Instructor: E-mail: Anne F. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

eisenber@geneseo.edu

Office: Phone: Sturges 123D 245-5335

Office Hours: Monday's 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Friday's 10:30 am – Noon or by appointment.

Teaching Assistants:

Katie Cardinal (kmc32@)

Kevin Castañeda(kc19@)

Sturges 123F

245-5335

Posted on the class

MYCOURSES page

Exploring & Explaining the Everyday & the Overlooked

Office:

Phone:

Office Hours:

Sociology 100 – Introduction to Sociology Spring 2013 Sturges 223

Monday's and Wednesday's: 10:00 am - 11:15 am

"We must rapidly begin the shift from a `thing'-oriented society to a `person'-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered. A civilization can flounder as readily in the face of moral and spiritual bankruptcy as it can through financial bankruptcy."

bell hooks (quoting Martin Luther King, Jr.), 1994, Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom, p. 27

"If you believe the Bible is the literal truth, the immortality of Henrietta's cells makes perfect sense. Of course they were growing and surviving decades after her death, of course they floated through the air, and of course they'd led to cures for diseases and been launched into space. Angels are like that. The Bible tells us so. For Deborah and her family – and surely for many others in the world – that answer was much more concrete than the explanation offered by science: that the immortality of Henrietta's cells had something to do with her telomeres and how HPV interacted with her DNA. The idea that God chose Henrietta as an angel who would be reborn as immortal cells made a lot more sense to them than the explanation that Deborah had read years earlier in Victor McKusick's genetics book, with . . . phrases like `the tumor's singularity' and called the cells a `reservoir of morphologic, biochemical, and other information.'"

Rebecca Skloot, 2010, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, p. 296

"So, by our capacity to register facts and occurrences, we become more capable of intervention. And this generates new kinds of knowledge far more complex than simple adaptation to a given and `unchangeable' situation. For this reason I do not accept (because it is not possible) the ingenuous or strategically neutral position often claimed by people in education or by those who study biology, physics, sociology, or mathematics. No one can be in the world, with the world, and with others and maintain a posture of neutrality."

Paulo Freire, 2001, Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage, p. 73

"What are the values that No Child Left Behind reinforces? Memorization, mastering a definitive body of knowledge that an institution insists is worth knowing, understanding that some subjects `count on the test' and other areas aren't worth testing at all. Everything about No Child Left Behind reinforces the idea of knowledge as a noun, not knowing as a verb."

Cathy N. Davidson, 2011, Now You See It: How the Brain Science of Attention Will Transform the Way We Live, Work, and Learn, p. 124

Course Goals and Intended Learning Outcomes: Human society can be studied and explained from a number of different perspectives ranging from the biological (how the environment affects our ability to function) to the philosophical (how human consciousness develops) to the psychological (how brain function affects our ability to interact with the environment). In fact, as we experience everyday social life we are bound to question why people act the way they do in particular situations. Why are we attracted to some people as opposed to other people? Why do our friends' behaviors change depending on the group in which they are participating? Why do people in other countries protest so much? Our ability to understand and explain varying aspects of human society allows us to better manage the world around us. The more successful we are in managing the world around us, the more likely we are able to easily adapt to changes and challenges we face. Finally, our adaptability affects our ability to engage the social world in a rewarding and positive manner. In other words – the more likely we are to enjoy life!

As one of the newest academic disciplines, beginning in the 1800's, sociology originated as an alternative way to explain the catastrophic changes occurring in human society at that time. To understand the impact of these changes on human relations, the first sociologists posed a series of questions that created a unique perspective for explaining the social world in which we live. "Introduction to Sociology" encourages students to develop a "sociological imagination" that allows them to better understand the world around them. To accomplish this we examine specific sociological ideas and then use these ideas to explain aspects of our own lives as well as the lives of others.

"Introduction to Sociology" is a required course for all sociology majors and also satisfies a Social Science core requirement of SUNY-Geneseo for all students. The overall intended learning outcome of this course is to introduce students to a broad range of sociological ideas so as to develop a "sociological eye" with which to understand human society. The course accomplishes this goal by focusing on three specific learning outcomes –

- 1. Honing students' critical thinking skills (verbal and written) through their participation in the course. Class discussions and completion of required course activities will challenge us to reassess our understanding of human society with a new perspective.
- 2. Providing students with in-depth knowledge of key approaches and ideas in sociology that examine the individual, groups, and social institutions.
- 3. Highlighting the applicability and utility of sociology in explaining social life as we experience it daily.

Course Readings - Required texts (available at the college bookstore)

- Andersen, Margaret L., Kim A. Logio, and Howard Taylor (eds.). 2012. Understanding Society: An
 Introductory Reader, Fourth Edition. CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning. [ALT]
- Schaefer, Richard T. 2012. Sociology Matters, Fifth Edition. NY: McGraw Hill. [RS]

You are expected to do the required readings prior to coming to class, as noted on the attached schedule, so as to be prepared to discuss assigned materials.

<u>Course Requirements</u>: The course requirements are constructed to achieve the following three things. They -

- 1. ensure that each student acquires a base of knowledge concerning sociology;
- 2. ensure an ongoing two-way communication process between student and instructor concerning course material whereby an appropriate level of feedback provides guidance for students' improvement in the course; and
- 3. provide a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their progress since everyone learns in different ways.

Each requirement yields a maximum number of points contributing to the total number of points possible, which are translated into a final grade as noted on the scale below. This is known as the <u>mastery system of evaluation</u> whose purpose is to allow each student to determine his/her own level of performance based on your own expectations. In other words – the grade you receive in the class is based on what you have learned and earned, rather than on how you compare to other students in the class. I **do not** curve grades on a mean or average – each person's grade at the end of the semester is based on the total number of points he/she has earned.

Requirement	Due Date	Points		Grade Sca	le	
Reading Integration Worksheets	See description	210	Α	493 pts	C+	403 pts
In-Class Test	See schedule	45	Α-	475 pts	С	385 pts
Research Essays	See description	150	В+	457 pts	C-	369 pts
Writing/Citing Workshop	See description	60	В	439 pts	D	353 pts
Participation	See description	70 ,	B-	421 pts	Е	<353 pts
	Total Points	535			1	

Requirement Descriptions

Points

Reading Integration Worksheets

210

An important aspect of creating an interactive classroom is students' active participation in class discussions. To encourage such participation, each student will submit a total of <u>five</u> reading application worksheets as a way of adequately preparing for class discussions. Each contribution is worth 42 points for a total of 210 points towards the final grade. Guidelines for the reading worksheets will be distributed in class.

In-Class Test

45

The class is constructed such that the material on the first day of class is as important as the material on the last day of class. To emphasize this point, the in-class test on the last day of class – Monday, May 6 - will concern the required material from the last three weeks of classes and how it relates to material from earlier in the semester.

Research Essays

150

The purpose of the research essays is to provide students with the experience of what it means to study, as well as explain, the social world from a sociological perspective. **Two** research essays out of four possible essay opportunities, each worth 75 points for a total of 150 points towards the final grade, are due as part of the course requirements. The guidelines for the four essay opportunities will be distributed in class and the submission date for each essay is noted both on the guidelines as well as on the attached schedule.

Writing and citing workshop

60

The purpose of the writing and citing workshop is to ensure that students clearly understand the standards for evaluating writing as well as how to avoid plagiarism. The workshop will be held on Wednesday, February 6 and attendance is required.

Participation Credit

70

To encourage class attendance and participation in class discussions a total of 70 points are earned in two different ways. The first way to earn participation credit is through informal in-class group activities and the second way to earn points is through a series of individual responses to in-class questions.

The purpose of constructing the course and its requirements in this fashion is to encourage a "hands-on" approach to learning sociology that allows you to actively deal with the ideas, issues, and problems inherent in the discipline. These skills are applicable in any arena you might find yourself – other courses, running a business, working for a business, and in further education. Additionally, this course compels you to have a stake in the class since it depends on cooperative learning among students, as well as the expertise, dedication, and interest of the instructor.

THINGS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

Attendance: Learning is an interactive process. A large portion of the material for this course will be covered in class and emerge from class discussions. Written class assignments are based on the material discussed in class as well as based on required readings. Additionally, the success or failure of any class depends on the efforts of both the instructor and class participants. Therefore, I strongly encourage thoughtful preparation (on my part as well as yours), regular attendance; and active participation. Although regular attendance is not a course requirement it will provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for successful completion of the course.

Interactive Media Devices: The purpose of classroom sessions is to provide an opportunity for our attention (students and teacher) to be dedicated to working with course materials. Our interactions and participation in classroom discussions is an integral part of the learning process. Disruption of this process (due to cell phones or pagers ringing) or lack of participation in this process (such as when texting, IMing, checking email, or listening to IPODS) is rude and disrespectful of everyone else in the class as well as detracts from the learning process itself. Therefore – all cell phones and pagers MUST be on silent (or turned off) and all other media devices must be stored in your bags during class. The first time you disrupt class or do not attend to class activities I will assume you simply forgot. HOWEVER – the second time it occurs you will be removed from the class permanently, you will receive an "E" for the class, and I will have your school record so noted.

Plagiarism: When you use the ideas of someone else, whether you quote a source directly or indirectly incorporate general points made by another person, **you must cite the source.** Proper citation practices not only help you to avoid the unethical act of plagiarism but are also a mark of good scholarship. Additionally, proper citation practices indicate that students take their own work seriously. When citing the work of others you demonstrate your ability to apply and synthesize information and to form your own ideas regarding the opinions of someone else. Guidelines for citing in any written materials submitted will be distributed in class.

More to the point, to emphasize the importance of proper citation practices I will:

- a) <u>FAIL</u> any written submission in which plagiarism has occurred (you use another's ideas either directly or indirectly and do not indicate as such with citations in the body of the paper AND a bibliography at the end).
- b) Deduct up to 25% of the total points available for any given assignment, from the points earned for that submission, for incomplete or improper citations. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the guidelines preventing plagiarism by using proper citation practices. Essentially, students will be penalized up to two and one half letter grades on each assignment for inaccurate or incomplete citation practices.

Paper Submissions: Unless stated otherwise on the assignment, papers MUST be submitted at the beginning of class and presented to the instructor. Papers simply left in my office mailbox without receiving approval beforehand to do so will not be accepted. **Most importantly, I do NOT accept assignments submitted electronically** unless approved ahead of time due to extenuating circumstances.

Language Use: An increasing number of academic and non-academic organizations, as well as many mainstream newspapers and magazines, require that authors use nonsexist and non-racist language. This means referring to persons in terms that are not ambiguous, stereotypical, or evaluative. For example, it is ambiguous to say "man is selfish by nature" when we mean to include all people regardless of sex. Thus, "humans are selfish by nature" is the less ambiguous phrase. To refer, for example, to a "chairman" rather than a "chairperson" when speaking generically perpetuates the stereotype that only men hold high-level positions.

This is not a trivial issue. It is no longer considered appropriate to ignore more than half of the human population (i.e., all women) by using only male pronouns simply because it is considered more convenient and less unwieldy. I strongly encourage you to make the manner in which you express ideas as conscious as the manner in which you learn to ask and answer sociological questions in this course, by using non-sexist language in your written and spoken remarks.

Course Concerns or Issues: I accept written rebuttals up to 1 week following the return of your scored assignment. A persuasive rebuttal includes a summary of the question or task involved, your response, and a statement about why you think you deserve more credit than you were given. Attach the original scored assignment to the back of the rebuttal. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to participate in the process of your own evaluation. This is a chance to be an advocate for your ideas and work and you will not be penalized for doing so.

Additionally, although I have put a great deal of consideration into both my teaching methods and the structure of the class, they are not perfect for every individual. I value your constructive feedback and use such information to improve. To this end, I will ask you to provide an anonymous evaluation of the class during the course in addition to the end-of-the-semester formal evaluation. Please give these evaluations your careful consideration. If there is a specific issue regarding the course I encourage you to approach me for discussion. If you are not satisfied with my response we will work with the Chairperson of the Sociology Department (Dr. Kurt Cylke) to resolve the issue.

Special Consideration: Students who require special consideration in regard to meeting and completing course requirements should speak with the instructor **as soon as possible**. Although course requirements are meant to appeal to all learning styles, I recognize that there are extenuating circumstances that impact on a student's ability to learn. My goal is for all students to have an opportunity to learn course material and to demonstrate their knowledge.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Wk #	Question for the Week	Monday	Wednesday		
1	INTRODUCTIONS To one another and to the class.		1/23 READINGS: • Handouts		
2	What makes sociology the "Queen of all the sciences?"	1/28 READINGS: • RS – ch. 1 • HANDOUTS	1/30 READINGS: • ALT - #1, 2, 3		
3	THE BASIS OF HUMAN SOCIETY Why DO Asian babies cry less than American babies?	2/4 READINGS: • RS – pp. 37-58	2/6 WRITING & CITING WORKSHOP: ATTENDANCE REQUIRED		
4	How much free will do you REALLY have?	2/11 READINGS: • RS – Pp. 58-74 • ALT - #7, 8, 9	2/13 READINGS: • ALT - #10, 11, 12		
5	What bridges link YOU to Kevin Bacon?	2/18 READINGS: • RS – ch. 3	2/20 READINGS: • ALT - #13, 15, 17, 18 RESEARCH ESSAY #1 DUE		
6	SOCIAL STRATIFICATION Is there REALLY a difference between being a serf or working at McDonalds?	2/25 READINGS: • RS - ch. 5	2/27 READINGS: • ALT - 24, 25, 26, 27		

Wk #	Question for the Week	Monday	Wednesday		
7	What is "redlining" and why should you care?	3/4 READINGS: • RS - ch. 6	3/6 READINGS: • ALT – #29, 30, 33, 34		
8	Why couldn't a woman be president when your parents		3/13 READINGS: • ALT - #36, 37.38		
9	were your age? SPRING BREAK	3/18 NO CLASSES	3/20 NO CLASSES		
10	SOCIAL ORDER Who has more power your parents or the financial aid office?	3/25 READINGS: • RS – pp. 209-222	3/27 READINGS: • ALT - #42, 43, 44		
11	Can you be a nudist on the SUNY- Geneseo campus?	4/1 READINGS: • RS – pp. 222-233 • ALT - #46, 47 RESEARCH ESSAY #3 DUE	4/3 READINGS: • RS – pp. 234-245 • ALT - #49, 50, 51		
12	ls Lincoln's dream REALLY possible?	4/8 READINGS: • RS – pp. 245-252	4/10 READINGS: • ALT - #56, 57, 58		
13	Would you rather have power or have money?	4/15 READINGS: • RS – pp. 252-262	4/17 READINGS: • ALT - #52, 53, 54, 55		
14	SOCIAL CONTROL Who is NOT deviant?	4/22 READINGS: • RS - ch. 4 RESEARCH ESSAY #4 DUE	4/24 READINGS: • ALT - #20, 21, 22		

Wk #	Question for the Week	Monday	Wednesday
	SOCIAL CHANGE	4/29	5/1
15	What would YOU change in the world today and how?	READINGS: • RS-ch. 11	READINGS: • ALT - #66, 67, 68
		5/6	
16	FINALE!	IN-CLASS TEST	
		Last day of class	

Finals Class Meeting – Wednesday, 15 May 2013, at 10:00 am in Sturges 223