Introduction to Sociology
SOC 100: University of St. Thomas
Section 01: MW@ 5:30-9:30

Instructor:  Dr. Lisa K. Waldner
Office:  OEC 445
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Web:  Check Blackboard for current announcements and link to class website
Office Hours:  A half hour before and after class
Classroom:  OEC 306

Course Description: Introduction to the concepts, theories, methods, and applications of the scientific study of society and social concerns. Enables students to understand the connections between the individual and larger social and cultural forces. Heightens awareness of the diversity of American and other societies.

Credit Hours: Four

Prerequisites: none

Instructor Philosophy: The overall goal of this course is to aid in the development of critical thinking and cultural awareness by using a sociological perspective. Introduction to Sociology is a “concepts” and “perspectives” course. Fundamental concepts represent tools for sociological analysis. These concepts and perspectives are applied to the social phenomena of everyday life in order to offer a new and more rational way of viewing society.

Course Objectives: Upon completing this course students should be able to:

- Apply sociological concepts and theories to individual life experiences
- Ask sociological questions
- Differentiate between sociological and non-sociological perspectives
- Be exposed to the various methods and tools sociologists use to seek answers to questions regarding the structure and processes of society
- Develop and refine critical reading and thinking skills

Course Format: This course will consist of both lecture and discussion. Ideally, lecture should provide background information, which will compliment the text, allowing more meaningful contributions to class and group discussions. Attached to this syllabus is a schedule of exams,
reading, writing, and computer assignments. Students should do the assigned reading BEFORE coming to class. The instructor assumes all assigned material has been read and will reference the texts during lecture as though you have read them! All students are encouraged to participate in class discussions. Honest differences of opinion are common and expected in sociology classes. We can disagree while maintaining respect for the academic environment and each other. To ensure that class interaction goes smoothly, please take a look at the class policies page of the syllabus.

**Class Attendance:** Doing well in this class means attending regularly. While outlines of lecture notes are available on the web, this does not even begin to compensate for what is missed. Please make every effort to be in class every single day. **Students missing 50% or more class periods (excluding exam days) will receive an F for the course.**

**Textbook & Readings:**


**Evaluation:** Grading is based on a straight percentage curve allowing for the possibility of every student in the class earning an “A” (or an "F"!!). Final grades will be determined by performance on three exams (this includes the final) five computer assignments, and attendance. Due dates for exams, reading, and computer assignments are listed in the attached schedule. Instructor policy does NOT allow assigning extra-credit to compensate for poor exam performance so allocate your study time accordingly.

**Exams:** Three exams will be given. Exam format will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer essays. To test your knowledge if basic concepts, your textbook has a web site with supplemental material. [http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_henslin_sociology_6](http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_henslin_sociology_6). While multiple choice exam questions will not be as basic, this is a good place to begin exam preparation.

The following polices apply to all exams.

- No early exams will be given (this includes the final). This means that before making travel plans, students should check the university exam schedule and ensure that travel plans do not interfere with the scheduled final exam time.
- Make-up exams will be only given to students with a documented family or medical emergency. Having too many classes or going to work are NOT acceptable excuses. It is the responsibility of the student to request a make-up.
- Make-ups should be pre-arranged if possible and taken within one week of the original exam date. At minimum students MUST contact the instructor by class time on the day of the exam unless there are extenuating circumstances.
Regardless of why the exam was missed, the instructor reserves the right to give an all-essay test for students requesting a make-up.

- Students may not leave during the exam to use the restroom
- Students arriving late for an exam will only be allowed to take the exam if no students have already left the room. Students will be allowed to schedule a make-up if the reasons for being tardy are deemed acceptable.

**Computer Assignments:** I have developed modules using KIDS COUNT data for use in introductory sociology classes. KIDS COUNT is a set of indicators of child well being that is made available by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. More information on KIDS COUNT can be found at [http://www.aecf.org/kidscount](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount). Modules that I have developed can be found on the Social Sciences Data Analysis Network page at: [http://www.ssdan.net/kidscount/modules.shtml](http://www.ssdan.net/kidscount/modules.shtml). The data analysis tools are read-only Excel files that can be found at: [http://www.ssdan.net/kidscount/data.shtml](http://www.ssdan.net/kidscount/data.shtml). Modules and the data analysis tool are free. Five of these assignments have been developed and are worth 20 points each. To do these assignments you will need to have access to Microsoft Excel and a web browser. All campus computers have this software.

The following policies apply to all assignments:

- Assignments can be turned in anytime on the due date as long as received by 10:00PM
- Assignments MUST be stapled or clipped with pages in the correct order. **Points will be deducted from assignments not securely fastened.**

Late assignments are only accepted up until one class period after the scheduled due date. For example, an assignment due Monday can be turned in as late as Wednesday. Two points per day will be deducted for late assignments. **This includes weekends!**

- Students missing class may fax their assignments to avoid late penalties. Please use a cover sheet and fax pages in reverse order for easy assembly.
- Students may use e-mail to turn in assignments but you MUST use MS Word.
- Assignments must be completed in the assigned order.
- Assignment substitutions are not allowed to make-up missed assignments.
- Students may work on these assignments together but everyone is responsible for turning in a copy of their work.
- It is strongly recommended that students make copies of their assignments to turn in and keep the originals
- Only assignments developed by me are eligible for credit.

**Collaborative Research Project:** This project requires students to apply sociological concepts by seeking out popular culture examples. There is a written and oral component as well as a group and individual grade. Oral presentations will take place the final week of class. More details are forthcoming.
E-Mail: All study guides, information on assignments, and other types of class announcements are sent via e-mail. E-mail is sent to your St. Thomas address. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know how to access this account. If you prefer not to use this account to read your e-mail, set your account to forward your e-mail to another address. Instructions on how to do this are at: http://mail.stthomas.edu/. If accessing e-mail through another Internet service provider, please ensure you are able to accept attached files. While study guides are also posted on the class web site, this will be the fastest way to obtain study guides and written assignment instructions.

Assignment and Exam Grade Changes: You are always welcome to discuss with me any questions or concerns that you have about individual grades. However, please remember the following:

- Please bring up your concerns in a timely fashion (within one week of receiving your graded work). I will not be pressured into changing grades at the last minute because a student realizes they may fall a point or two short of a desired grade.
- Be prepared to explain why your grade should be higher if that is your concern. I have already graded your work. I expect to hear concrete reasons why you deserve more points rather than general displeasure over a particular grade. The burden of proof is on you to convince me to reconsider your work.
- If points were taken off for not following directions, do not expect me to change your grade. By all means see me for clarification of directions.
- Always, always, always follow up a discussion with e-mail if I agreed to give you another point or two. This is your documentation that we had this discussion and I am old and forget things easily!
- Always keep your graded work until the semester is over and you are satisfied with your final grade.
- Ask me if you turned in an assignment but never received it back.

Final Grades: will be assigned according to the subsequent scale. The instructor will not modify this scale for any individual student for any reason. If you are having difficulties, ASK FOR HELP! I will work with any student who requests assistance.

Plus / minus grading will be used. Students under SDR grading must have 280 points for passing credit.

Three exams (@80)..................................................240  
Five-computer assignments (@20 points each)...........100  
Collaborative Research Project.................................60  

Total Points................................................................400

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400-372</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>100%-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>371-360</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92.9%-90%</td>
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**Incompletes:** (Grade of I) Incompletes will be given only if the following two criteria are met: (1) student is currently passing the course and (2) circumstances were beyond student control (example: medical emergency). UST policy allows the instructor to set earlier deadlines for the completion of Incompletes. Therefore, a grade of I **MUST** be completed **BEFORE** the start of the next semester. Any students missing this deadline will receive an F (or R if SDR grading is in effect).

**Grade changes:** will only be given when the instructor makes a computational error. Grade changes will **NOT** be given to accommodate students who are in danger of losing financial aid, scholarships, or academic eligibility.

**Withdrawing from a Course:** Students not withdrawing before the deadline will receive a grade of either F (or R for SDR grading) Please see the attached schedule for information on the deadline for withdrawing.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students that present an “Accommodations Request Form” will be provided all accommodations deemed appropriate by the Enhancement Program or Specialized Services Staff. Regardless of disability status, all students have permission to tape record lectures for this class.

**Academic Honesty:** any activity compromising academic integrity is not allowed. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following examples:

- Providing or receiving information for unauthorized use during exams, quizzes, or other graded work
- Failing to report incidents of dishonesty committed by classmates
- Mutilating or stealing library materials or misplacing materials with the intent to reduce accessibility to other students
- Stealing or attempting to steal tests, keys, or grade books
- Serving or enlisting another person to take a test in the student's place or to do any academic work for which the student will receive credit
- Plagiarizing (using another person's work without acknowledgment)
- Changing answers or grades and attempting to claim instructor error
- Signing the attendance sheet for another student
• Any other conduct intended to obtain academic credit fraudulently or dishonestly which a
reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest or
improper in an academic setting

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and all violations will be punished to the fullest extent
possible. Punishment ranges from losing credit on the assignment in question to failing the
course. Dishonesty on an exam will result in an F for the course. If in doubt about what
constitutes dishonesty, please ask. Ignorance is no excuse for noncompliance.

Accusing another student of dishonesty: By all means report cheating that you observed during
an exam but my ability to do anything about it is limited if I do not actually observe the student
cheating. Therefore, the sooner you report it the better chance I have of documenting your
complaint.

Welcome to Introductory Sociology! I look forward to our joint learning experience and a
chance to work with all of you. Please call or stop by my office if I can assist with exam
preparation, explanation of course standing, difficulties with reading or computer assignments,
and/or discussion of ideas and issues from Principles of Sociology. I hope you will enjoy and
benefit from this course.

Dr. Lisa

Classroom Etiquette:

As the instructor I am charged with maintaining a respectful and pleasant academic
environment for ALL students. To accomplish this, please refrain from the following
behaviors.

• The use of cellular phones and pagers. Please turn them off or use the vibrate mode for the
duration of the class period. I will not under any circumstances tolerate these devices
ringing in class.

• Leaving the classroom to use your cellular phone or respond to a page. This is very
disruptive to both your classmates and myself. There are times when it is important that you
can be contacted quickly (medical, family emergency). Please inform me and sit near the
door.
• Excessive tardiness or absenteeism. Be on time for class (especially on exam day!) and attend regularly. I do not have time to do “mini-lectures” for those who miss class. If you do come in late, take the seat closest to the door to minimize disruption.

• Consistently leaving class early: The university published class meeting times several months ago. It is up to you to sign up for class at a time when it does not conflict with other obligations. I do understand from time to time that things come up and you may need to leave early. Let me know BEFORE class starts that you will need to leave and please sit near the door.

• Talking while the instructor or another student is speaking. This is just rude so please refrain.

• Note passing: is distracting, disrespectful, disgusting, etc.

• Sleeping in class: is disrespectful and totally defeats the purpose of coming to class. While it would be nice if we all could learn while we sleep, science has not yet found a way to make this possible.

• Any other behavior that is disruptive and a violation of civility.