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Introductory Sociology, Spring 2025

Course Information

- **Course Number:** Sociology 10000: Introductory Sociology, 082
- **CRN:** 25586
- **Instructional Modality:** Online Asynchronous
- **Course Credit Hours:** 3

Instructor Contact Information

- **Name of Instructor:** Dr. Caitlin Kearney
- **Office Hours:** Via Zoom, by appointment
- **Zoom Link:** https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/3996356383
- **Email Address:** cekearne@purdue.edu

Course Description:

From university catalog: *A survey course designed to introduce the student to the scene of human society. Fundamental concepts, description, and analysis of society, culture, the socialization process, social institutions, and social change.*

Overview: Introductory sociology is a survey course that first works to answer the question: What is sociology? It is often defined as the study or science of society, but we will work to understand more fully what this means and what sociologists actually do. Sociology is a broad field that studies topics from crime to health to the environment.

From the American Sociological Association (ASA):

> The introductory college-level Sociology course is designed to introduce students to the sociological study of society. Sociology focuses on the systematic understanding of social interaction, social organization, social institutions, and social change. Major themes in sociological thinking include the interplay between the individual and society, how society is both stable and changing, the causes and consequences of social inequality, and the social construction of human life. Understanding sociology helps discover and explain social patterns and see how such patterns change over time and in different settings. By making vivid the social basis of everyday life, sociology also develops critical thinking by revealing the social structures and processes that shape diverse forms of human life.[1]

In alignment with the vision outlined by the ASA, the primary goal of this course is for you to develop and apply your ==sociological imagination==*, which is the capacity to think systematically about how things we experience as individuals are connected to larger social forces.*

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[1] https://www.asanet.org/wp-content/uploads/savvy/introtosociology/Documents/CurriculumIntroSoc032709.html
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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, you, the student, should be able to:

- Understand the breadth of the field of sociology and demonstrate mastery of basic sociological concepts and theories.
- Understand the essence of sociological questions and major sociological paradigms.
- Think sociologically as it relates to individual circumstances and society.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and institutions shape society and individuals.
- Use sociology to better understand central issues of the world today and apply your sociological imagination in future courses and careers, regardless of the field.

Learning Resources, Technology, & Texts

Required Text:

- <u>A Sociology Experiment,</u> Third Edition
- This is an online textbook. Each chapter costs $1. You are welcome to purchase the entire textbook (all 16 chapters) for $14, or individually purchase only the 13 chapters we will read (see course schedule below) for $13.
- Register as a student here: https://sociologyexperiment.com/

Additional Material:

- Throughout the semester, additional readings, videos, and podcasts will be assigned. These will be posted to the course site.
- All additional material will be classified as required, recommended or supplemental.
  - **Required** means, well, that it is required! You are expected to thoroughly engage with this material and will be responsible for understanding the content on quizzes and exams.
  - **Recommended** means that the material can help you better understand core concepts. Often, this will present information from a required material in a different way, such as a contemporary example. You are only responsible for the concepts from recommended material that are already present in the required materials. In other words, if you understand the concepts from that week's required material clearly, you can view the recommended material as supplemental.
  - **Supplemental** materials are optional. These are extension materials if you are interested in learning more about a particular topic. You are not responsible for knowing the content on quizzes or exams.

Learning Resources:

Brightspace:

- Access the course via Purdue's Brightspace learning management system. All of the course materials and assignments will be available as weekly modules.
- See the Student resources widget on the Brightspace homepage for resources on Technology, Academics, Campus, and Health and Well-Being.

Software/web resources :

- Word Processor (i.e. MS Word). <u>MS Office is free for all students.</u>

Tutoring support:
- The [Academic Success Center](#) provides a variety of proactive, practical and approachable academic support services for undergraduate students, including extensive online resources accessible anytime to help students succeed.
- Visit [Ask a Librarian](#) to connect with helpful resources and services provided by the Purdue Libraries and School of Information Studies for course assignments and projects.

Assignments

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Assignment Expectations

All assignments are due at the end of the week at 11:59 pm on Sundays. The only exception is the final and midterm exams which are due by 11:59 pm on Fridays. See the course schedule below for dates.

All assignments should be submitted on Brightspace, use correct grammar/spelling, and when applicable, use Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced and one-inch margins.

Late assignments will be docked a letter grade (10%) for each day they are late. Please alert me to any extenuating circumstances and I can work with you to provide an extension. Serious restructuring of the course or multiple extensions will only be considered if the student consults with the Office of Dean of Students (odos@purdue.edu). Even if an extension is granted, all late work must be submitted by 5/11 at 11:59 pm (48 hours before I must submit final grades to the university).

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Getting to Know You Assignment: (5points) During the first week of the course, I will ask you to complete a short survey to help me get to know you better.

Syllabus Quiz: (10 points) During the first week of the course, you will be asked to carefully read the course syllabus and then take a short, multiple choice question to demonstrate your understanding of course expectations.

Discussion Board Posts & Responses: (6 points each) Starting in week 1, students will respond to a discussion prompt based on the week's readings and other material (videos, podcasts, etc). The discussion board is a class-wide activity.
- Each post is worth six points. You receive **3 points** for your initial post and the additional **3 points** for commenting on **two** other posts.
- Your initial post should be a minimum of 100 words and your responses should be at least 50 words.
- To get full points:
  - Respond thoughtfully and reference course material.
  - These discussions should be focused on broader, systemic factors rather than personal opinions. The goal is to present a sociological argument based on evidence presented in the reading.
  - Do not use AI as it is very obvious (really, even if you think it isn't) and also undermines the learning experience for everyone.

Exercises: (10 points each) Starting in week 2, students will complete a short exercise every other week. The format of these exercises will vary as will the format. Some weeks, you will be asked to complete an activity and submit it directly to me. Other weeks you will be in a small discussion group and asked to share your exercise responses and reflections with your group.

Brightspace Quizzes: (10 points each) At the end of each module (week), you will have a multiple-choice quiz about the material covered throughout the module. These will cover the chapter(s) and readings/materials for that week. They are open-book and open-note. At the end of the semester, I will "drop" your lowest score and convert the grade to a 10/10.

Sociological Autobiography: At the end of the course, you will submit a 2 page (double-spaced) sociological autobiography, in which you consider your life from a sociological perspective. More details will be provided and a rubric will be posted on Brightspace.

Midterm Exam: Students will complete a midterm exam online via Brightspace. This exam is open-book and open-note. It will use a lockdown browser, so eBooks will need to be brought up on another device. Students will have 60 minutes to complete 50 multiple choice questions.

Final Exam: Students will complete a noncumulative final exam online via Brightspace during the last week of class. The exam is one attempt only and is completed via a lockdown browser. Notes and the textbook may be used, but will need to be brought up on another device. Students will have 60 minutes to complete 50 multiple choice questions.

Grading Scale

Grades:

Requirement	Possible Points
Getting to Know You Survey	5
Syllabus Quiz	10
Discussion Boards	36 points (6 posts x 6 maximum points per post) *Lowest score "dropped" (converted to 6/6)*
Exercises	60 points (6 exercises x 10 maximum points per exercise)
Brightspace Quizzes	120 (12 quizzes x 10 points per quiz) *Lowest score "dropped" (converted to 10/10)*
Sociological Autobiography	15
Midterm Exam	50
Final Exam	50
Total	**346**

Grading Scale:

Points	Percent	Grade
336-346	97.00-100.00	A+
322-335	96.99-93.00	A
311-321	92.99-90.00	A-
301-310	89.99-87.00	B+
287-300	86.99-83.00	B
277-286	82.99-80.00	B-
266-276	79.99-77.00	C+
253-265	76.99-73.00	C
242-252	72.99-70.00	C-
232-241	69.99-67.00	D+
218-231	66.99-63.00	D
208-217	62.99-60.00	D-
Less than 208	≤59	F

Note: I do not round up grades.

Course Schedule

The following schedule is tentative. Brightspace will always have the most up-to-date schedule and deadlines. I will also send out an announcement via Brightspace if any changes occur.

The course is paced on a weekly basis. The week's module will be released at the start of the week and all of the assignments are due at the end week. Each week starts at 12:00AM on Monday and ends at 11:59pm on Sunday. The only exception to this is the midterm and final exam weeks, where the exam is due by the Friday of that week at 11:59pm.

Week	Topic	Corresponding **A Sociology Experiment** Chapter *Note: additional readings/videos/podcasts will be assigned in Brightspace.*	Assignments
Week 1: 1/13 to 1/19	Course introduction What is sociology?	Introduction	Getting to Know You Survey Syllabus Quiz Quiz #1 Discussion Post #1
Week 2: 1/20 to 1/26	How do we study sociology?	Research Methods	Quiz 2 Exercise #1
Week 3: 1/27 to 2/2	Social structure and the individual	Social structure and the individual	Quiz #3 Discussion Post #2

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Week 4: 2/3 to 2/9	Social class, inequality, and poverty	Social class, inequality, and poverty	Quiz #4 Exercise #2
Week 5: 2/10 to 2/16	Culture	Culture	Quiz #5 Discussion Post #3
Week 6: 2/17 to 2/2	Gender and sexuality	Gender and sexuality	Quiz #6 Exercise #3
Week 7: 2/24 to 3/2	Race and ethnicity	Race and ethnicity	Quiz #7 Discussion Post #4
Week 8: 3/3 to 3/9	Sociology of education	Sociology of education	Quiz #8 Exercise #4
Week 9: 3/10 to 3/14	**Midterm Week** *Take the midterm exam on Brightspace by 11:59 pm on 3/14.*		
Spring Break: 3/17 to 3/23			
Week 10: 3/24 to 3/30	Political sociology	Political sociology	Quiz #9 Discussion Post #5
Week 11: 3/31 to 4/6	Immigration and urbanization	Immigration and urbanization	Quiz #10 Exercise #5
Week 12: 4/7 to 4/13	Deviance, crime, and violence	Deviance, crime, and violence	Quiz #11 Discussion Post #6
Week 13: 4/14 to 4/20	Health and illness	Health and illness	Quiz #12 Exercise #6
Week 14: 4/21 to 4/27	Environmental Sociology	Environmental Sociology	Sociological Autobiography
Quiet Period: 4/28 to 5/3			
Final Exam Week: 5/5 to 5/10 *Take final exam on Brightspace by 11:59 pm on 5/10.*			

Course Expectations

Engagement: This is a reading and writing intensive course. Both are useful tools social scientists use to understand our world and conduct research. Completing the course readings and thoughtfully engaging in the weekly assignments will ensure that you get the most out of this course.

Digital Interactions: It is expected that your online involvement be engaging, respectful, and meaningful. It is my intention to create and nurture a safe online environment in which students are intellectually stimulated and personally challenged to "try on" different perspectives. A safe environment does not mean that we will always agree. Working as a community of learners, we can

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build a polite and respectful course environment. Please use the following guidelines for discussion posts and other online collaboration with your classmates:

1.   Stay on topic! Be sure the links, comments, thoughts, or pictures you share are relevant.
2.   Before posting to a discussion board, check if anyone has asked a similar question or thought and received a reply.
3.   When the recipient can't hear your tone or see your facial expressions, it might not be received as a joke. Much of what we get from conversations is non-verbal, which is, of course, lost in virtual spaces. Be careful when writing anything that sounds angry or sarcastic, even if you are joking. And remember, typing in ALL CAPS is read as yelling.
4.   Respect the opinion of your peers. If you feel the need to disagree, do so respectfully and acknowledge the valid points in your peer's argument.
5.   Dialogue, not debate. In a debate, the goal is to convince others that you are right. In a dialogue, the goal is to understand and expand each other's perspectives by sharing different viewpoints. Try to focus on dialoguing when you are engaged in the discussion boards.
6.   Be succinct. If you write an overly long response to a simple question, it is unlikely that anyone will spend the time to read through all of it.
7.   If you refer to something your classmate said earlier in the discussion, quote just a few key lines from their post so that others won't have to go back and figure out which post you are referring to.
8.   Run a spelling and grammar check before posting anything on a discussion board.

Generative AI Usage: Any use of generative AI (such as ChatGPT) should be supplementary and should not replace the development of essential cognitive skills. I think of it as the new Wikipedia…a great place to start but you, as the author, are responsible for ensuring that the information and outputs are appropriate. When using generative AI tools, students are expected to exercise responsible and ethical practices. It is crucial that students develop a deep understanding of the subject matter independently, only utilizing generative AI as a tool to augment their learning process.

Please do not use Generative AI tools as a substitute for your own thinking, reflections, and voice. If you are uncertain, that's OK, and it's fine for it to be reflected in your writing/discussion posts. The increasing availability of tools like ChatGPT presents new challenges for university classes as it not only can generate fake knowledge but it short-circuits the process of reading for understanding. Often, these tools produce highly mediocre and bland and often very wrong content. **Ultimately, all writing and work you submit should be your OWN. Any written assignments should be your own voice.**

Student work may be submitted to AI or plagiarism detection tools (i.e., Turnitin) in order to ensure that the student work product is human created. The submission of AI generated answers constitutes plagiarism. If you submit work that appears to have been written using AI sources, I will ask you to meet with me to discuss your thinking and writing process. AI detection tools are imperfect, so I will always follow up with any concerns.

Academic Integrity: Students are permitted to discuss course readings, discussion prompts, and exercises with their peers. However, you are not permitted to discuss quizzes or exams. Giving or receiving responses to quizzes or exams will be considered cheating. **Academic dishonesty for any reason (cheating, plagiarism, and/or submitted AI generated work) will result in a zero on the particular assignment.**

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University Policies & Resources

Mental Health/Wellness:
- If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try [Therapy Assistance Online (TAO)](#), a new web and app-based mental health resource available courtesy of Purdue Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). TAO is available to students, faculty, and staff at any time.
- If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) (ODOS). Call 765-494-1747.
- If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc., sign up for free one-on-one virtual sessions with a [Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell](#). Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the session. Sign up is free and can be done on BoilerConnect.
- If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact [Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays.

Basic Needs Security: Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed, and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Accessibility:
- Purdue University strives to make learning experiences accessible to all participants. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247, as soon as possible.
- If the Disability Resource Center (DRC) has determined reasonable accommodations that you would like to utilize in my class, you must send me your Course Accommodation Letter. Instructions on sharing your Course Accommodation Letter can be found by visiting: https://www.purdue.edu/drc/students/course-accommodation-letter.php Additionally, you are strongly encouraged to contact me as soon as possible to discuss implementation of your accommodations.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern.

Nondiscrimination Statement: Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. See Purdue's full [Nondiscrimination Policy Statement](#).

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