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SOC101 (SECT 08, 09): INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Fall 2016

Section 08 (TuFr 2p-3:20p): SSB321

Section 09 (TuFr 11a-12:20p): SSB321

Course Description & Learning Goals

Students successfully completing this course will gain an overview of the unique perspectives sociologists bring to their subject matter, the means by which they practice their craft, the key concepts they employ in the analysis of culture and society, and some of the major findings in select areas of research. Students will also understand the practical contribution a sociological perspective offers to individuals committed to impacting their world. More specifically, students will acquire skills in critical analysis and reasoning (ability to critique the arguments of others in the discipline and construct one's own arguments, using data/evidence); intercultural competence (understanding practices, perspectives, behavior patterns of other cultures and subcultures); ethical reasoning & compassion; and respect for diversity.

Required Texts

Elijah Anderson. *A Place on the Corner*, 2nd edition.

Dalton Conley. *You May Ask Yourself*, 4th edition.

Malcolm Gladwell. *Outliers: The Story of Success*.

Mandatory College-wide Policies and Statements

This course conforms to all campus-wide course and academic policies. You may view these policies using these links:

- Final Exam-Evaluation-Reading Days Policy:
<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=9136>
- Absence and Attendance Policy:
<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=9134>
- Academic Integrity Policy:
<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=7642>
- Disability Support Services:
<http://differingabilities.pages.tcnj.edu>
- Americans with Disability Act Policy:
<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=8082>

E-mail and voice-mail: I check e-mail each morning, and voice mail on days we have class only. Please don't expect me to check my e-mail over the weekends, at night, or during breaks. I never check voice-mail from home. I usually reply within 2 business days to e-mail messages.

Fourth hour equivalency statement: Although this class meets for three hours each week, it is a 4-credit (1 unit) course that offers a depth of learning with additional learning tasks unfolding in the equivalent of a fourth hour. Students will engage in group or individual learning projects outside of class and/or

additional learning experiences occurring multiple times during the semester on or off-campus, including community-engaged learning activities and/or campus-wide events.

Course Policies

1. *Attendance, Participation, and Behavioral Expectations*: Students demonstrate their commitment to learning by regularly attending class, by arriving *on time* and *staying for the full class period*, by contributing usefully to class and small group discussions, by doing their part to create an atmosphere of respectful and serious learning, and by reading the assigned material in advance of the class. You will be expected to so express your commitment in this class, and will receive a tentative participation grade after each exam. Please note, this is a prepared *participation* grade: regular attendance only with no participation is a D.

Students will also be expected to behave as adults in class. This includes: a.) *cell phones turned off and put out of sight for the entirety of the class period* (i.e., no texting), b.) computers used for class purposes only, c.) *body needs managed to avoid mid-class disruptions*, d.) no side conversations or other disruptive behavior, and e.) relevant texts brought to class, students prepared to take notes and participate fully in the learning process. Violation of these expectations will lower your participation grade. Repeated violation will lower your participation grade substantially and result in a formal complaint against the student filed with the Dean of Students.

2. *Papers and Examinations*: Students demonstrate their academic seriousness by turning in all papers and assignments on time, and by writing with excellence. This includes (but is not limited to) spelling, grammar, style (i.e., use the active voice, avoid wordiness/clutter, write for clarity), documentation, and format (thus, any written assignment should be formatted with double line spacing, 1 inch margins, and a 12 point typeface). Dedicated students for whom this presents a challenge will avail themselves of the college's writing tutors.

a. *All assignments must be turned in on time*. Overwork, personal struggles, and the like are important issues, and I encourage you to avail yourselves of your residence staff, student development staff, or the college's counselors for help in these matters. Such issues, however, do not constitute a valid excuse for lateness. Neither do variations on "the computer ate my writing assignment," "I don't know how the file I uploaded didn't have any text in it," or "I e-mailed my paper to you, did you get it?" count as valid excuses. Valid excuses are a death in the immediate family or severe hardship (which I will confirm with the Dean of Students).

Late assignments are penalized as follows: 5% deduction for papers uploaded 3 minutes to 11 hours and 59 minutes late,

10% deduction for 12h:00m-23h:59m late

20% deduction for 24h:00m-47h:59m late

30% deduction for 48h:00m-71h:59m late

40% deduction for 72h:00m-95h:59m late

50% deduction for 96h:00m (4 days) or more late

b. Likewise, *examinations must be taken at the scheduled time*. Only those with official TCNJ activities (e.g., field trips), or the valid reasons specified above, may reschedule their examinations. No make-up exams will be given to students who notify the professor *after* the exam has taken place, unless they were incapacitated and physically unable to call beforehand (i.e., unconscious in a hospital). Make-up examination format is at my discretion (usually a 20-30 minute oral examination).

c. *Plagiarism/Cheating* will not be tolerated, and I will advocate for the fullest penalties possible. Don't be foolish--you don't want me as your adversary. I have respect for the student who accepts the consequences of poor preparation and turns in his/her *own* work. Do what is honorable and right.

3. *Grading Distribution*: Your course grade will be based on the following percentages:

Exam 1	10%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
Course Paper	25%

“Three Sociological Connections” Creative Project	10%
Prepared Participation	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grade distribution is the traditional 0 to 100 point scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 60-66=D, less than 60=F.

Student Requirements

1. *Exams*: There will be 3 exams in this class, administered as indicated on the schedule below. The examinations will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The first exam comes early, and it is designed to help you assess your initial progress in the course. The second exam covers the first half of the course, the third exam covers the second half of the course. The Conley text is the core course textbook and is therefore central to the exams; other texts supplement Conley and are included on the exam as well – typically via essay questions. Exams draw from class materials as well as text assignments; *you will be tested on text assignments even if these assignments are not reviewed in class*. I don’t believe in spoon-feeding students; you are expected to know how to read and understand materials on your own, and ask questions in class about what you do not understand.
2. *Prepared Class Participation*: There will be a variety of ways that we’ll be learning together in this class. Your considerate and prepared (that means having the reading done in advance) contribution to class and small group discussion is an essential part of our learning. Keep in mind, I’m not going to be evaluating the sheer *volume* of words that you share with your classmates, but rather the “weight” of what you share. Naturally, those who attend regularly and participate thoughtfully will receive the highest evaluations in this area. See also the discussion of behavioral expectations above.
3. *Course Paper*: This is a writing assignment that takes our three text authors (Anderson, Conley, and Gladwell) and makes them simultaneous guests in a special Kendall Hall presentation, where you will serve as convener and moderator of their 60 minute session. The assignment will thus be oriented to an audience of your peers, and formatted as a written transcript of the event (i.e., like a script for a play or movie).

Your **first** task is to set a theme for this presentation (i.e., a topic that all three authors are knowledgeable about, such as: “An Honest Conversation about Race in America,” “The Powerful, Unwritten Rules of Social Interaction and Why They Matter,” “Rethinking Achievement in America,” “Deviate at Your Own Risk: Understanding Social Conformity,” “Why Belonging Is Essential to Well-Being,” etc.). **Second**, you are to make an audience-engaging, opening statement about this theme, addressing not only its importance but also the contributions each author has made to understanding it better. **Third**, each of the authors will offer prepared remarks on the topic. Their prepared remarks will not be comprised long verbatim quotations from the texts but rather more conversational statements they are likely to give at such an event based on what you know of their claims or can reasonably infer from their texts. **Fourth**, you will give the authors opportunity to ask questions of each other and answer them. Please, please, please -- assume that they know each other and have read each other’s books. **Fifth**, you will open the floor to questions from your audience and relay the author’s responses. And **finally**, you will make a closing statement summarizing the key themes and “take home points” of the session as a whole and thanking the panel and audience.

- Length and Quality: Sadly, most teachers and professors reward students for longer papers rather than better papers, and thus students become quite adept at BS-ing for whatever page length necessary. I despise incoherence, wordiness, and passive constructions in writing, and I will not accept it in student papers: write only as much as necessary to effectively complete the assignment, and not a word more. *Ninety percent of student papers I receive could be cut by 50% without losing an ounce of meaning*. Don’t write your paper the night before – write it 3 days beforehand, edit it ruthlessly the day before, and turn in a crisp, clean, revised version. For further explanation of what I mean by incoherence, wordiness, and passive constructions, see the William Zinsser excerpts from *On Writing Well* that I’ve posted to Canvas.

- **Submission:** Upload this paper to Canvas before the start of class on the date indicated below; *do not submit a hard copy and do not e-mail it or send it as an attachment to a Canvas message.*
4. **Creative Project:** You will have the option of doing an individual project & presentation during the final two classes, or a group project & presentation during the final class or examination period. These creative projects will make 3 explicit, sociological connections between the project and the course materials. Possible group projects may include skits, videos, songs, spoken word, presentation of national survey data, etc. The group project may last up to 10 minutes, and all group members must be involved *in an important way*. Individual projects may be rooted in a book/article, a survey or census analysis, an analysis of popular media, or a further exploration of a topic discussed in one of our texts; these may last up to 6 minutes. All projects must be approved in advance by your professor *by the date noted on the course schedule*. Be sure to practice your presentation (*don't read off notes or the screen*), maintain good eye contact, and keep within the time frame specified. Time limits will be enforced. And group project members will share the same grade – I recommend groups of just 2 students, as the potential for “free riding” increases exponentially in groups of 3 or more.
5. **Caveat:** I shall endeavor to follow this syllabus as closely as I can. However, since none of us can foretell the future, I reserve the right to make adjustments as necessary during the course. These adjustments will be announced in advance during class; you are responsible for knowing about these adjustments whether in class or not (just like you are responsible for all class materials whether present or not).

Course Schedule:

Date:	What's Happening	What's Due
Aug 30	Course Welcome	
Sep 2	"Two American Families"	Gladwell Introduction, Ch 1
Sep 6	**Follow Monday Schedule**	
Sep 9	The Sociological Imagination	Conley Ch 1
Sep 13	Methods	Conley Ch 2
Sep 16	Methods & Culture	Conley Ch 3, Gladwell Ch 2
Sep 20	Culture & Media	Gladwell Ch 3-4
Sep 23	EXAM 1	<i>Covers all material above</i>
Sep 27	Socialization; Micro-Sociology	Conley Ch 4, Anderson Preface
Sep 30	Groups & Networks	Conley Ch 5, Anderson Ch 1
Oct 4	Social Control & Deviance	Conley Ch 6
Oct 7	Stratification	Conley Ch 7, Gladwell Ch 6
Oct 11	**FALL BREAK**	
Oct 14	Race	Conley Ch 9, Anderson Ch 2
Oct 18	Ethnicity	Gladwell Ch 7, Anderson Ch 3
Oct 21	Catch Up & Review	
Oct 25	EXAM 2	<i>Covers all course material from first class to this point</i>
Oct 28	**no class meeting on Oct 28 th **	<i>Start brainstorming about your creative project presentation, and visit your professor during office hours to get his advice</i>
Nov 1	Poverty	Conley Ch 10, Anderson Ch 4-5
Nov 4	Capitalism & The Economy	Conley Ch 14, Anderson Ch 6
Nov 8	Education	Conley Ch 13, Gladwell Ch 9

Nov 11	Micro-to-Macro Link in Sociology	Anderson Ch 7, Appendix (“Jelly’s Place”), Preface to 2 nd Edition
Nov 15	<i>COURSE PAPER DUE</i> <i>Film: “The Waiting Room”</i>	<i>Upload Course Paper to Canvas</i>
Nov 18	Health & Society	Conley Ch 11
Nov 22	Religion	Conley Ch 16 <i>This is the final day to review your creative project ideas with your professor</i>
Nov 25	<i>**Thanksgiving Break on Fri, Nov 25**</i>	
Nov 28	Work & Meaning Robert Waldinger: “What Makes a Good Life?” (TEDxBeaconStreet)	Gladwell Ch 5, 8
Dec 2	<i>EXAM 3</i>	<i>Covers all course material from second exam to date.</i>
Dec 6, 9	Creative Project Individual Presentations <i>**groups may request to present on this day on a time-available basis**</i>	<i>Attendance required</i>
Final Exam Period	Creative Project Group Presentations	<i>Attendance required</i>