

# SOC 1: Introduction to Sociology

Professor: Robert Braun  
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440 Social Sciences Building

## Office Hours:

MW 10:00-11:10AM

Sign up: <https://www.wejoinin.com/robert.braun>

Zoom: <https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/92931177736>

Fall 2023

2050 Valley Life Sciences  
MWF 9-10 AM

## Course description

Sociology studies how forces beyond our control and outside the realm of nature shape what we feel, perceive, want and get. Behaviors that may at first seem like deeply personal choices or determined by nature -suicide, academic achievement, college major- are shown by sociologist to be clearly affected by how we are raised and who we interact with. Sociologist apply this distinct approach to three interrelated sets of questions:

- *Identity*: To which groups do we belong and how does this affect our behavior?
- *Inequality*: Which group gets what, when and most importantly why?
- *Integration*: How do groups produce social order and solidarity?

Sociologists believe that answering these questions lies at the heart of understanding both world history and the world we live in today. In this class you will learn how to answer these questions yourself by investigating differences within and across societies, studying how sociologists have made sense of these differences and exploring how all of this matters for you and your surroundings. Students will improve their analytical skills by drawing connections between social science theory, popular non-fiction, historical monographs and journalistic accounts. Upon completing the course, students will not only be acquainted

with the main types of sociological explanation, but they will also be able to evaluate the evidence supporting the various explanations. In turn, this will help students to see society more clearly and, hopefully, with greater empathy for those who are different.

## Readings

All required readings are available on the bcourse web site (Files->Readings). To avoid confusion, readings are ordered by week. Podcasts, apps and videos can be found via the hyperlinks in the syllabus.

## Requirements and Grades

The formal requirements and grade calculation are as follows:

- Quizzes 10%
- Midterm 25% of grade.
- Final: 25% of grade.
- Draft paper: 5% of grade.
- Final paper: 20% of grade.
- Section participation: 15% of grade.

## Grading Scale

- A+: 97-100
- A: 93-96
- A-: 90-92
- B+: 87-89
- B: 83-86
- B-: 80-82
- C+: 77-79
- C: 73-76
- C-: 70-72
- D+: 67-69

- D: 63-66
- D-: 60-62
- F: 0-59

## Quizzes

We will post 5 quizzes to bCourses over the semester on selected Fridays (see below) between 9:10-9:20am. Your best 4 scores will be counted. Each quiz is worth 2.5% of your final grade for a total of 10%. Each quiz will ask 5 multiple choice questions. My aim is to keep you on track with course material. Quizzes are open-book. If I think someone is taking quizzes for you - for example, if your quiz scores are very different from the rest of your performance - I reserve the right to quiz you orally in my office and alter your grade.

## Paper

Students have to write one paper (8 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins). Paper assignment will be handed out on 9/20. You will submit a first draft on 10/27. Final due date: 12/13.

## Plagiarism

We will use software and other techniques to detect plagiarism and fraud. Even the most minor case of plagiarism or fraud can result in a F for the entire course. We will discuss plagiarism in section and lecture. Contact your instructor or GSI if you are still unsure about what plagiarism is after these discussions.

## Office Hours

My office hours will be held weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays between 10 and 11:10 am (Berkeley time). Please sign up for office hours in advance via [www.wejoinin.com/robert.braun](http://www.wejoinin.com/robert.braun). You can come to my office (440 Social Sciences Building) or meet me via zoom (<https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/92931177736>).

## Contingency

We intend for this class to take place in person. However, in case of emergency (forrest fires, pandemics etc.) we will switch over to zoom. A zoom link for this class will be provided during the first week of class. We will use Cours Capture for this class. **However, videos will only be available until the next lecture.**

## PART I: THE BIRTH OF SOCIOLOGY

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### 8/23: What is Sociology?

- Answer online survey questions.
- C. Wright Mills, *The sociological imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959. Selection.
- Malcolm Gladwell. Getting in. The social logic of Ivy League admission. *The New Yorker*, 2005.

### 8/28: This is Sociology!

- Durkheim, Emile *Suicide: A study in sociology*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis. 1951. pp. 152-170; 208-215; 217-222; 241-254; 276 (Footnote 25).

### 8/30: The Invention of the Modern World

- Harari, Yuval Noah. *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. New York, NY: Random House, 2014. Chapter 2, 247-254, 264-266, 302-315, 336-342, 347-349, 352-364.

### 9/4: Labor Day

- No readings.

### 9/6: The Birth of the Modern Individual

- Donna Freitas, *The happiness effect: How social media is driving a generation to appear perfect at any cost*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Chapter 1.

### 9/11: Social Integration

- Barbara Ehrenreich, *Blood rites: Origins and history of the passions of war*. London: Granta Books. 2011. Chapter 13.

## 9/13: The Birth of Capitalism

- Weber, Max. *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York, NY: Routhledge, 2013. Selection.

## 9/15: FRIDAY ONLINE QUIZZ

- 5 Multiple choice questions available on bcourses.
- 9:10-9:20!
- All material so far.

## 9/18: The Birth of Class I

- Hand out paper assignment.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels [graphics by Martin Rowson], *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. London: Self made hero graphics.

## 9/20: The Birth of Class II

- Read paper assignment and examples.

## 9/25: The Birth of Race I

- W.E.B DuBois *Black Reconstruction. An Essay Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America*. New York: Harper. 1934. Chapter 2.

## 9/27: The Birth of Race II

Read **one** of the following two pieces:

- Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou. *The Asian American achievement paradox*. New York, CA: Russell Sage Foundation, 2015. Selection.
- Tomas Jimenez. *Replenished ethnicity: Mexican Americans, immigration, and identity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. Page 138-164.

## 9/29: FRIDAY ONLINE QUIZZ

- 5 Multiple choice questions available on bcourses.
- 9:10-9:20!
- All material post previous quiz.

## 10/2: The Birth of the Nation-State 2

- Ann Hironaka, *Never-ending Wars: The international community, weak states and the perpetuation of civil war*, Boston, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1.

## 10/4: Review

- Review material.

## 10/9: Midterm

- Prepare exam questions.

## PART II: SOCIAL FORCES

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## 10/11: Conformity

- Matthew Salganik and Duncan Watts. "Leading the herd astray: An experimental study of self-fulfilling prophecies in an artificial cultural market." *Social psychology quarterly* 71.4 (2008): 338-355. **READ INTRO, CONCLUSION AND SUMMARIZE STUDY SETUP AND FINDINGS. DO NOT GET BOGGED DOWN IN STATISTICS AND METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS.**

## 10/16: Roles

- Victor Rios, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. Chapter 3.

## 10/18: Institutions & Bureaucracy

- Zygmunt Bauman (1989) *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Chapter 4.

## 10/20: FRIDAY ONLINE QUIZZ

- 5 Multiple choice questions available on bcourses.
- 9:10-9:20!
- All material post midterm.

## 10/23: Socialization

- Annette Lareau, *Unequal childhoods: class, race and family life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Selection.

## 10/25: Social Identities

- Listen to 2018 podcast with Lilliana Mason here:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/podcasts/transcript-ezra-klein-interviews-lilliana-mason.html>

## DRAFT IS DUE ON FRIDAY 10/27 (BEFORE MIDNIGHT)

## 10/30: Interaction and Identity 1

- Jia Tolentino, *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-delusion*. New York, NY: Random House, 2019. Selection.

## 11/1: Interaction and Identity 2

- W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Harper. Selection.
- Elijah. Anderson, *Code of the street: Decency, violence, and the moral life of the inner city*. New York, NY: WW Norton & Company, 2000. Selection.

## 11/3: FRIDAY ONLINE QUIZ

- 5 Multiple choice questions available on bcourses.
- 9:10-9:20!
- All material post previous quiz.

## 11/6: Interdependence and Critical Mass

- Vi Hart (2020) Parable of the Polygons. A playable post on the shape of society Link: <https://ncase.me/polygons/>.

## 11/8: Social Networks

- Nicky Case (2020) The wisdom and/or madness of crowds. Link: <https://ncase.me/crowds/>.

## 11/13: Social Change

- Alessandra Gonzalez & David Yanagizawa-Drott (2020) Misperceived social norms. Women working outside the home in Saudi Arabia. *American Economic Review* 110(10).

## 11/15: Professor traveling

- No readings.

## 11/17: FRIDAY ONLINE QUIZ

- 5 Multiple choice questions available on bcourses.
- 9:10-9:20!
- All material post previous quiz.

## 11/20: Empathy

- Sam Richards (2011) A radical experiment in empathy. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IgOVOPLTYI>.

## 11/22: Thanksgiving Break

- No readings.

## 4/27: Review

- Review material.



## **11/29: Final**

- Prepare for exam questions.

**FINAL PAPER IS DUE ON (12/13)**