INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
SOCI 1510 | Fall 2021

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Course Description and Objectives

This course provides an introduction to the study of society. It begins by introducing major paradigms of social thought and the methods that are used to conduct social scientific research. Although not comprehensive, it then introduces some of the major topics that sociologists study, including culture, inequality, race, class, gender, and education, among others. In the first part of the class, students will develop a sociological imagination to connect your individual experiences to the larger factors that shape social life. We will then discuss social divisions and inequalities with the goal of developing the tools to critically analyze the world around you and conclude by examining social institutions, which are the building blocks of society.

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

- Identify and define main sociological concepts.
- Understand how to apply the sociological imagination to the cultural medium of music.
- Apply the concepts, theories, and research related to inequality to the cultural medium of music.
- Evaluate numerical data and apply sociological perspectives to the Central Texas Sustainability project (CTSIP).

Course requirements:

All students must secure a copy of the textbook for this course.

***If you need a copy of the textbook, please email me

Technical Requirements and Skills

All students must be have access to a computer, reliable internet, and Canvas in order to participate in this class. Here is a list of the minimum technology requirements:

- Access to a computer
- Reliable internet access
- An active UNT email account
- Microsoft Office Suite
  - Note that Canvas does not interface well with Pages and Google Docs. Do not upload your files using these word processing systems.
  - This software is available at a discount to students at https://untsystem.onthehub.com/
- Active Canvas account
  - Canvas Technical Requirements (https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)
- Zoom
  - All students receive an institutional account with Zoom. For instructions on downloading the software, see https://classroomsupport.unt.edu/sign-into-zoom.

Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Essays (4 x 100 points)</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersectionality Minute Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1 x 100 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guest Lecture Reflection</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality Assignment</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>800</td>
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**Course Grading Scale**

A = 800 – 720 Points  
B = 719 – 640 Points  
C = 639 – 560 Points  
D = 559 – 480 Points  
F = 479 – 0 Points

**Comparative Essays**

There are four comparative essays in this course which cover special topics in the field of sociology. The comparative essays will help you engage with sociology and use critical thinking skills to compare, contrast, and connect ideas together to form one cohesive (and sociological) argument. When you are writing your essay, focus on the sociological message. How do these ideas apply to society at large, about the greater dynamics of society? Synthesize your ideas by comparing and contrasting alternative perspectives. Essays must be at least 500 words in length. You must respond to at least one of your peers in 150 words.

**Intersectionality Minute Paper**

This first assignment will facilitate your understanding of intersectionality as you apply the concept to your personal biographies. The theory of intersectionality is used to explain how individuals occupy multiple, interconnected layers of social identity related to race, gender, class, (dis)ability, nationality, sexual orientation and age, manifesting varying systems of privilege and disadvantage. First, watch the video and read the article required for this assignment. Next, create an intersectional diagram to represent your overlapping layers of identity. Be as thorough and comprehensive as possible. You may make a visual diagram, or simply list your intersectional identities in bullet point format. Last, set a timer for a minimum of fifteen minutes and respond to the following question: (1) How does your intersectional identity influence your perceptions of the social world? List three examples to explain how your perception and experience in the world is unique.

**Guest Lecture Reflection**

Sociologist Emilia Gaston will present on indigenous issues via Zoom sometime around October 14th (date and time of presentation are tentative--a recording of the lecture will be made available for those who are unable to attend the live lecture). For this assignment, please write a 500 word reflection on what you learned during the presentation. What were the main take-aways? How does this lecture connect with the content we’ve learned in class so far? Include one example from the text to support your response.
**Symbolic Interactionism Paper**

In this exercise, reflect on the significance of symbolic interactionism theory through real-life application. Apply this theory to your life by identifying symbols you relate to in some manner, and reflect on those symbols through analyzing their multiple interpretations in the social world. First, identify 20 symbols in the social world which relate to your personality which describe who you are, including but not limited to: favorite hobbies, books, colors, foods, style, interests, etc. Make a collage of these symbols to display your social self through a collection of pictures. Be as creative as you'd like! Next, take a moment and reflect on the symbols you've selected. Consider the meaning(s) of your collage and think about why you chose these symbols to represent your social self. Why did you select these symbols? Discuss why these symbols are significant to you and what they mean on a sociological level in at least 750 words.

**Inequality Assignment**

The Inequality Assignment is required for all students enrolled in SOCI 1510 at UNT. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate your ability to synthesize numerical data and sociological perspectives. Throughout the semester, you will learn about a variety of theoretical perspectives. In this exercise, you will use the data in Canvas from the Central Texas Sustainability project (CTSIP), a comprehensive evaluation of sustainability indicators in Central Texas, to identify patterns in numerical data and then apply each of the perspectives in explaining why these patterns exist. Detailed instructions can be found in Canvas. To earn credit, you must follow these instructions exactly as they are written.

**Class Environment**

I strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility in the virtual classroom. I encourage students to participate by expressing your opinions, asking questions, and presenting outside information to deepen your engagement with course material. Online courses provide few opportunities for face-to-face interaction between you, your professor, and your classmates. Since most of the interactivity that takes place in an online course involves text-only discussion, you cannot always accurately "read" body language, facial expressions, vocal inflections, or the
changing pace of what's being said. This presents a number of challenges and opens up opportunities for classmates to misunderstand what one another is saying.

Please do your part to facilitate a stimulating and rewarding learning environment. This involves being respectful of one another, having an open mind, and being willing to have your ideas challenged. Course discussions may contain dialogue regarding race, gender, sexuality, religion, and politics. Respond in a respectful non-critical tone regardless of whether you agree or disagree with another person's posting or comments. In some cases, discussion threads may make you feel awkward, uncomfortable, or frustrated. When this happens remain open-minded and remind yourself that others are entitled to have their own perspectives on the issues.

When posting, avoid using language that is angry, sarcastic, or meant as a joke. Without seeing your facial expression or hearing your tone of voice, your classmates might not realize you are joking. When in doubt, ask questions and clarify what the other person is trying to say. Think carefully about the content of your message before posting. If you are uncertain about posting something, it may be best to set it aside, spend some additional time thinking about it, and come back to it later. Feel free to reach out to me privately if you are concerned about "inappropriate" content that's been added to a discussion or if you want to talk over your posting before you add it to the thread. Harmful words and actions will not be tolerated: This includes racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, or ableist language. I reserve the right to delete posts from discussion boards based on my discretion.

Be sure to read the full discussion thread before responding. To earn points, you need to contribute original responds. Keep your posts to the conversation relevant and clear. If you refer to something a classmate posted previously then quote a few lines from the post you are mentioning so that it will be clear what you are referring to.

**Policy for Graded Materials**

Under ordinary circumstances, no late work will be accepted. Due dates will only be shifted if the student reaches out to the instructor prior to the due date. The dates for all graded material listed here will not change. Students requiring accommodations for exams should speak with me after obtaining an accommodation form from the Office of Disability Access.

Because this course is accelerated, I do my best to return grades promptly and provide feedback within a week of the due date. If I determine that grading will take longer than a week, you will see an announcement from me with an update. Any assignment sent via email or received in person will not be graded.

You earn the grade you receive in this class. I do not curve or scale quizzes, assignments, or final grades. If you become concerned about your grades, meet with me immediately. Except in extreme circumstances, I do not give incompletes.

**Communication Policy**

This is an asynchronous online course. All the information for this class can be found in the course
modules. I will communicate course information via Canvas announcements and email. It is your responsibility to check your email daily. Please set your communication preferences in Canvas so that you are notified of announcements and grade submissions. I recommend students download the Canvas app for notifications and reminders.

If you have a general question about the course or assignments, please post it to the Q&A discussion board in Canvas. Either I will answer it, or, one of your classmates will. This way we can all benefit from questions asked, and they can be answered in a venue that the whole class can see. You may also want to find someone in class to be a "buddy" with. This will give you at least one other person who you can email with questions.

If you have a private question, please contact me directly. I reply to emails within 24 hours and within the time frame of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please plan accordingly before exams and due dates. Students may also make an appointment to meet with me in person or online via Skype.

This class requires computer use and internet access. It is your responsibility to make sure you are able to access this course material. If you need technical support, please reach out to the UNT Student Help Desk: http://it.unt.edu/helpdesk.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor and then the departmental chair. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident.

Accommodations

Students with Disabilities: It is my goal to foster an inclusive learning environment in this class. If you require accommodations, please notify me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible, by sending an email or presenting a letter from Office of Disability Access. If you need more information about accommodations, please review the UNT Policy 16.001 or contact Office of Disability Access at 940-565-4323 (voice) or online.

Student Athletes: Provide me with a game schedule for the semester, signed by the coach, in the first week of class in order to be eligible for any excused absence.

Religious Holy Days: If you plan to miss class to observe a religious holiday, UNT policy states that you must notify the instructor with as much advanced notice as possible. If, with proper notice, you miss a class, assignment, or exam, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable timeframe. For more information, see the UNT website on religious observances.

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UNT community have a responsibility to uphold this mission
of the university and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. For more information, see the policy. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, please refer to the appropriate resources.

Academic Honesty

I expect all students to abide by the UNT Code of Student Conduct: “As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas has established standards of conduct to foster a safe environment conducive to learning and development. Students and university student groups are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others and upholds the integrity of the university community.” You are responsible for understanding the Code of Student Conduct.

All work you produce on assignments, discussions, and quizzes must be your own. If you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. All assignments will be evaluated with Turnitin, which sends both the student and instructor an originality report.

You are responsible for understanding what constitutes a violation, according to UNT Policy 6.003. If you are not familiar with a citation method, seek assistance from the instructor or the free University Writing Lab.

Please maintain a high standard of individual honor and integrity. Collaboration of any kind on quizzes will result in a failing grade for the exam. Cheating of any kind of assignments will also result in a failing grade. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on an exam or assignment, and submitting a written assignment from a previous course without prior permission of both instructors. All this will be reported to the appropriate administrators in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. At UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues. Here is information about how to contact them.

Link: UIT Student Help Desk site
http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130 Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm
For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help
(https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)