**Introduction to Sociology**

Sociology 115 (2700)

Fall 2014

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:45am- 10:05am, LC 22

**Instructor:** Abby J. Stivers

**Office:** Arts & Sciences 3rd Floor, Room 309A

**Email:** astivers@albany.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30- 12 and by appointment

**Course Description**

*“It is gratifying from certain value positions (including some of this writer’s) that sociological insights have served in a number of instances to improve the lot of groups of human beings by uncovering morally shocking conditions or by clearing away collective illusions or by showing that socially desired results could be obtained in more humane fashion.”*

 **Peter L. Berger**

 *Invitation to Sociology*

This course introduces students to the basics of sociology. It does not assume prior knowledge of sociology. Sociology is the study of the reality that we construct and live in. Unlike the physical realities of our world, social realities are constructed and constantly depend on our participation for their continued existence. Sociologists look at every aspect of life from many different vantage points. Some study individuals and their actions, some study the effuse systems of power and control which circulate around us. Sociologists study science, religion, war, power, crime, demography, gender, politics, culture and much more. We will be exploring a general overview of what sociology is in this course. This course fulfills the general education requirement for the social sciences category.

**Learning Objectives**

Through participation in this course, students should:

- understand the basics of what sociology is and what a sociologist does.

-understand the difference between structure and agency.

-use sociological concepts to analyze your everyday life.

-understand the difference between an opinion and a fact.

**Readings and Materials**

For this course you will be required to buy Dalton Conley’s *You May Ask Yourself* 3rd Edition. The book is available at the University Bookstore. You may also purchase (or rent) the electronic version of the book if you would like, since it is less expensive. Any other readings will be posted on Blackboard.

You must bring paper to class in case of a short in class writing exercises and something to write with. Either a pen or pencil is fine.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

Your grade will be based on **three exams and** **ten short writing assignments**. All exams will be cumulative but weighted more heavily to the newest materials covered in class.

First midterm exam 20 Points

Second midterm exam 25 Points

Final exam 30 Points

10 In class writing assignments 25 Points (Hand in all 10 and get 3pnts extra credit)

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 100 possible points (103 with extra credit)

The In Class writing assignments will be graded as follows:

1. Not completed (0 points)

✓- Did not meet basic requirements (1 point)

✓ Adequate (2 points)

✓+ Very Good (2.5 points)

If you hand in all ten assignments you will receive an extra 3 points to your overall grade. There will be **no additional extra credit**.

The grading scale is as follows:

A 92-100 C 72-77

A- 90-91 C- 70-71

B+ 88-89 D+ 68-69

B 82-87 D 62-67

B- 80-81 D- 60-61

C+ 78-79 E Under 60

I reserve the right to bump borderline grades up for exceptional effort or in-class participation. I will not bump any grades down.

**Other Class Policies**

**Missed exams:** Students may make up exams or assignments past the due date only with documentation of a legitimate excuse for missing the assignment or exam, such as serious illness or death in the family. See <http://www.albant.edu/undergraduatebulletin/regulations.html> for general university policy on absences and <http://www.albany.edu/healthcenter/medicalexcuse.shtml> for policy on medical absences in particular. Please see me if you have any questions.

**Missed Writing Assignments:** In class writing assignments may be made up if you (the student) are able to provide a legitimate excuse for why you missed class. Without a reason for missing the assignment you will receive no credit for that day’s work.

**Academic integrity:** Any student who engages in academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating on exams, plagiarism, copying assignments) will automatically receive a failing grade for the exam or assignment. In addition, that student will be referred to the University Judicial System, which can administer more serious punishments (including suspension or expulsion). You are responsible for knowing the university’s Undergraduate Academic Regulations ([http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate \_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate%20_bulletin/regulations.html)) and complying with them.

**Schedule**

Please be aware that the schedule of readings and lectures is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class so if you miss class, please make sure you find out possible changes from classmates. ***Readings should be done before class of the day that they are listed\*\*.***

**Section 1- The Sociological Imagination**

T August 26 Introduction to the course- No Reading due.

TH August 27 Methods- Read Chapters 1 and 2

T September 3 Culture and Media- Read Chapter 3

TH September 4 Socialization and the Construction of Reality- Read Chapter 4

T September 9 Groups and Networks- Read Chapter 5

TH September 11 Social Control and Deviance- Read Chapter 6

T September 16 In Class Documentary on Crime and Deviance- No Reading due.

TH September 18 Review for 1st Midterm

T September 23 - **1st Midterm**

TH September 25 NO CLASS

**Section 2- Race, Class and Gender**

T September 30 Stratification- Read Chapter 7

TH October 2 In Class Documentary on Stratification – No Reading due.

T October 7 Gender- Read Chapter 8

TH October 9 Gender- Read *Dude You Are a Fag* (on blackboard)

T October 14 Race- Read Chapter 9

TH October 16 Race- Read *Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination* (on blackboard)

T October 21 Poverty- Read Chapter 10

TH October 23 Health and Society- Read Chapter 11

T October 28 Review for 2nd Midterm

TH October 30 – **2nd Midterm**

**Section 3- Institutions and Power**

T November 4 Family- Read Chapter 12 and 13

Th November 6 Reading Day

T November 11 Capitalism and the Economy- Read Chapter 14

Th November 13 In Class Documentary about the Economy- No Reading due

T November 18 Authority and the State- Read Chapter 15

Th November 20 Science the Environment and Society- Read Chapter 17

T November 25 Collective Action, Social Movements, and Social Change- Read Chapter 18

Th November 27 NO CLASS

T December 2 Religion- Read Chapter 16

Th December 4 Religion- Read Section of *Sacred Canopy* (on blackboard)

T December 9 Last Day of Class **–Review for Final**

**The Final Exam will be held on Friday December 12th at 3:30pm**