

Introductory Sociology
SOC 1838G–001 (3 credit hours)
Mon/Wed/Fri 8:00am–8:50am, Blair Hall 1103
Spring 2021 Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Wade Smith
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Various policies and procedures described in this syllabus are implemented as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Those items that are in response to Covid-19 are written in red using italics to make them easily distinguishable. These policies and expectations are implemented in support of proposed best practices to promote the health of the campus community and reduce the spread of Covid-19.

As the situation with Covid-19 develops, changes may be made to this course to support proposed best practices and promote the health and wellness of students, faculty, staff, and the broader university and local communities. If changes are made to this course, those changes will be communicated in class, via the News feature in D2L, and, if necessary, by updating this syllabus.

For information about university-wide Covid-19 policies and expectations, refer to the EIU Covid-19 Return to Campus Guidebook at <https://www.eiu.edu/covid/returntocampus.php>.

Office Hours

Scheduled office hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 2:00pm–3:20pm; and by appointment

To support proposed best practices and limit personal contact, students will need to schedule office hours meetings at least one hour in advance of the scheduled meeting time. Students will have the option to schedule an in-person meeting or a video meeting using Microsoft Teams software. See the Office Hours content folder on the course D2L website for detailed information explaining how to schedule a meeting, and how to attend a video meeting (if preferred).

The days and times listed below are times for which students may schedule a 20-minute meeting. If these scheduled times for office hours do not work with your schedule, please contact me by email to make an appointment at an alternate meeting time.

*I am available for office hours meetings at the following times on **Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays:***

- 2:00pm–2:20pm
- 2:20pm–2:40pm
- 2:40pm–3:00pm
- 3:00pm–3:20pm

Course Descriptions

Catalog Description: Scientific description of the regularities and patterns of behavior that characterize our society and the larger global environment. Sociological analyses of the social forces that affect our daily lives.

Detailed Description: This course provides an introduction to sociology as a social science. Using a variety of theoretical perspectives and analytic approaches, we will examine patterns of social behavior and the social institutions which both influence and are influenced by such behavior. In addition to exploring social institutions and human behavior, we will explore culture, social status, and the various levels and forms of social organization that characterize society. In addition, this course will introduce the central concepts and theoretical perspectives of a number of subfields of sociology that can form the foundation for more in-depth future explorations of social phenomena.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- a. Discuss sociological perspectives
- b. Explain the role of theory in the conduct of inquiry
- c. Identify strengths and weaknesses of major research strategies
- d. Summarize their understanding of society through the scientific description of the regularities and recurring patterns that characterize social life
- e. Report on our nation's place in the larger global environment paying particular attention to the interdependence and interrelationships among societies
- f. Challenge common assumptions, determine and weigh appropriate evidence, and develop reasoned conclusions
- g. Explore sociological explanations of the social forces that shape and control individuals' lives
- h. Describe how societies are established and change
- i. Explain the social diversity of the United States and incorporate the variables of sex, race, ethnicity, social class, and age in developing an understanding of our social world
- j. Discuss the influences of social relationships on individual's attitudes and behavior

Required Text

Chambliss, William J. and Daina S. Eglitis. 2018. *Discover Sociology*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Course D2L Website

Various course materials (including an up-to-date course schedule, out-of-class assignments, supplemental readings, reading prompts, and exam materials) will be made available on the course D2L website. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the materials available on the course website and regularly check the News feed on the website as that is where I will post important course announcements as necessary. Note that I do not check the D2L messaging system regularly. If you need to contact me by email, use the Panthermail address provided above.

Course Environment and Policies

Course Environment: The primary objectives of this course are to 1) develop an understanding of human behavior and social institutions from a sociological perspective, 2) make sense of course material in the context of everyday life, and 3) promote a critical thinking mindset. Your active participation in course discussions and activities is essential if we are to accomplish these objectives. This participation requires that you arrive to class on time, stay for the entire class, turn off and put away cell phones and other electronic devices before class begins, and refrain from otherwise disruptive behavior. Students who engage in distracting or disruptive behaviors—including use of electronics—may be asked to leave class.

Throughout the semester we will discuss a number of potentially sensitive topics. While your active participation in these discussions is encouraged and important, it is essential that we maintain a courteous and respectful course environment that promotes the participation of all members of the class. Discussing various perspectives and experiences is a valuable component of the learning process, and student contributions deserve our attention and respect. Disrespectful and discourteous actions and comments do not belong in the classroom and will not be tolerated.

Throughout this course we will engage readings, participate in class discussions, and watch video clips that will expose students to a diverse set of norms, values, and histories, all of which are essential to understanding our social world. Note that some of the materials used in this class may contain mature themes, images, and language, or address topics that may be uncomfortable for some students. It is important, therefore, that our use of these materials remains focused on their contributions to the learning process. If you have concerns with any of the course materials or associated class discussions, please see me immediately.

COVID-19 Safety Precautions and Behavior Expectations: To protect our campus community during the Covid-19 pandemic, all persons on campus are required to observe social distancing guidelines, respect posted signage, wash hands frequently, and wear a clean cloth or disposable face mask that covers their nose and mouth in all shared spaces including classrooms, hallways, offices, dining halls, grounds, and parking lots. Students should also self-monitor for possible Covid-19 symptoms and contact university health services if feeling sick. You should NOT come to class if you are feeling sick, and should contact your instructor as soon as possible to alert them of your absence.

Students who refuse to comply with the Covid-19 mask policy and other social distancing requirements will be asked to leave the classroom and will be reported to the Office of Student Standards for corrective and/or disciplinary action. For additional information about EIU Covid-19 policies and expectations, refer to the EIU Covid-19 Return to Campus Guidebook at <https://www.eiu.edu/covid/returntocampus.php>.

Attendance: I do not take attendance; however, 12 percent of your final grade is based on your performance on Critical Thinking Exercises (described below) that are usually unannounced and often completed in class. Additionally, the material presented and discussed in class is testable and often not provided in other course materials. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain the material presented in class—to include course announcements—from another student. If you have specific questions about this material, do not hesitate to schedule a meeting for clarification.

If you are required to miss class due to experiencing Covid-19 symptoms or for other reasons related to Covid-19 (such as being required to quarantine or being told by health services to limit your contact with others and/or not attend classes), contact the instructor as soon as possible to provide documentation for your absence and to discuss the possibility of alternative modes of instruction during the period of absence.

Attendance at Exams: Except under extenuating circumstances approved by the instructor, students absent during a scheduled exam without having the absence excused by the instructor prior to the scheduled exam time will not be given a make-up opportunity. For exceptional circumstances that prevent students from contacting the instructor prior to the exam time, students must contact the instructor as soon as possible to provide documentation for the absence and schedule a make-up exam.

Schedule Conflicts: If you have a known schedule conflict with course requirements such as exams, due dates, or known dates of absence, you must contact the instructor by the end of the fourth week of class (and at least one week prior to the schedule conflict) so proper arrangements can be made. Schedule conflicts that arise during the semester should be brought to the instructor's attention as soon as possible.

Returned Work: All graded work will be returned to you. In the case of a grade dispute, it is your responsibility to provide proof of graded work, otherwise grades cannot be disputed.

Laptops & Electronic Devices: Laptops and other electronic devices (such as tablets) are approved for in-class use for note taking purposes only. Cell phones, watches with Internet access, and other small electronic devices used for purposes other than note taking are not permitted for use in the classroom. Students using electronic devices for reasons other than note taking may be denied the right to use the electronic device for note taking in future class meetings, may be asked to leave the classroom, may be reported to the Office of Student Standards, and may face disciplinary action.

Readings: All assigned readings are to be completed prior to class time on the date for which they are assigned as we will be discussing and applying the topics covered in the readings in class on that date. To assist you in your reading of the material and help prepare you for class discussions, assignments, and exams, weekly 'Reading Prompts' are posted on the course D2L website. Completing these prompts during your reading of the material will be helpful and contribute to your success in this class.

Out-of-Class Assignments: All assignments completed outside of class must adhere to the assignment’s instructions and be submitted following the assignment’s submission requirements. No assignments will be accepted via e-mail. Except under exceptional circumstances approved by the instructor, ‘Critical Thinking Exercises’ (described below) will not be accepted late. ‘Field Assignments’ (described below) that are submitted late but within 48 hours of the due time will be accepted for 80 percent credit as described in this section. If you fail to submit a ‘Field Assignment’ by the due time, the assignment is considered late. To allow for a late submission, you must contact the instructor by email and make arrangements to submit the assignment within 48 hours of the due date and time. Late assignments that are submitted within 48 hours of the due date and time will be graded and given 80 percent credit (i.e., the assignment will be graded normally, and the total points earned will be multiplied by 0.8). Except under extenuating circumstances, no assignments will be accepted after this 48-hour period.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (available here: <http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards, and sanctions may be imposed by the instructor up to and including failure of the course.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the office of Student Disability Services (SDS). All accommodations must be approved through SDS. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696 or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

Evaluation Components

Your grade for this course will be based on your performance on Exams, Field Assignments, and Critical Thinking Exercises as described below.

Grade Components: Points Possible and (Percentage of Course Grade)

Exam 1	80 pts	(16%)
Exam 2	80 pts	(16%)
Exam 3	80 pts	(16%)
Final Exam	110 pts	(22%)
Field Assignments (3)	90 pts	(18%)
Critical Thinking Exercises (12)	60 pts	(12%)
Total Points Possible	500 pts	(100%)

Course Grades: Point Ranges and (Percentage of Points Earned)

A: 448-500 pts (90%-100%)	B: 398-447 pts (80%-89%)	C: 348-397 pts (70%-79%)	D: 298-347 pts (60%-69%)	F: ≤ 297 pts (≤ 59%)
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Note: Final course grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Exams: Each exam will be a combination of multiple choice and identification questions. This format will be discussed in detail prior to Exam 1 and sample questions will be posted on the course D2L website. The “Reading Prompts” and “Topics of Discussion” documents posted on the D2L website will serve as your study guides for exams. The final exam will be cumulative.

Field Assignments (FA): During the semester you will complete three out-of-class assignments (what I call “Field Assignments”) that require you to think critically about meaningful sociological data. These assignments are designed to assess your ability to theorize, analyze, and hypothesize (three key sociological tasks). Each Field Assignment will include the completion of a worksheet and the submission of a written report (to be uploaded in D2L). Each of these assignments is worth a maximum of 30 points. Details for each assignment will be provided at least three weeks in advance of the due date. Due to the format of these assignments, I do not accept Field Assignments as Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP) submissions. See the “Out-of-Class Assignments” section above for information about late Field Assignment submissions.

Critical Thinking Exercises (CTE): Throughout the semester, 14 activities (“Critical Thinking Exercises”) will be incorporated into the course schedule. These exercises, which may be announced or unannounced in advance, will require you to apply critical thinking to specific topics of interest and may include in-and/or out-of-class components. Your completion of each of these exercises is worth a maximum of five points. Your 12 highest CTE grades will be added to your course grade, and the lowest two will be dropped. Make-up opportunities for missed CTEs are only possible under extenuating circumstances or for absences that are excused by the instructor in advance.

Abbreviated Course Schedule*

Week	Primary Topic of Discussion and (Analytical Spotlight)	Notes
Week 1 (1/10-1/16)	Defining Sociology	
Week 2 (1/17-1/23)	The Sociological Perspective	
Week 3 (1/24-1/30)	Sociological Theory & Research Methods	
Week 4 (1/31-2/6)	Sociological Theory & Research Methods (<i>Deviance & Social Control</i>)	
Week 5 (2/7-2/13)	Culture & Socialization	Exam 1
Week 6 (2/14-2/20)	Culture & Socialization (<i>Religion</i>)	
Week 7 (2/21-2/27)	Social Institutions (<i>Economy</i>)	Field Assignment 1 Due
Week 8 (2/28-3/6)	Social Status & Stratification (<i>Social Class</i>)	
Week 9 (3/7-3/13)	Social Class (<i>Education</i>)	Exam 2
Week 10 (3/14-3/20)	Race & Ethnicity (<i>The State</i>)	
Week 11 (3/21-3/27)	Sex & Gender (<i>Family</i>)	Field Assignment 2 Due
Week 12 (3/28-4/3)	Sexuality Intersectionality	
Week 13 (4/4-4/10)		Exam 3
Week 14 (4/11-4/17)	Historical Sociology (<i>Medicine</i>)	
Week 15 (4/18-4/24)	Social Change (<i>Social Movements</i>)	Field Assignment 3 Due
Week 16 (4/25-5/1)	Globalization	
Final Exam Week	(Monday, May 3, 12:30pm-2:30pm)	Final Exam

*For a detailed schedule that includes assigned readings by date and specific due dates, see the schedule posted on the course D2L website.