*Society as **stagnate**…*

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*…or **change**.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

In any political or military conflict it is of advantage to capture the information used by the intelligence organs of the opposing side. But this is so only because good intelligence consists of information free of bias. If a spy does his reporting in terms of the ideology and ambitions of his superiors, his reports are useless not only to the enemy, if the latter should capture them, but also to the spy's own side. It has been claimed that one of the weaknesses of the espionage apparatus of totalitarian states is that spies report not what they find but what their superiors want to hear. This, quite evidently, is bad espionage. The good spy reports what is there. Others decide what should be done as a result of this information. The sociologist is a spy in very much the same way. His job is to report as accurately as he can about a certain social terrain. Others, or he himself in a role other than that of sociologists, will have to decide what moves ought to be made in that terrain.
Peter Berger, Invitation to Sociology

That, in brief, is why it is by means of the sociological imagination that men [or women] now hope to grasp what is going on in the world, and to understand what is happening in themselves as minute points of the intersections of biography and history within society.
C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination

What do we mean by a *social world*? How do we operate within it; what *roles* do we have and how do these roles influence the way we think, the way we act, and what we believe? How does our perspective of the social world change over time, across different societies and cultures, or even within the same nation or culture? What does the kind of society we live in say about ourselves? Do we treat some groups differently than others? Do we have shared goals, expectations, rules and ideas about what normal members of society should look and act like? Where do these expectations come from?

Largely, the discipline of sociology has been developed to answer these questions. And, like any scientific discipline, sociology has tested theories and methodologies aimed at explaining social phenomena. The goal, for any sociological pursuit, is to understand what is there – using Berger's metaphor – without bias. Throughout this semester we will explore these questions, and others, in order to establish a better understanding of how to perceive and scientifically explore the social world.

To do this, this course has two main goals to help guide us. First, an introduction to the discipline of sociology and its' main areas of research is presented and discussed. This will be accomplished by first exploring the core principles of sociology. These core principles are outlined in the first few chapters of your textbook and cover the following preliminary questions:
- *What is sociology and what do sociologists do?*
- *What does it mean to view the world sociologically, to use a sociological perspective?*
- *What is social theory and how is it used to examine society?*

Initially, we will begin by answering these questions using both historical and contemporary examples set in a variety of social and cultural contexts. Next, and for the bulk of this semester, we will focus our attention on specific areas and topics within the discipline of sociology. Such areas include the sociological analysis of crime, religion, education, gender, health and medicine, economics, politics, poverty, the family and others.

The second goal for this course is to provide you with a set of valuable analytical tools necessary for navigating in today's world. This includes both analytical reading and writing skills. What does this mean? Throughout this course you will learn how to read text, data tables, and basic statistics and be able to critically assess their content. In addition, you will learn how to produce an academic paper by researching and critically forming an argument around a social issue of your choice. These skills are invaluable not only in the field of sociology, but in any area you end up pursuing. In addition to these two goals, we will also explore the occupational opportunities a degree in sociology can offer.

In sum, this course is designed to meet the following learning outcomes:

Students can/will be able to…
1. **Describe and recall major concepts and methods used by sociologists to investigate our social world.**
2. **Apply sociological concepts and methods to real-world problems and issues.**
3. **Identify how social forces (e.g., societal, cultural, institutional, etc.) influence individual and group beliefs and behaviors.**
4. **Develop sociological and global perspectives that will contribute to a liberal arts education.**

REQUIRED TEXT

All students enrolled in this class are required to have a copy of **Karen Sternheimer's 'Everyday Sociology Reader.'** Supplementary material will also be used throughout the course to provide additional information.

COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS

Format
      The format of each class will vary throughout the semester. Since we all learn differently, I will utilize a variety of teaching methods to present the material. These methods will include lectures, in-class activities, video presentations, and class discussions. It is vital that you come to class prepared (i.e., read what you are asked to have read!) and ask questions and make comments when you have them. Not only will the material make more sense, but you will get a lot more out of the class as well.

Academic Integrity
      To ensure that the highest level of academic and personal integrity is upheld, it is important that you understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UWSP (see Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students). For a complete overview of UWSP academic standards and disciplinary procedures, please visit: the following website: http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Academic-Misconduct.aspx

Disability Services
      The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies. Any student who feels that an accommodation may be needed based on the impact of a disability should contact Disability Services and Assistive Technology at 715-346-3365 in Room 609 Learning Resource Center at 900 Reserve Street. Staff will work to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Attendance Policy

Your attendance and participation will be recorded and calculated as part of your final evaluation. However, I understand 'participation' inclusively. This can include the conventional (i.e., talking in class) as well as other forms of interaction in and outside of class (e.g., office hour visits, email discussions, in-class activities). In short, I am looking for students to be engaged in the material, however or wherever that might be.

Technology Policy

My expectations regarding technology are simple and, hopefully, not unrealistic. I do not expect students to be without their phones, tablets, and/or computers. I completely understand that the schedule for most students may even necessitate this. In fact, our class will even utilize this as a resource at times during the semester; for instance, in-class activities that prompt students to do a quick search online. I also understand that some students prefer to take notes electronically, on a tablet or laptop. (Be warned: research shows that students retain more information when notes are hand-written.) But, *unless specified otherwise or a circumstantial agreement with me is made, phones should be silent (e.g., airplane mode), and out of sight*. As soon as a device becomes a distraction to the class, I will revoke technology privileges all together.

Assignment Submission and Late Policy

All assignments (unless specified otherwise) should be submitted by the respective deadline electronically via Dropbox on D2L. Turnitin (originality checking software) is activated with results viewable to you and me. Please use this as a tool for writing. Late work is accepted up to one week after the specified deadline (5-point reduction), also via the appropriate D2L dropbox. I will not accept assignments after this.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Unit Papers

You will be expected to complete four, unit-based, papers. These will be exercises completed outside of class that review the content we are covering. In addition, a 'mock' unit paper will be assigned in the beginning of the semester that is connected with a library informational session. I will provide specific directions for these assignments as the course progresses.

The first 'mock' unit paper is worth 25 points. Remaining unit papers are worth 50 points each. In total, unit papers are worth 225 points.

'My Utopia' Project

This is a semester long project that incorporates in-class activities, a popular book of fiction, and continual reflection of your own beliefs and ideas about society. Points are earned via the 20 topical worksheets, in-class book clubs, etc. More detail pertaining to the project objectives and instructions will be discussed in class.

In total, this project is worth 145 points

Attendance/Participation

  Attendance is crucial to succeed in this class. Keeping up on your reading in order to actively participate in class will ensure that you are adequately prepared for the unit papers and, especially, the 'My Utopia Project.' My teaching philosophy is based on a cultivation of *active learning*. This means that I aim to provide an environment whereby students are able to 'experience' the material. However, this is a dual relationship. Students must also be willing to learn in order to make this happen. By *being* in class regularly (not just present), an active and invigorating culture of learning can be developed. This being said, I understand that life is full of unexpected events and emergencies. If you think you will miss a class, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make other arrangements.

  There are three main components for attendance/participation. First, you will be required to have at least one in-person meeting with me to discuss your 'My Utopia' project. Second, points are earned by attending and participating in the traditional sense: coming to class, asking/answering questions, commenting during and outside of class. Indirectly, and third, is the completion of 20 in-class exercises that are used for your final 'My Utopia' project. The ONLY way to complete these assignments is to be in class. (*These exercises are ONLY handed out in-class and submitted via D2L Dropbox.*) <u>*In short, if you're here and engaged, you get the full points.*</u>

The breakdown of points is as follows:

In-person meeting:	10
Participation:	20
Total =	*30 points*

Evaluation

      Evaluation of this course is based on the standard UWSP grading scale.

Course Evaluation:

Unit Paper =	225
My Utopia =	145
Attendance =	30
Total =	400

Grading Scale		
Letter Grade	Percent	Points
A	92-100	366<
A-	90-91	358-365
B+	87-89	346-357
B	83-86	330-345
B-	80-82	318-329
C+	77-79	306-317
C	73-76	290-305
C-	70-72	278-289
D+	67-69	266-277
D	60-66	238-265
F	<60	<238

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Introduction and Background			
6-Sep	Introduction and review of syllabus		
8-Sep	Sociological perspective	Ch.1 (1-10)	
13-Sep	**LIBRARY (Lab 316)**		
15-Sep	Scientific study of society	Ch.1 (10-25)	
Unit 1. Framing our Social World			
20-Sep	Culture	Supp.	
22-Sep	Socialization	Supp.	
27-Sep	Social interaction	Ch.3	
29-Sep	Social units	Ch.4	**UP0**
4-Oct	Crime and deviance	Ch.5	
6-Oct	Fieldwork		
Unit 2. Social Stratification			
11-Oct	Social class	Ch.6	**UP1**
13-Oct	Sex, gender, and sexuality	Ch.7	
18-Oct	Race, ethnicity, and nationality	Ch.8	
20-Oct	Global inequality	Supp.	
25-Oct	Social tolerance	Supp.	
27-Oct	Fieldwork		
Unit 3. Social Institutions			
1-Nov	Economy	Ch.9 (243-262)	**UP2, In-person meeting**
3-Nov	Government	Supp.	
8-Nov	Media and Healthcare	Ch.2 and Supp.	
10-Nov	Education	Ch.9 (276-299)	
15-Nov	Religion	Ch.9 (262-276)	
17-Nov	*Fieldwork*		
22-Nov	Book Club		
24-Nov	*Thanksgiving Break*		
Unit 4. Social Demography and Change			
29-Nov	Population and migration	Supp.	**UP3**
1-Dec	Environment and food	Supp.	
6-Dec	Social change	Ch.10	
8-Dec	Social movements	Supp.	
13-Dec	Fieldwork		
15-Dec	*Book Club and review*		**UP4**
21-Dec 2:30-2:30pm	**Final Exam Period**		**My Utopia paper**