

Sociology 101

Introduction To This Study Guide

This study guide contains the reading assignments, chapter overviews, and lessons for Sociology 101: Introduction to Sociology. You will find instructions on reading assignments and the submission of your lessons in the following sections.

Introduction to Sociology

This course is a broad overview of the logic, theory, and practices of sociology. It is difficult to “pin down” sociology and what it means because it is a versatile scientific perspective that employs a great variety of methods and philosophical approaches to understanding the social world. My primary objective is to introduce you to the study of sociology and, along the way, to help you to develop your “sociological imagination.” The **sociological imagination** is a concept constructed by C. Wright Mills, an American sociologist in the 1940s and 1950s. According to Mills, the sociological imagination is a way of looking at the social world that requires the ability to see the impact of large cultural and historical forces on our everyday lives. When using our sociological imagination, we are able to see how our everyday “private troubles” are connected to larger scale “public issues” and to socio-historical processes.

Required Textbook

Newman, David M., *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*, 4th edition, Pine Forge Press, 2002.

I have used several different textbooks for SOC 101, but this is by far my favorite one. Newman is an engaging writer who avoids hard-to-understand social science jargon and uses vivid examples to illustrate the important concepts of sociology. We will not cover every topic in the textbook. I have selected those topics and corresponding chapters that I believe will provide the most efficient and comprehensive introduction to sociology.

Most of the chapters in the book contain special features. When you are reading each chapter, pay close attention to the short **research features** (the short sub-sections in each chapter that places sociological concepts in the context of a particular study).

Another important section type is the **micro-macro connections** section in each chapter. According to Newman, the “micro-macro” discussions are used to illustrate the connections between our everyday lives and the structures of our society.

Finally, be sure to read the **chapter highlights** and review the **key terms** at the end of each chapter. Reading these features are not, of course, a good substitute for reading the chapter, but will help you to revisit the main ideas and to test your understanding of the key concepts.

Sociology on the Internet

I urge all SOC 101 students to expand your sociological imaginations on the Internet. Some good places to start:

The SocioWeb: www.socioweb.com/~markbl/socioweb

The American Sociological Association website: www.asanet.org

Note: Internet access is not required to complete this course.

Lessons

The lessons in this course have from one to four parts. Each part will ask you to draw on what you have learned from a single chapter in the Newman text. Students are expected to complete 12 parts in the order listed in the study guide. Each lesson has four (4) main components. (1) first, a reading assignment; (2) next, a brief discussion of the chapter topics; (3) a list of key terms; and (4) finally, each part will include a self-check quiz consisting of a few multiple-choice questions and true/false items to assist you in preparing for the exams. You will find an answer key to these quizzes in the back of the study guide.

At the end of the lesson parts, you will find writing assignments that will challenge you to apply what you have learned in the textbook and course lessons. These five assignments should be typed and double-spaced. If you do not have access to a computer or typewriter, you may neatly print your essays. Each writing assignment is worth 20 points. You will be graded on your careful consideration of the question posed and your use of course material (i.e., the textbook and lesson) to construct a coherent, persuasive essay. You do not have to agree with everything that you read in the book. If you do have disagreements with the text, state them! But be fair and objective when responding to the material and always back up your opinions with clarity and reason.

Although you should use the textbook as a guide, please construct your essay using your own words. Please do not copy sections of the Newman text or any other book to write your essays. Any student who plagiarizes the work of another will be receive an "F" for the course.

Examinations

Two examinations are required in this course: a midcourse examination and a final examination. These exams are numbered as writing assignments 4 and 7 respectively. The midcourse exam is a test of your knowledge of the material covered in lessons 1 through 3. The final exam will test you on lessons 5 and 6. You should apply to take the midcourse exam after completing lesson 3 and you should apply for the final exam after completing lesson 6. Each exam will include a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions. You will not be permitted to use your textbook, study guide, or any notes when taking these exams. Two hours is allowed to complete each examination.

Grading Policy

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on the five writing assignments and two exams detailed above. Each writing assignment is worth twenty (20) points and each exam is worth one hundred (100) points. The total possible points for the course is 300, weighted as follows:

5 writing assignments \times 20 = 100
midcourse exam = 100
final exam = 100

Your final course grade will be calculated with the following scale:

A = 270-300 points
B = 240-269 points
C = 210-239 points
D = 180-209 points
F = 179 points and below

Plus and minus grades may also be assigned.

Course Schedule

- Lesson 1 “The Sociological Imagination.” Read Chapter 1 in Newman text. Complete writing assignment 1.
- Lesson 2 A. “Thinking Sociologically.” Read Chapter 2
 B. “The Social Construction of Knowledge.” Read Chapter 3. Complete writing assignment 2.
- Lesson 3 A. “Culture.” Read Chapter 4.
 B. “Socialization.” Read Chapter 5.
 C. “The Presentation of Self.” Read Chapter 6. Complete writing assignment 3.
- Lesson 4 Midcourse exam.
- Lesson 5 A. “Deviance.” Read Chapter 7.
 B. “Family.” Read Chapter 8. Complete writing assignment 5.
- Lesson 6 A. “Class and Inequality.” Read Chapter 10.
 B. “Race and Ethnicity.” Read Chapter 11.
 C. “Sex and Gender.” Read Chapter 12.
 D. “Social Change and Social Movements.” Read Chapter 14. Complete writing assignment 6.
- Lesson 7 Final exam.

Communicating with Your Instructor

Please feel free to contact me at any time during the course if you have questions, comments, or concerns about the course. The best way to reach me is to send a note with one of your lessons to the Course Services office. Send the note to my attention: Dr. Thomas Vander Ven. You may also reach me via email at vandervt@ohio.edu.

All questions regarding administrative issues (e.g., exam supervision, extensions, withdrawals, etc.) should be directed to Independent and Distance Learning Course Services office.