In the coming weeks, you will find that this course relies heavily on communication. This syllabus is provided to you as a means of beginning and facilitating this process. In the following pages, I share some of the bases for my teaching philosophy as well as my expectations of you in this course. Please be sure to read this over very carefully.

In general, sociology is the study of groups within society. While this course is intended to give you an introduction to various concepts in sociology, we will be doing more than making ourselves aware of how sociologists study our world. Rather, we will be spending a great deal of time using sociological tools to analyze and critique the various ways that we see ourselves as well as the way we see others. The concepts and issues to be examined this semester are not ones to simply memorize. Rather, it will be our task not only to learn specific information or concepts but also to learn to think critically about the determinants of social behavior.

Each of us brings to this class a collection of socialization experiences gathered over our lifetimes. We have been taught the appropriate behavior for ourselves according to our place in society. This has had an effect on our lives that we often don’t examine closely enough. Furthermore, we have been taught to respond, often unconsciously, to one another with a pattern of attitudes and behaviors. In turn, we have acquired the power to be sexist, homophobic, heterosexist, racist, classist, ageist, ableist, etc., even though we are often unaware that we hold these beliefs. As members of society it is important that we understand how these processes create inequality, their effects on different people, and how this inequality can be addressed. This semester we will focus on many of these processes, bringing them into the open, examining them closely, and studying how they impact our lives. Additionally, we will examine how a knowledge of sociology will better prepare you as professionals in your future careers (e.g., as nurses, social workers, educators, business entrepreneurs).

To successfully complete the goals of this course, we must establish and develop a foundation of respect. To help institute this, in class we will engage in many discussions. Your experiences in this class will help to broaden and enrich your educational and social experiences this semester. Please keep in mind that when discussing issues in this class, all opinions will be respected and accepted as long as they are argued critically, and I ask that you respect the opinions expressed by myself as well as your classmates.
The following are our goals for this term:

1. To introduce you to the concepts of Sociology and Social Psychology, including the Sociological Imagination, the theory of Social Construction and some of the dominant sociological frameworks.
2. To understand the connections between our lives and those of others.
3. To help you gain an understanding of the elements of inequality in terms of class, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexuality, and sexual identity.
4. To raise our consciousness toward people and experiences that are different from our own.
5. To understand the role of sociology in preparing us for life, work and citizenship.

The following are the student learning outcomes for this course:

1. Students in this class are introduced to the methods of sociology through lecture and reading material in the course. Students are provided with a brief introductory overview to the methods of sociology and how they can be utilized to bring about sociological knowledge.
2. Through the introduction of sociological theoretical frameworks, students are provided with tools to analyze human behavior and the impact of social institutions, such as the state, the economy, the family, education, the media, and the like. They are encouraged to apply these frameworks to their overall fields of study.
3. Through the use of the sociological frameworks introduced in this class, students are provided with the opportunity to explore solutions to social problems. Through the exploration of forms of inequality based on race, class, gender, age, disability, etc., students will develop explanations of these forms of inequality as well as explore solutions. This will be done through assignments as well as examinations.
4. As students explore various forms of inequality and the role of social institutions in constructing and maintaining them, they will be required to reflect on their own experiences. This is done specifically through introducing them to the concept of the sociological imagination, a frame of mind that helps students to connect their personal experiences to larger social forces.
5. As students are introduced to theoretical frameworks in lectures and course readings, they are made aware of the benefits and drawbacks of each framework and how they can be applied to a multitude of social factors in their personal and professional lives.

Perhaps the most important element of this course is critical thinking. To think critically means:

**First**, we must identify and challenge assumptions. We should try to identify the assumptions that are at the foundation of the concepts, values, beliefs, and behaviors that we deem important in our society. Having identified these assumptions, we need to then explore their accuracy and legitimacy, considering whether or not what we take for granted does indeed reflect the realities that we experience.

**Second**, to think critically we need to be aware of our place and time in our culture. When asking questions about aspects of our culture we need to be aware of our own standpoint—the position from which we are asking these questions. In other words, we need to be aware of our own location at a particular intersection of culture and history, and how that is impacted by our own race/ethnicity, social class, sex/gender, sexuality, ability, age, etc. and how that in turn influences the questions we ask as well as the answers we accept. Our standpoint also influences what we see as “normal” or “ordinary” behavior. This relates to the concept of enculturation—immersion in our own culture to the
point where we assume our way of life is “natural” or “normal”. Because we are so enculturated into our own societal standards and practices we often assume that they are the only options and, as a result, we are unaware of alternatives. Furthermore, as a result of this lack of awareness we often view those who have other cultural standards or practices as behaving in a strange or unnatural manner.

Third, when thinking critically we need to imagine alternative ways of thinking. In doing so, we must examine the assumptions that are at the foundations of our ideas and ways of behaving. Considering alternatives to current ways of thinking can often provide us with new insights about widely accepted ideas.

Fourth, to think critically one must develop a reflective analysis. Such an analysis requires that we be skeptical, not in the sense that we don’t believe anything we see but rather that we question what are seen as fixed belief systems now that we know there are possible alternatives to these beliefs. A reflective analysis requires that we challenge dominant ideas as well as popularly held notions regarding solutions to social problems.

Thinking critically frees us from personal, environmental, and institutional forces that prevent us from seeing new directions. Furthermore, as critical thinkers we are no longer passive recipients of knowledge and products of socialization. Rather, after thoughtful scrutiny and continuously asking questions we become active participants in arriving at our own ideas and commitments. As a result, our ideas are based on a solid and informed foundation, all the while keeping in mind that we may still be wrong. When we face challenges to our ideas we will be better prepared to provide justification for and evidence in their support.

As you will come to notice, a fundamental aspect of sociology is to be critical of the status quo. This will require you to think critically about how the social structure has affected your values, attitudes, and behaviors. When teaching this course, my objective is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment which allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. I will continually push you to challenge yourself. Thus, memorization is not the intent of this course. Rather, I ask you to understand the material presented to you and to think about how it either challenges or reinforces your ideas of how the world works.

**Course Books**

There is one required book for this course.

The book may be purchased at the SCSU Husky Bookstore or other textbook sources. In addition to this text, additional readings will be available on D2L. The book for this course will be also available on reserve at the Miller Center. Please note that readings may be assigned in addition to those listed in the course schedule and reading list.

In addition to the above text, we will be using a classroom response system called Top Hat. This system will enable you to participate in in-class polls and quizzes and will also provide me with a mechanism to register your attendance in class. You can use a variety of devices to participate: laptops, tablets, smart phones or cell phones. To participate in this system, students will need to purchase a subscription. Instructions for registering are available in the Student Quick Start Guide. Our six-digit course code is 351026.

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**Some Tips on Reading for Class**

Students have often given me feedback that they have difficulties in getting their reading done for all of their classes. In an effort to help you get things read for this class I provide you with the following tips for reading:

1. **Ask “Why am I reading this article”**
   
   Before you begin reading an article, think about why you are reading it:
   
   - Are you reading to get ideas for your own paper? If so, read the abstract and/or introduction to see what has been done and the discussion/conclusion to see what questions remain.
   - Are you looking for information related to supporting your own ideas? Pay particular attention to how the author did her or his research. Take notes.
   - Are you reading it to increase your general knowledge? Consider how the article fits into your own understanding and how, if at all, it changes your ideas.
   - Are you reading it just because it was assigned to you? Consider what you think the instructor wants you to get out of it and how it fits with the particular section of the course. In addition, keep in mind the total amount of readings assigned. If there are 10 readings assigned, don't spend all of your time on the first few and skip the remaining readings. Distribute your time evenly. Also, don’t assume short readings will take less time! Finally, the assignment of a large amount of readings is an opportunity to learn to efficiently extract information.

2. **Don’t just read the article**

   Many students approach academic reading assignments as they would reading a novel; trying to read and understand each word. As a result, they often get frustrated, confused, or just plain bored. Keeping in mind why you are reading the article, focus on the relevant sections. Skim the article, looking for key points or interesting ideas.

3. **Put the article in context**

   Think about who the author is, why s/he wrote the article, when it was written, how it contributes to other articles of similar topics, how it is useful, etc.

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4. **Read actively**

Don’t read lying down. If the article is putting you to sleep, you won’t get anything out of it. Rather, read in a place where you can think about what you are reading. Be prepared to take notes (see below).

5. **Don’t highlight**

Using a highlighter encourages passive reading. Rather than using a highlighter, try using a pen or marker (in a color that stands out) to underline key phrases, make notations in the margins, and to note any questions or ideas that come to you.

6. **Summarize**

Finally, after finishing an article take a few moments to summarize the article. Using a single sheet of paper, write on the top half of the paper what the author said. Use the bottom half of the paper to write what you think about what the author said, including any questions or ideas that came to mind.

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### Course Requirements

**PLEASE NOTE: A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE REQUIRES SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF EACH COMPONENT OF THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS.**

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

- **Quizzes**: 25%
- **Class Attendance & Participation**: 15%
- **Exams (3)**: 60%

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### Quizzes

25% of your final grade will be based upon responses to brief questions on the readings. These questions will be asked at five (5) random times throughout the semester and will relate to the readings assigned for that particular week. All quizzes will take place on D2L. This is a mandatory assignment and cannot be made-up if you miss a quiz.

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### Class Attendance & Participation

15% of your final grade will be based upon your attendance at and your participation in each class. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Each time you are absent I will deduct points from your final grade. Four (4) or more absences will result in an ‘F’ for the course. Consistently arriving late will also detract from your grade. If for any reason you need to miss class, please let me know.

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### Exams

There are three exams in this course. The first exam (February 9th) will cover the basic concepts and theories of sociology and the first five weeks of the course. The second exam (March 16th) will cover the material regarding culture and language, social control, deviance, and work, class and socioeconomic status. The third and final exam will cover the material on the race, gender, sexuality as well as the
material on social change and will be held during the final exam period (May 3rd @ 9:55 a.m.). The exams will cover readings, lecture materials, films, as well as the main lessons of the in-class activities and discussions. Each exam will be worth 20% of your final grade.

A Note About E-Mail

I welcome and encourage you to email me when you have questions, would like to offer feedback, and/or need to communicate with me about anything related to this class. When emailing me, please keep in mind the following:

1. Please be sure to put “SOC 160” or “Sociology 160” in the subject line of your message. Without doing this, it is unlikely that I will respond to your email.
2. Please be appropriate in how you address me: Acceptable salutations (ways to give greeting in your message) include:
   a. Professor Ore
   b. Dr. Ore
   c. Tracy
   Unacceptable salutations include:
   a. Hey you
   b. Mrs./Miss Ore
   c. Hey Stacey
3. Please be patient in waiting for a response to your message. I try to reply to all messages within 48 hours of receiving them. Keep in mind, also, that I typically do not respond to email on weekends.

Extra Credit

I do not give extra credit options in this class.

Some Final Notes

I encourage you to make use of my office hours. They are devoted to you so don’t feel as if you are disturbing me when you come by. If they are inconvenient for you, please feel free to set up an appointment with me.

I know that the above rules and regulations may seem like a bit much, and it may appear that this class is more structured than you thought. This syllabus is provided as merely a guideline for how this course will be run. I ask all of you to feel free to give me feedback about this course. It is important that this learning experience be multidirectional; that we learn from each other. This cannot happen unless we all participate. Remember to communicate with me; let me know what’s going on. If for any reason you have a problem coming to class or meeting a deadline, please let me know.

2 Note: This exam time is determined by the University final exam calendar. Unfortunately, due to the size of the class, I cannot allow for alternate exam times.
Assigned readings are listed directly below the weekly topic. Additional readings may be assigned in class. All readings for each week must be completed prior to coming to the first class meeting of the week.

Reading Key:  Mapping the Social Landscape = MAP
Additional Readings = AR

Week of January 10th: Course Introduction & Definitions

Required Reading:
1. Read the syllabus carefully so that you understand my perspectives, expectations, goals, and your responsibilities.

Week of January 17th: Theories & Concepts of Sociology

We begin this course focusing primarily on fundamental concepts in sociology. Using a sociological perspective changes how we perceive the surrounding world, even ourselves. Thinking sociologically is like entering an unfamiliar society, according to Berger—something like culture shock. This semester you may experience a great deal of this as you are made aware of new and unsuspected elements of human existence in society. Through learning the basic concepts and theories of sociology, we will acquire the tools necessary to begin this process.

Required Reading:

Current Issues Reading:
1. Hungry, Homeless and in College

Week of January 24th: Socialization & Constructing the “Center”/Constructing the “Other”

This week we will begin to examine the means by which we become fully human, the process of socialization. This is a life-long process which teaches us the standards and expectations of the culture to which we belong. In addition, we will examine how socialization aids in the process of the social construction of reality; defining what is the norm and, as a result, what is outside this norm.

Required Reading:

Current Issues Reading:
1. Who Gets to Graduate?
Week of January 31st: Social Stratification, Groups & Social Structure

In our examination of groups and social structure we will pay particular attention to the issues of status and role and how they impact the life chances of people at various locations in our socially stratified society.

Required Reading:
3. Williams, C. L. “Shopping as Symbolic Interaction: Race, Class, and Gender in the Toy Store.” p. 194-204 MAP

Current Issues Reading:
1. A History of Native Americans Protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline

Week of February 7th: Social Institutions & Maintaining the Social Order

This week we take an introductory look at how social institutions help maintain the social structure and the social order. We will focus our attention on the institutions of the government and education.

Required Reading:
5. Stevens, M. L. “A School in the Garden.” p. 564-577 MAP

Current Issues Reading:

Exam #1: Thursday, February 9th

Week of February 14th: Culture, Language & the Media

This week our focus is on language and how it serves as a link between all of the different elements of culture and thus serves to perpetuate the social order. In addition, this section will address the institution of the media which is responsible for supplying members of society with information, for reinforcing the policies of other institutions, and socializing members of society with regard to appropriate ways of behaving and accepted cultural values. Finally, the purpose of this section is to illustrate how the media serves as a mechanism for connecting and supporting other institutions in society.

Required Reading:
2. Glassner, B. “The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Fear the Wrong Things.” p. 105-113 MAP
3. Trask, H. “Lovely Hula Hands.” p. 113-120 MAP
5. Lindner, A. “Controlling the Media in Iraq.” p. 453-463 MAP
8. Linneman, T. J. “How Do You Solve a Problem Like Will Truman?: The Feminization of Gay Masculinities on Will & Grace.” AR

Week of February 21st: Maintaining Social Order through Defining Deviance

Due to the existence of norms, deviant acts occur with great frequency. According to sociology, deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behavior; it is a property conferred upon particular behaviors by social definitions. In other words, deviance is what people say it is. Whether such activities are sufficient to define us as mentally ill or criminal depends on how others perceive, define, and respond to a given situation. More importantly, norms and their application are linked to social inequality. In our
analysis of deviance and social control we will review how the different sociological paradigms view these issues, discussing the different theories for why it occurs. Later we will discuss some of the ways in which our society attempts to control what it views as deviant.

**Required Reading:**

**Week of February 28th: Work, Class & Socioeconomic Status**

The U.S. society is highly stratified in terms of class. The privileges of the rich contrast sharply with the poverty of millions of women and men who struggle day to day to simply survive. This section will reveal that the popular portrayal of the U.S. as a “middle-class society” does not agree with many important realities.

**Required Reading:**
2. Domhoff, G. Community and the Upper Class.” p. 253-266 MAP
3. Shapiro, T.M. “Race, Homeownership, and Wealth.” p. 266-277 MAP
5. Leidner, R. “Over the Counter: McDonald’s.” p. 464-478 MAP

**Recommended Reading:**

**Note: No class March 6th – 10th—Spring Break!**

**Week of March 15th: Life Chances & Access to Resources**

During this week of the course, we will continue to examine the impact that access to resources—or the lack thereof—impacts one’s life chances.

**Required Reading:**

**Exam #2: Thursday, March 16th**

**Week of March 21st: History & Constructions of Race**

This week we shift our focus and begin discussing issues of race, ethnicity and intergroup relations. It is important to remember the information that we have been discussing up to this point. All of the sociological concepts, as well as issues of language and class, will relate very directly to the topic of this week and next. It is also important to keep in mind that when we discuss race, we are discussing all races. We all belong to a racial community, but often those of us that are in the majority in the U.S. tend not to be aware of our membership in the community of whites. We will begin by discussing concepts, and then move on to discuss patterns of intergroup relations.

**Required Reading:**
1. Desmond, M. and M. Emirbayer, What is Racial Domination?” p. 338-353 MAP
Week of March 28th: Race, Racism & Maintaining Societal Hierarchies

We continue our focus on racial and ethnic inequality through examining the role that racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination play in our everyday lives.

Required Reading:

Week of April 4th: The Social Construction of Gender & Sexuality: Defining our “Places”

This section of the course will focus on the concepts and theories with regard to sex, sexuality and gender. It is important that you understand these concepts and theories, reflecting on how the perspective you hold impacts how you see sex and gender relations.

Required Reading:
1. Loe, M. “Working at Bazooms: The Intersection of Power, Gender, and Sexuality.” p. 79-94 MAP
2. Kane, E. “No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That!” p. 121-133 MAP
5. Steinem, G. “If Men Could Menstruate.” AR

Week of April 11th: Maintaining the Sex/Gender Hierarchy

Regardless of how we view sex and gender inequality, or how widespread we think it is, there are several ramifications of a system that is stratified on the basis of sex and gender. This week we will discuss the ramifications of such a system.

Required Reading:
2. Risman, B. “Gender as Structure.” p. 291-300 MAP

Week of April 18th: Heterosexism, Homophobia & Social Control

In this section of the course we focus on how we maintain a system stratified on the basis of sexuality and sexual identity through institutional, interpersonal, and internalized heterosexism and homophobia. We will explore how the existence of these forms of oppression impact the lives of all members of society, regardless of sexual identity.

Required Reading:

Week of April 22nd: Where Do We Go from Here? Societal Transformation

Having completed our discussion of a variety of sociological issues we are now able to move forward and discuss the possibilities and potential for making improvements with regard to social problems. As a way of discussing these possibilities, we will consider what needs to be in place for social change to occur, some of the perspectives on social change, as well as social movements that have brought and have the potential to bring about social change.

Required Reading:

Exam #3: Tuesday, May 2nd @ 8:00 a.m.