Independent Study in Idaho

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SOC 101
Introduction to Sociology

The University of Idaho in statewide cooperation with Boise State University — Idaho State University — Lewis-Clark State College
Course Guide

Sociology 101
Introduction to Sociology

University of Idaho
3 Semester-Hour Credits

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Welcome!
Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about assignments, exams, and grading. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the ISI office for clarification before beginning your course.

Policies and Procedures
Refer to the ISI website at www.uidaho.edu/isi and select Students for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, exams, proctors, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

Course Description
Basic theories, concepts, and processes involved in scientific study of society; includes socialization process, social inequality, the family, religion, deviance, population, the environment, and social change. U-Idaho students: May be used as core credit in J-3-d, social science, American diversity.

Required: Internet access
12 graded lessons, 3 proctored exams

Course Materials
Required Course Materials

• A computer with Internet access.
• Access to a television with DVD or VCR capabilities and access to DVD or VCR rentals. You may also be able to access the movies on your computer via internet movie providers.
• Students will be asked to create a free account on www.youtube.com in order to display optional video assignments.

Course Delivery
This course is available online. An electronic course guide is accessible through BbLearn at no additional cost. Refer to your Registration Confirmation Email for instructions on how to access BbLearn.

Course Introduction
Welcome to Sociology 101, Introduction to Sociology. This is a three-credit survey and skills course consisting of twelve graded lessons and three exams. It is a survey course because you will become acquainted with the basic concepts used by sociologists to explain society and social interaction. It is a skills course because it will provide you with a unique perspective for understanding our social world, and the skills to apply sociological principles to your own life. This will be a multimedia course in that students will be required to watch movies and explore videos on YouTube.
In an era of rapid and pervasive social change, the acquisition of sociological skills is invaluable and empowering. Some of the topics covered in this course include: culture, socialization, gender roles, family, deviance, race and ethnicity, and stratification. As in most courses, you will be asked to read the textbook, write essays, and take tests, but you will also get the chance to watch and interpret blockbuster movies, create videos for YouTube (if you choose) and watch other students’ creations. I am so excited about the new format for this course. Please feel free to contact the instructor with any questions or concerns. Have fun and enjoy the course!

**Course Objectives**

- Explore sociology as a science and understand how it is used
- Distinguish between sociology and common sense
- Look at the world with a sociological perspective
- Survey the range of topics that interest sociologists
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Improve written communication skills by following the Guidelines for Written Assignments for this course
- Gain an appreciation for the variety and diversity of society

**Lessons**

- **Overview**
  - Each lesson includes the following components:
  - lesson objectives
  - reading assignment
  - (pop quiz): self-study assignment
  - important terms
  - lecture
  - written assignment
  - multimedia assignment

**Study Hints**

- Complete all assigned readings.
- Set a schedule allowing for completion of the course one month prior to your desired deadline. (An Assignment Submission Log is provided for this purpose.)
- Web pages and URL links in the World Wide Web are subject to change. If you cannot access a link that has been listed in this course guide, use your favorite search engine (such as Google) to locate the site. To seek assistance or provide any updated information, contact your instructor.
- Chapters in the textbook must be read thoroughly.
- The written assignments comprise 45 percent of the final grade for this course. It is imperative to follow the guidelines below on how to write a strong essay.

**Guidelines for Written Assignments**

Essays will be evaluated on the student’s ability to state the answer clearly, give an appropriate example, and discuss the relevance of the term or concept to the study of society. The best answers will include examples and discussions of the relevant terms and concepts addressed by the questions.

To help you get the most out of your essays, use the formula of **state, show, and explain.**
- **State** the answer to the essay question using the appropriate sociological concepts or issues.
- **Show** or illustrate the concept or issue by using an example from the world around you.
- **Explain** why this concept or issue is relevant to the study of society. In other words, why do sociologists study this issue or concept?

In addition, essays must be written using proper punctuation, grammar, and spelling. Many errors can be caught with a simple proofread. Please send in only your best work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For the University of Idaho’s rules on plagiarism, see the *Student Code of Conduct* policy at [www.webs.uidaho.edu/fsh](http://www.webs.uidaho.edu/fsh), the *Faculty-Staff Handbook*, Chapter 2: Student Affairs Policies, Student Code of Conduct, 2300, Article II, Academic Honesty.

**Helpful Hints**
- If this is your first time taking a self-paced distance education course, you may find learning the material from the textbook without attending in-class lectures to be difficult at first. I went through the same thing. Don’t give up. You’ll find that learning to use a textbook as the primary source is an invaluable skill.
- Your textbook has inserts of helpful information on nearly every page. Please read these inserts as you come to them.
- Complete the *self-study* Pop Quiz at the end of each chapter before you write your essays. Do **not** submit the Pop Quiz to your instructor. It is not graded, but provides information necessary for essays and exams.

**Multimedia Assignments**
Students will be given the option throughout the course to view and write about several movies. The movies will illustrate concepts we are studying in each chapter. Student understanding of the concepts illustrated by the videos/movies should be demonstrated in essays. Please note that a few of the movies may be disturbing to some students. For this reason, movie assignments are self-selected. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to create short video essays as alternative assignments. Details on these alternative assignments can be found within each lesson.

**Exams**

**Overview**
- You must wait for grades and comments on lessons prior to taking each subsequent exam.
- For your instructor’s exam guidelines, refer to the *Registration Confirmation Email* sent to you upon registration and the *Exam Information* sections in this course guide.

See *Grading* for specific information on lesson/exam points and percentages.

**Choosing a Proctor/Scheduling Exams**
All exams require a proctor.

**Grading**
The course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

| Twelve lessons | (20 points each) | 45% of final grade = | 240 points |
| Three exams     | (100 points each)| 55% of final grade = | 300 points |
|                 |                 | 540 total points possible |  
### Final Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Grade</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Percentage Earned</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>486–540</td>
<td>90–100%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>432–485</td>
<td>80–89%</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>324–377</td>
<td>60–69%</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Below 60%</td>
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Lessons will be awarded grades as follows:

**A**: This grade will be given to essay answers that state the answer clearly, illustrate with appropriate examples, and discuss the relevance of the term or concept. A papers will be relatively free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

**B**: This grade will be assigned to essay answers that use the formula of *state, show, and explain*, but are missing a clear understanding of the term or concept. B papers will have some errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation.

**C**: This grade will be assigned to essays that show a weak understanding of the concept or term and may be missing one of the three steps of *state, show, and explain*, and/or show a lack of proofreading.

**D**: This grade will be assigned to papers showing limited or no understanding of the concepts or terms.

**F**: This grade will be assigned to papers that show no informed discussion of the material.

Rewrites are not an option.

Exams will be 55 percent of the final course grade. Each exam is worth 100 points. Each exam consists of 35 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each, and three essay questions worth 10 points each.

Note: Students must earn a **minimum** of 225 points on the exams combined (a C average) to pass the course.

The final course grade is issued after all lessons and exams have been graded.

Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism are considered a very serious transgression and may result in a grade of F for the course.

### About the Course Developer

Shawna Huggins has been an instructor for Independent Study in Idaho since 1994. She also teaches courses at Southern Oregon University and provides seminars on SAT and college prep for local high schools. She tutors students of all ages in most academic subjects. Shawna is happiest when she is learning something new, so she enjoys the access to information afforded by the Internet. Shawna earned her baccalaureate in sociology/anthropology at Southern Oregon University in 1989, and her Master of Arts in sociology at Washington State University in 1992.
Ms. Huggins wishes to acknowledge and thank Marie MacBryde at McGraw-Hill Education Permissions Department for permission to use chapter terms and objectives from Jon Witt's SOC 2012 for this syllabus.

**Contacting Your Instructor**

Instructor contact information is available in BbLearn.
**Assignment Submission Log**

Send the completed *Proctor Information Form* to the ISI office at least two weeks prior to taking your first exam.

**Pop Quiz, self-study. Do not submit the pop quiz answers to your instructor. Pop quizzes are not graded.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Projected Date for Completion</th>
<th>Date Submitted</th>
<th>Grade Received</th>
<th>Cumulative Point Totals</th>
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It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 1.

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<th>Exam 1</th>
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It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 2.

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It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take the Final Exam.

| Final Exam |                               |                |                |                         |
Lesson 1
The Sociological Imagination

Lesson Objectives
After completing this lesson, you should be able to:
• Define and apply the sociological perspective.
• Define sociology as a social science.
• Distinguish between sociology and common sense.
• Identify the major sociological perspectives.
• Define and apply the sociological imagination.

Reading Assignment

Pop Quiz: Self-Study Assignment
After reading Chapter 1, and before you write your essays, complete the Pop Quiz on page 21 in your textbook.

Important Terms
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>agency</th>
<th>macrosociology</th>
<th>social inequality</th>
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<tr>
<td>anomie</td>
<td>microsociology</td>
<td>social science</td>
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<tr>
<td>conflict perspective</td>
<td>private troubles</td>
<td>sociological imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functionalist perspective</td>
<td>public issues</td>
<td>sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactionist perspective</td>
<td>science</td>
<td>theory</td>
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Introductory Lecture
Welcome to class! I am so glad to have you here. We are going to have a lot of fun as we explore the field of sociology. Jon Witt, the author of your textbook, defines sociological theory on page ten of your textbook as “...a set of statements that seeks to explain problems, actions, or behavior. An effective theory may have both explanatory and predictive power.” I like to present these theories in three different ways. See which explanation works best for you.

The Formal Definition
The functionalist perspective is the most macrosociological of approaches, meaning that it concentrates on large-scale phenomena or entire civilizations rather than on small groups or the individual experience. This perspective is also one of the oldest theories in sociology. Comte, Spencer, and Durkheim are often referred to as the “founding fathers” of the functionalist perspective. The functionalist perspective emphasizes the way in which parts of a society are structured to maintain its stability. The conflict perspective tends to be a macrosociological approach and has its roots in the work of Karl Marx. Where the functionalist perspective assumes that parts of society work together harmoniously, conflict theorists argue that inequality generates change. The interactionist perspective is a microsociological approach, meaning the focus is on small groups and the analysis of our everyday life experiences and interactions. George Herbert Mead and Max Weber are considered the founders of this theory.
Now that you have a brief overview of the three perspectives, let’s look at how each might explain how formal education functions in society. Functionalists would say that formal education helps maintain social order by transmitting culture, promoting social integration, providing training and social control, and contributing to cultural innovation. Conflict theorists suggest that education supports the existing system of inequality because education reinforces the status quo and, therefore, its existing inequalities. Interactionists would look at how stereotypes can shape what happens in the classroom to shape the individual’s educational experience. As you can see, all three perspectives address education from a different point of view. We will explore that further in the following discussion of the visual definition.

The Visual Definition
It is important to understand that each perspective sees society in a different way. I like to think of the perspectives as differently colored sunglasses. When you “wear” your functionalist perspective glasses (green—the color of living organisms), you see how the social structures of society work together for the benefit of society. Thus, you focus on how formal education contributes to the operation of society. You focus on how the family functions as an institution of socialization and sexual regulation, and how this benefits society, and so forth. When you “wear” your conflict perspective glasses (red—the color of conflict), you focus on the consequences of the unequal distribution of education in society. You also focus on the difference of financial power between men and women and the consequences of this differential power for children of divorce. When you “wear” your interactionist glasses (purple—the color of feelings, meaning), you focus on the meaning of education to the individual. For example, what are the consequences to the student if he/she is labeled as gifted or challenged? You focus on the experience of family life and how men and women experience marriage differently.

The Popular Culture Definition
Here is my favorite way of understanding the perspectives. For those of you who are Star Trek fans, or have at least seen the original series or The Next Generation, here are some helpful tips: A member of Star Fleet Academy would compare functionalists to Data or Spock as they all ask, “What function does it serve?” or “What is its function?” The Starship Enterprise helps to remind us that functionalism is a macrosociological view as we look out the window of the starship to see social organizations as a whole. This perspective keeps us focused on social structure and social institutions. I liken the conflict perspective to that used by a Ferengi, or by Worf, the security officer on the Next Generation’s Enterprise. Worf is always considering, “Who is in charge? Who has the power? Whose rules are we following? Who is making the rules?” A Ferengi would say, “I have all the money and you don’t so how do I make more and what rules can I make that prevent you from getting what I have?” We are still on the bridge looking out the window and seeing the big picture. We are looking at which groups have the power, and at which group is in charge. Interactionists remind me of Deanna Troi, the counselor on the Next Generation’s Enterprise. She always asks, “What is the meaning? How do you feel? What does that mean to you? What is your interpretation?” The interactionist perspective is microsociological in that it focuses on the meaning people give to labels, experiences, and situations. I think Deanna represents this theory well.

I hope that our discussion of the three perspectives has helped you to understand how each one interprets and explains the social world.
**Written Assignment**

For the Lesson 1 assignment, pay close attention to the “five questions sociologists have frequently asked”, on textbook pages 12 and 13 under the heading of “The Development of Sociology.” If you make a video essay, choose one of these questions to help you with your project.

**Essay Questions**
Answer essay questions 1 and 2.

1. What does the author of your textbook mean when he states in the opening paragraph on page 4, “…our individualism is made possible by our interdependence”?

2. Turn to page 13 in your textbook. Read the POPSOC insert. Use the Web address to find and list the current top ten songs. What does an analysis of the lyrics of these songs tell you about American culture today?

**Multimedia Assignment or Standard Essay**
Complete one of the following assignments.

1. Reel Talk
   Choose and view a movie on page 5 in your text. Read “The Hamburger as Miracle” section in your textbook. Write an essay discussing interdependence. Draw from examples in the movie and the reading.
   
   **Topic:** The sociological imagination

2. Make a Video
   Do you ever watch videos on YouTube? Does your phone take video or do you have a camera that does? Make a brief video (1–3 minutes) that illustrates how each perspective interprets society. You can illustrate each perspective using the examples in the lecture above (tinted glasses or Star Trek), or better yet, come up with your own. After you make your video, post it on YouTube and send the URL to your instructor as the answer for this assignment.

3. Standard Essay
   What is the role of theory in the study of society?