

Institutions & Social Change, SOC 205 Instructor: Arfa Aflatooni, PhD
Winter 2018 E-mail: aflatoa@linnbenton.edu
MW 8:30-9:50 Phone #: 541-917-4537
Office Hours: Weekdays 1-2
Or by Appointment (office: SSH 105)
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Prerequisites

There is a prerequisite for this class. Generally speaking, you should have taken **SOC 204** (as a prerequisite to this class) before taking SOC 205. Those students that haven't taken SOC 204 prior to SOC 205 are, however, allowed to take SOC 205 with my permission. Please talk to me on the first day to find out how you can stay in this class. I also highly recommend you take **Writing 115 and Reading 120** before taking or in conjunction with my class.

Course Description

In this class we will continue our examination of various topics that the discipline of sociology has to offer. The main focus of this class is an analysis of **various social institutions and the forces of social change in our contemporary society**. In order to have a stimulating and successful sociology class, I encourage you to participate in class discussions. You also need to attend all class schedules and have read and studied the reading assignments prior to coming to class.

Course Outcomes

- 1. Develop an understanding of the role of modern social institutions in shaping our lives.**
- 2. Exam the extent of ethnic, racial and gender inequalities in modern society.**
- 3. Analyze sociological theories on family, religion, politics, economics, and education critically.**
- 4. Understand the processes that contribute to social change in modern society.**

Required Textbook

Essentials of Sociology (6th edition), by Anthony Giddens, Michael Duneier, Richard Appelbaum and Deborah Carr, published by WW Norton.

Tests and Assignments

There are three tests for this class, two midterms and a final. The tests are not cumulative. The three exams count for 50% of your final grade. The tests will be composed of a combination of multiple choice (MC) and essay questions. The MC questions come from the text and essay questions are primarily based on class discussions. **You will also be doing Five assignments for this class. You will find the assignments attached to the syllabus.**

Grading

Exams = 50%

Assignments = 40%

Attendance and participation: 10%

Extra Credit

I allow students who want to raise their test scores to do extra credit work on per weekly (one per week) basis. Go to <https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/race?mcubz=0> and read one of the articles that addresses race relations in America today. Then, reflect on what you have read and write a page (double spaced and typed) and turn it in every week. If you turn in one extra credit work per week before each exam (three before each test) I will add **TEN** points to your test score. **I do not accept emailed extra credit work.**

Classroom Environment and Policies

(1) Come to class prepared to discuss, having finished all reading and writing assignments.

(2) Keep notes of your reactions to works as you read. Be prepared to Share these reactions when called upon.

(3) Pick a passage from the reading assignment you find particularly Significant and be prepared to share it with the class.

(4) Come armed with questions. We learn by thinking critically, questioning, and getting involved.

(5) You have a responsibility to yourself, to me, and to your colleagues to be active learners. This class is not just about individual participation. It is a shared experience of inquiry. You are learning how to learn and how to be an active thinker.

(6). Be cordial towards and respectful of your fellow students and their opinions. Do not talk or giggle when class is in session. Do not bring food and beverages to class and be on time. Please turn off your cellular phones and pagers while you are in class. Out of respect for your classmates and me, no cell phones, BlackBerry Devices, iPods, iPads, or MP3 players are allowed in class. Please turn off all electronics before class.

(7). In a class of this nature, interaction and participation are important. If you do not follow through with your end of the bargain (i.e., attending class, participating in discussions, keeping up with the reading) it is unlikely our experience together will be completely successful.

(8) Missed exams and assignments will be counted as zeros except, for extraordinary circumstances. Acceptable reasons for missing an exam would include health problems, a death in

the family, etc. **Please note that the arrangements should be made with me before the exam.** Make-up exams are taken at Student Assessment Center at RCH-111. **Late assignments are accepted but points will be deducted from them. I will not accept any late assignments during the finals week.**

(9) Class policy on plagiarism: Students who use someone else's work as their own or copy information or ideas from outside sources without proper citations will receive an "F" for their work. Bibliographies and in-text citations are required whenever you use outside sources, including the Internet. Do Your Own Work!

(10) Students who have some type of disability or medical condition that will require them to take their tests at the Office of Disability Services (541-917-4789) should contact me at the beginning of the term (the first week) and provide documentation from the Office of Disability so that I can make the appropriate arrangements with the ODS to take their tests there.

Course Outline

Week 1

Gender Inequality

Reading: Chapter 9

Week 2

Ethnicity and Race

Reading: Chapter 10

Week 3

Families and Intimate Relationships

Reading; Chapter 11

Test # 1: Jan 29

Week 4

Education and Religion

Reading: Chapter 12

Week 5

Politics and Economic Life

Reading: Chapter 13

Week 6

The Sociology of Body: Health, Illness, and Sexuality

Reading: Chapter 14

Test # 2: Feb 21

Weeks 7 and 8

Urbanization, Population and Environment

Reading: Chapters 15

Weeks 9 and 10

Globization in a Changing World

Reading; Chapter 16

Final Test : Monday March 19 at 8 am

Assignment 1
Winter 2018
Due date: 01/17 /2018

Option 1

You are to find and interview a person who has experienced discrimination and prejudice. This person can be a member of an ethnic/ racial minority group, a physically challenged person, a person with a different sexual orientation, an elderly person, or a woman.

Here are some of the questions you may want to include in your interview:

- 1. What types discrimination has s/he experienced?**
- 2. What was the reaction of the person to those who discriminated against her/him?**
- 3. How was the person affected by the experience?**
- 4. How did you feel about that person's experience?**
- 5. What can we do as a society to deal with discrimination?**

Your report should be typed (double-spaced) and not exceed 3-4 pages.

Option 2

Read the following article:

<http://joc.sagepub.com/content/12/2/175.full.pdf+html?ijkey=Jb5zeHXozB5Fg&keytype=ref&siteid=spjoc>

Sandlin and Maudlin examine ways in which women have been represented in the media to encourage their consumption. In addition to examining the sexist aspects of advertising, they look at the intersectionality of race, class, and gender.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. How did the feminization of consumption begin?***
- 2. How are white women depicted in the media in terms of their motivations for consuming?***
- 3. How are black women depicted differently in the media and what does this say about the assumption of their consumption?***
- 4. Is your consumption affected by the way products are advertised along gender lines?***

Your report should be typed (double-spaced) and not exceed 3-4 pages.

Assignment # 2
Winter 2018
Due date: 01/31/2018
Option 1

Do one of the following options:

Option 1

Select an issue confronting U.S. families that interests you today. The following questions might provide you with some ideas for this assignment:

- Should gay and lesbian marriages be legalized?
- What can be done to improve children's adjustment to divorce?
- What can communities do to assist working families with children?
- How can the problems confronting female-headed households be addressed?
- What can be done to prevent domestic violence?

A useful website for these discussions is the Council on Contemporary Families (<http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org>). Find an article(s) that addresses your issue. What does research say about the issue? Write a two page summary of what you found (typed and double-spaced)

Option 2

Go to Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life website:

<http://www.pewforum.org/>

Click on the religion section of the site and then:

Select a topic from that section that interests you. Read some papers and articles(make sure you cite the articles/papers in your report) that deal with your chosen topic and then answer the following questions:

- What is the role of religion in shaping the debate on that topic?
- Does religion help or hinder defining the issue?
- What is the proper role of religion in defining the issue in your opinion?
- Has religion played a role in shaping your life? If it has, how? If it has not, why?

Write a two-page report (typed and double-spaced) based on your findings.

Assignment 3

Winter 2018

Due date: 02/14/2018

Exporing Local Social Institutions

Attend a meeting of a local social organization. This could be a religious group, a political group, an educational group, an environmental group or any other organization that can be classified as a social institution. Then find out the following:

- 1. What is the main function of the organization?**
- 2. What is the ideology of the group?**
- 3. What is the impact of the organization on the community?**
- 4. What are the accomplishments of the organization?**
- 5. What are the demographics and size of the group and its members?**
- 6. What are your impressions of the group?**
- 7. What would be a good criticism of the organization based on your observation?**

You can attend a meeting of an organization that you belong to or are familiar with.

Your report should be between two to 3-4 pages (typed and double-spaced)

Option 2

Read the following article:

<http://apr.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/07/18/1532673X15594232.full.pdf+html?ijkey=99.vSJvIOXE9Q&keytype=ref&siteid=spapr>

Bowler and Donovan studied the perceptions the public hold in regard to campaign finances. They tested influence of who gives the money, how much is given, how the money is used, and if the money is needed.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. What are the general perceptions of the public regarding corruption and campaign money?**
- 2. How did the information of who gives the money, how much is given, how the money is used, and if the money is needed influence the perception about corruption?**
- 3. What the authors suggest needs to be done to reduce the negative perceptions about corruption based on their results?**

Your report should be typed (double-spaced) and not exceed 3-4 pages.

Winter 2018

Assignment 4 (Demography Assignment)

Due date: 02/28/2018

Do both parts

Part 1

This part of the assignment deals with the **demographic transition theory** of population change (chapter 15 page 431-433) and read this:

<https://www.populationeducation.org/content/what-demographic-transition-model>)

To do the assignment you need to find **a country for each stage** (one country for each stage, if there are no countries in stage one, you can skip it) of the demographic transition. Provide some basic demographic characteristics (birth rate, death rate, natural increase rate, growth rate, and doubling time) of these countries and **indicate in what stage each country is**. Also, provide some historical statistics on the population growth in each of these countries and predict, based on the information, the future population growth in these countries.

Part 2

You also need to collect information about the town or area (the state or county) that you live in or were born in (or you consider as your hometown). Find out what is the current population of that locality and see if it has increased or decreased in the past couple of decades. If there is information that can explain this change (high BR or DR or in-migration or out-migration), indicate those reasons.

Your report should be typed and not exceed four pages (2-4 pages).

Published Sources:

State publications (Oregon Vital Statistics)

US Census Bureau Publications

United Nations Publications

World Bank Annual Reports

Ask the reference librarian to help you locate these sources in the library.

WWW Sources:

[WWW.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

[WWW.census.gov/stat_abstract/pop.html](http://www.census.gov/stat_abstract/pop.html)

[WWW.prb.org](http://www.prb.org)

[WWW.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

Assignment # 5
Winter 2018
Due date: 03/7/2018

Option # 1

Read the following research paper:

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0891243210387277>

Bell and Braun examined the gender differences in the participation in environmental activism in Appalachia. They examine both men's and women's motivation for participation and compare the differences.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. Why is there higher participation by women in environmental justice organizations?**
- 2. Why is there higher participation by women in the Appalachian movements to stop coal mining?**
- 3. What are the reasons some men participated in the Appalachian movements?**
- 4. Have you ever been involved in social activism? If so, how? If not, why?**

Your report should be typed and not exceed four pages (2-3 pages).

Option # 2

Read the following research paper:

<http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/rbtfl/RVWtlxn5xFoOA/full>

Molnar studied flash mobs from 2002 to 2009 and developed a typology of flash mobs to demonstrate how they have evolved. Molnar also proposed how and why they will continue to be a social phenomenon.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. How do flash mobs compare to earlier forms of disruption and pranks like Dadaism or Yippies?**
- 2. What is the typology of flash mobs?**
- 3. The author focuses on the sociability of flash mobs, what is sociability, and why is it an appropriate term to use?**
- 4. Have you or friends ever used social media to organize an event? If so, what was the event and how successful were you in bringing people to that event?**

Your report should be typed and not exceed four pages (2-3 pages).

