

Introduction to Sociology
SOC 100-92
Fall 2020 (Short Session)
Wednesdays 6:30-9:35pm (Virtual Blackboard Collaborate Lecture Sessions)

Instructor: Prof. Christian W. Erickson, Ph.D.

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Blackboard: <https://my.morton.edu>.

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Office Session Times: Wednesday, 12:30pm to 1:30pm; evening session to be added; or, individual office session by arrangement.

Required Resources:

- **Conley, Dalton. 2019. *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*. Sixth Edition. New York: W.W. Norton.**
- **Publisher's Website for Course Textbook: <https://www.norton.com/books/9780393674170>.**
- **Blackboard/Blackboard Collaborate.**

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is an introduction to the basic principles, concepts, and methods, fundamental to the discipline of sociology. Emphasis is on achieving an understanding of the structure and dynamics of human society with special attention to: group behavior, socialization processes, social institutions and social problems.

Cases/Contemporary Examples:

While virtual lecture sessions and virtual lecture session discussion will largely focus on concepts introduced by the readings, I (Prof. Erickson) will be using examples from the following subject areas to take advantage of my research and writing specializations to expand upon subjects covered in the readings. Students are encouraged to suggest other areas of interest, and I (Prof. Erickson) will make every attempt to use student suggestions to shape lecture and any supplemental readings or multimedia content.

- Election 2020.
- War/Violence/Terrorism/Crime (US and China(PRC)/Russia/Iran tensions; terrorism/counterterrorism; guns/mass shootings/Chicago Metro Area Gang/Criminal violence).
- NarcoPolitics and Addiction: "Opioid Crisis" Fentanyl, Marijuana Legalization.
- Countercultures and Dissident/Resistance Movements.
- AI/Surveillance/Robotics/Automation/IoT/5G and 6G.
- Intelligence Agencies, Secrecy, FOIA (Freedom of Information Act), and Human Rights.

Expectations of Class Behavior and Participation:

This course covers controversial topics such as race/ethnicity, gender, politics, and religion. Respectful participation is expected at all times (in virtual lecture/chat and in all written material). Additional expectations include:

- All personal electronic devices (such as cell phones) will be turned off unless in use for note taking (such as lap tops) – more relevant to face-to-face classes, but during video/audio participation in virtual lecture, or during student presentations, try to keep distractions to a minimum.
- On time arrival for virtual lecture sessions is expected. Students arriving after attendance is recorded in Collaborate will be recorded as late, but I (Prof. Erickson) will take into consideration and technical issues encountered while logging on.

- Questions and comments in chat/or via video/audio on Collaborate, are welcomed and are an important part of the learning process. However, please direct all questions/comments to the instructor, except during discussion group exercises.
- Lecture slides and additional materials will be posted on Blackboard. All students are expected to log on and either download or print off all materials posted there. Important class announcements are also sent through Blackboard.

Academic Misconduct:

Academic integrity is a fundamental value at the college and university level. Morton College views any academic dishonesty as a serious offense requiring disciplinary action. Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to: cheating, aiding cheating, and plagiarism.

Sexual Harassment:

Morton College has a clear and firm policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Such conduct will not be tolerated in this class. Students are encouraged to report any unwelcome sexual advances to the appropriate school authorities. Learning is best achieved in an environment of mutual respect and trust.

Withdrawal/Drop Policy:

If a student can no longer attend, or for any reason, must drop this course, I (Prof. Erickson) consider it the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from class.

Grading:

Current Events Requirement: Students are expected to keep up with current events generally, and particularly related to the topic of the assigned readings for any particular week. Links to relevant news sources will be provided from course Blackboard site and website for classes starting September 9th.

Course Assignments: This course places equal emphasis on readings and virtual lecture. In addition to a final research paper, a midterm and final exam, students are required to do one brief presentation on the subject of their research paper for 5 minutes (no longer than 7) during one class session.

Total class grade will be derived from the following activities and assignments:

Class participation: 30% of the total class grade

(Attendance, virtual lecture participation/assignments 15% - presentation 15%).

Midterm examination: 20% - October 28th.

Research/Term paper: 25% - December 11th.

Cumulative final exam: 25% - December 16th.

There will be no make-up examinations without medical excuse or prior arrangement with the professor. Make-up exams will be penalized 10 – 20 points on a 100-point scale (10 points penalty if exam is taken w/n a week of the exam date, 20-point penalty after a week).

Grading Scale:

90%-100% = A - 80-89.9999% = B - 70-79.9999% = C - 60-69.9999% = D - Less than 60% = F

Virtual Collaborate Presentations: Students are required to do one brief presentation on the subject of their research paper for 5 minutes (no longer than 7) during one class virtual session. A more detailed description of the presentation assignment, and possible topics, will be distributed **September 9th**, you must schedule a week for your presentation by **September 25th**, and the presentations can begin on **September 30th**. The last class you can schedule your presentation is **December 9th**. The subject for the

presentations will be drawn from the subject of your research paper in relation to concepts introduced in class.

Research Report: Each of you will write a research report of **1750 to 2000 words** (excluding bibliography and notes, seven to eight typed, double-spaced pages 12-point font). The research report should be both an empirical and analytic report on a subject, that: 1) is backed up by empirical evidence that is organized according to the criteria discussed in lecture. You must then: 2) state your own opinion and analysis; and, 3) substantiate your opinion and analysis with facts detailed in your research paper.

A more detailed summary of the research report assignment will be distributed **September 9th**. The subject of the research report should examine issues related to the contemporary themes of the course, meaning the contemporary issues confronting the family. A comprehensive list of possible subjects for the research paper will be included on the detailed summary of the term paper assignment distributed on **September 9th**.

The paper assignment has four parts: 1) subject description; 2) expanded description/bibliography; 3) description, outline, and annotated bibliography; and, 4) final research paper (due dates for each component of the paper assignment is indicated on the syllabus).

Part 1. Week 3 – Due: September 25th (11:59pm): A paragraph long paper description with 3 sources Assignment is worth 5% overall paper grade.

Part 2. Week 6 – Due: October 16th (11:59pm): One-page paper description with 6 sources Assignment is worth 5% overall paper grade.

Part 3. Week 11 – Due: November 20th (11:59pm): One and a half-page description, annotated bibliography with 9 sources; outline. Assignment is worth 10% overall paper grade.

Part 4. Week 14 – Due: December 11th (11:59pm). Final research paper. 80% of overall paper grade.

A major goal of this assignment is to ensure that students can conduct research on a subject related to sociology, and other related disciplines, and write up their research in a well-organized and properly cited paper.

All paper assignments are due via e-mail by 11:59pm of the due date, e.g. **Paper Assignment 1 is due by 11:59pm, September 25th**.

Grading for assignments should take no more than 1 week after the due date. My expectations of student work are commensurate with collegiate courses.

A major goal of this assignment is to ensure that students can conduct research on a subject related to political science, and other related disciplines, and write up their research in a well-organized and properly cited paper.

ASA/APA/MLA style guides:

Students in this class are encouraged to use the American Sociological Association guidelines for citation in their written work. Use the following style guide to include in-text citations and create your bibliography. Of course, let me know if you have any questions.

<https://sociology.fas.harvard.edu/files/sociology/files/asastyleguide.pdf>

Use of APA and MLA citation styles are also appropriate, and can be used. Just explicitly identify which citation style you are going to be using on your first paper assignment.

Research:

While the “open” web provides an almost infinite number of sources for research, students are explicitly encouraged, and required, to incorporate material drawn from books, peer reviewed academic journals (especially those available through the Morton College and local library systems). Students are also encouraged to use their local libraries and inter-library loan systems. Research sources will be discussed in class, and links will be provided in Powerpoint slides, via Blackboard, and the external course website.

Note Taking:

Taking notes is an important part of succeeding in this class. It is strongly recommended that you come to virtual sessions fully prepared to do this. Recording of lectures is also permissible. Students who do not record (in writing or on audio) the material being covered in the lecture will be at a severe disadvantage in their attempt to review/study for tests and usually have difficulty passing this course.

FINAL NOTE: *The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus as circumstances warrant. Students will be informed of any modifications via virtual lecture sessions, Blackboard announcements, and e-mail.*

Course Schedule			
Day	Date	Reading/Assignments	Due
Week 1			
W	09/09	Introduction, distribution of the Syllabus, Paper Assignment 1, Presentation Assignment Guidelines. Overview of Chapter 1: The Sociological Imagination. Syllabus, Paper Assignment 1, Presentation Assignment Guidelines Distributed.	
Week 2			
W	09/16	Brief Review of Chapter 1: The Sociological Imagination. Chapter 2: Methods. Chapter 3: Culture and Media.	
Week 3			
W	09/23	Chapter 4: Socialization and the Construction of Reality.	
F	09/25	Assignments Due @ 11:59pm.	Paper Assignment 1 Due. Presentation Date Selection Due.
Week 4			
W	09/30	Chapter 5: Groups and Networks. Presentations Can Begin. Paper Assignment 2 Distributed.	
Week 5			
W	10/07	Chapter 6: Social Control and Deviance.	
Week 6			
W	10/14	Chapter 7: Stratification. Midterm Exam Review Guide Distributed.	
F	10/16	Assignment Due @ 11:59pm.	Paper Assignment 2 Due.

Week 7			
W	10/21	Chapter 8: Gender.	
Week 8: Midterm Exam.			
W	10/28	Midterm Exam – No Assigned Readings. Blackboard Virtual Exam.	Exam Time: 6:30 – 9:35.
Week 9.			
W	11/04	Chapter 9: Race. Paper Assignment 3 Distributed.	
Week 10			
W	11/11	Chapter 10: Poverty. No virtual lecture – Veteran’s Day.	
Week 11			
W	11/18	Chapter 11: Health and Society.	
F	11/20	Assignment Due @ 11:59pm.	Paper Assignment 3 Due.
Week 12			
W	11/25	Chapter 12: Family. Chapter 13: Education.	
Week 13			
W	12/02	Chapter 14: Capitalism and the Economy. Paper Assignment 4 Distributed. Final Exam Review Guide Distributed.	
Week 14			
W	12/09	Chapter 15: Authority and the State. Last Class for Presentations.	
F	12/11	Assignment Due 11:59pm.	Paper Assignment 4 Due.
Week 15: Final Exam.			
W	12/16	Final Exam – No Assigned Readings. Blackboard Virtual Exam.	Exam Time: 6:30 – 9:35.
Final Grades Due: December 21, 2020, 2pm.			