
**Fall 2016**

**Instructor:** Simon J. Purdy, Ph.D.  
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**Office:** Sangren Hall, Room 3224  
**Office Hours:** Wednesday 12:00-1:00 PM (or by appointment)  
**Class Meetings:** MWF 11:00-11:50 AM in Sangren Hall 1710

**Optional Textbook:**

Ritzer, G. (2015). *Essentials of Sociology*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed) Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.  
ISBN: 9781483380896

\* Used books and older editions are totally fine, and encouraged!

\*\*Consult the course schedule for assigned readings. Additional readings and materials may be posted that are not found on the course schedule below; these materials will be announced in class and will be found on the ELearning website.

**Course Description:**

“All knowledge of cultural reality, as may be seen, is always knowledge from particular points of view”  
Max Weber (1949).

This course is intended to serve as an introduction to the scientific discipline of sociology, from its theoretical and methodological roots, to its applications in modern phenomena such as crime, education, politics, social class and more. Over the course of this semester, we will learn how to think sociologically while examining a host of pertinent issues/topics at the local, national and global levels in order to broaden our understanding of the complex world in which we live. We will make a concerted effort to ground our examination in objectivity and empirical evidence, taking into account a diversity of viewpoints and sources of information along the way.

Our exploration of the world through the sociological lens may cause you to question some of your own existing beliefs. Whether or not you end up changing your mind about certain issues (such as why crime victimization differs amongst racial and ethnic groups) is not important. What is important, is that you are able to develop more than one way of looking at a given issue, and thus are able to logically evaluate your personal assumptions and the bases of those assumptions (i.e., whether you are only considering evidence in support of your view).

**Course Objectives:**

- To develop an understanding of what sociology is, as a scientific discipline.
- To develop a sense of, and ability to use, the sociological imagination.
- To gain the ability to apply sociological theories and methods in order to see any given issue from a new perspective.

**Class Structure:**

The majority of information in this class will be presented in lecture form during our regular class meetings. We will also utilize a variety of media to supplement the lectures, including video and audio presentations. A major portion of the class will require your participation, as the topics we cover will be discussed and dissected as a group in order to gain the widest variety of views and therefore the best possible understanding. The class will flow from one issue to the next throughout the semester, with more or less time being allotted to any given issue depending on the interest it generates. As such, the schedule presented in this syllabus may not perfectly match the course progression.

**Extra Credit:**

The best way to learn about sociology is by making it applicable to your own interests and experiences. As you will no doubt notice within the first few weeks of class, my taste in examples and illustrations tends to lean towards early 90's rock and grunge music videos. Because of the potential for my interests not representing yours, I have decided to give the class a chance to contribute to our modern understanding of sociology, while earning some extra credit at the same time. At any time over the course of the semester you can submit examples (video clips, songs, articles, etc.) to our ELearning discussion board, which you feel demonstrate something related to our discussions in class. Each post that you make can be worth up to 1% added to your overall grade, to a total of 5% extra credit for the semester.

**Course Grade and Grading Scale:**

Your grade for this course will consist of points earned from 4 examinations (3 chapter exams and the final exam), and in-class/take-home activities. The examinations will account for 65% of your grade, and the remaining 35% will consist of the various in-class and take-home activities.

*Grading Scale*

Percentage	Grade
93 - 100	A
88 - 92	BA
83 - 87	B
78 - 82	CB
73 - 77	C
68 - 72	DC
63 - 67	D
0 - 62	E

**Ground Rules:**

- 1) All assignments must be turned in on time. Late assignments **will not** be accepted for any reason unless an arrangement has been made with the instructor to account for legitimate reasons (i.e. severe illness, death in the family, etc.).
- 2) If you miss an exam, you will have a chance to make it up during the university assigned retake period (Friday of exam week), if you get approval from the instructor for a legitimate reason as listed above.

- 3) All assignments and examinations must be completed by you alone. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will be handled in accordance to university policies.
- 4) Sources used in any writing assignment must be fully cited.
- 5) Cell phones must be turned off during all class sessions. If your cell phone becomes an annoyance to the class you will be asked to leave and it will count as an absence from the class. Cell phones, as well as headphones and any other electronic devices are prohibited during examinations.
- 6) While computers represent a wonderful advancement in the history of human technology, they often prove to be a multi-tasking distraction from the academic experience. Therefore, if you must use your computer to take notes in class, you will be required to sit in the first two rows of seats.

### **University Policies and Statements:**

#### **Accommodation for Disabilities**

Students with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who need to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact Disability Services for Students located at Woodlawn Place at the beginning of the semester. A disability determination must be made by this office before any accommodations are provided by the instructor. For more information, contact DSS (269) 387-2116.

#### **Student Academic Conduct**

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the academic policies and procedures in the Undergraduate or Graduate Catalogs (found online, <http://catalog.wmich.edu>) that pertain to student rights and responsibilities. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity, and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

### **Tentative Course Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Material Covered</b>	<b>Readings</b>
9/7	Course Introduction	
9/9	Basics of Sociology	Chap 1
9/12	Social Theory: Functionalism	Chap 1
9/14	Social Theory: Functionalism	Chap 2
9/16	Social Theory: Conflict/Marxism	Chap 2
9/19	Social Theory: Conflict/Critical	Chap 2
9/21	Social Theory: Interactionism	Chap 2

9/23	Interactionism/Social Research	Chap 2
9/26	Social Research	Chap 2
9/28	Social Research	Chap 2
9/30	<b>Exam 1 Friday, Sep. 30th</b>	
10/3	Culture	Chap 3
10/5	Culture	Chap 3
10/7	Socialization	Chap 4
10/10	Socialization	Chap 4
10/12	Organizations/Politics	Chap 5
10/14	Organizations/Politics	Chap 5/12
10/17	Organizations/Politics	Chap 12
10/19	Social Class and Stratification	Chap 7
10/21	<b>No Class</b>	
10/24	Social Class and Stratification	Chap 7
10/26	<b>Exam 2 Wednesday, Oct. 26th</b>	
10/28	Race and Ethnicity	Chap 8
10/31	Race and Ethnicity	Chap 8
11/2	Race and Ethnicity	Chap 8
11/4	Gender and Sexuality	Chap 9
11/7	Gender and Sexuality	Chap 9
11/9	Religion	Chap 11
11/11	Religion	Chap 11
11/14	Religion	Chap 11
11/16	<b>Exam 3 Wednesday, Nov. 16th</b>	
11/18	Crime and Deviance	Chap 6
11/21	Crime and Deviance	Chap 6
11/23	<b>No Class</b>	
11/25	<b>No Class</b>	
11/28	Crime and Deviance	Chap 6
11/30	Health and Medicine	Chap 13
12/2	Health and Medicine	Chap 13

12/5	Technology and Society	TBD
12/7	Technology and Society	TBD
12/9	Technology and Society	TBD
<b>FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 12<sup>h</sup>, 10:15am</b> <b>Make-up Exams, by Appointment</b>		