

# SYG 2000: “PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY” ♦

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## **COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

SYG 2000 Principles of Sociology: 3 Credits

Grading Scheme: Letter Grade

Introduces sociology as a social science and analysis of American society. Culture, socialization, deviance, bureaucracy, population, urbanization, social stratification, minorities and other topics. (S)

Attributes: General Education - Social Science

## **GENERAL EDUCATION SUBJECT AREA OBJECTIVES**

Social and behavioral science courses, like SYG 2000, provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES FOR SYG 2000 PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY**

- 1) Introduce students to the basic concepts, theories, and methods that sociologists use. Reading assignments and lectures provide students opportunities to see how social scientist use varied methods to collect information about specific social issues. Moreover, students will critically assess how that information can be used to frame understanding about why social patterns exist and what might be the possible consequences of those patterns.
- 2) Provide students with a brief overview of sociology as a discipline within the social sciences that exposes students to strategies to identify, study, and address social issues and research questions. In-class exercises will provide students with opportunities to work in small teams and apply critical thinking skills to accomplish various tasks (e.g., speculate on the probable social consequences for legislative and technological innovations).

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♦ This syllabus represents an approximation of the course’s content and schedule. The Professor reserves the right to make reasonable changes and alterations of the schedule and content of this syllabus and to announce those changes in class. Students are responsible for fulfilling any new or revised requirements or obligations resulting from these changes.

- 3) Help students to develop the ability to understand how various social processes and structures affect one another. This will be accomplished by showing how various social changes related to family, work, education, health, and other matters involve shifts in public perceptions and social initiatives.
- 4) Encourage students to develop a better understanding of how their own lives and significant relationships are shaped by larger social forces.
- 5) Provide students with insights about how individuals' interactions with their family members and friends can affect the larger society.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The general education student learning outcomes (SLOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to acquire while completing a general education course at the University of Florida. The SLOs fall into three categories: *content*, *communication*, and *critical thinking*:

- *Content* is knowledge of the concepts, principles, terminology and methodologies used within the discipline. Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the discipline.
- *Communication* is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms. Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline.
- *Critical thinking* is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### **COURSE COMPONENTS:**

#### **Attendance: 25% of Final Grade**

Because this class relies heavily on team-based learning activities, daily attendance is required. There are 29 class periods, therefore attending each class period is worth 0.86% of your final course grade. There are some conditions under which students can receive an excused absence (see "Attendance" section), and only students with an excused absence will be allowed to make up the points from any missed assignments; the Professor reserves the right to determine whether an alternative assignment or grading criteria will be used in such circumstances. Students with unexcused absences will not be allowed to complete any make-up or alternative assignments.

#### **IQs / TQs (Quizzes): 30% of Final Grade**

IQ stands for "Individual Quiz" and TQ stands for "Team Quiz." The IQ / TQ-style of quizzing requires students to first take a short quiz individually (the IQ score) and then they will be able to get together with their team to discuss the questions before taking the same short quiz again (the TQ score). Students will NOT receive immediate feedback on their IQ score. Although teams will be able to discuss and collaborate on their responses to the TQ, each student will submit their own TQ and can choose whether or not to submit the same answers as the rest of their team. Each question will be worth one (1) point during the IQ and four (4) points during the TQ; in other words, 6% of your final grade will be based on your IQ scores and 24% of your final grade will be based on your TQ scores.

#### **Team Research Assignments: 15% of Final Grade**

Each module has an associated Team Research Assignment. These assignments are intended to give you hands-on experience with research skills that are useful for sociologists. These assignments will be completed with your team, and you will collaboratively produce a single submission for which all teammates will receive the same grade. There are five (5) Team Research Assignments, therefore each assignment is worth 3% of your final grade.

**Peer Evaluations: 6% of Final Grade**

You will be working with a team of other students to complete TQs and Team Research Assignments. You will need to develop a Peer Evaluation rubric and use it to score your fellow teammates. The Professor will take these scores into account when assigning each student's Peer Evaluation grade. You will work with three (3) teams during the semester, therefore your overall Peer Evaluation score from each team is worth 2% of your final grade.

**Midterm: 12% of Final Grade**

The midterm will cover the material from Modules 1-3, and it will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

**Final Exam: 12% of Final Grade**

The final exam will cover the material from Modules 4-5, and it will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

**GRADING:**

Your final course grade will be calculated based on the following components:

Attendance	25%
IQS / TQs	30%
Team Research Assignments	15%
Peer Evaluations	6%
Midterm	12%
Final Exam	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final course grades will be calculated according to following grading scale. I will NOT round grades up.

A	100 - 95%
A-	94 - 90%
B+	89 - 87%
B	86 - 83%
B-	82 - 80%
C+	79 - 77%
C	76 - 73%
C-	72 - 70%
D+	69 - 67%
D	66 - 63%
D-	62 - 60%
E	59 - 0%

**What does a letter grade mean?****A = Exemplary work**

You have demonstrated a thorough understanding of the material that greatly exceeds the average.

**B = Good work**

You have demonstrated a firm grasp on the material but have minor gaps in knowledge or process.

**C = Average work**

Your work suffers from substantial gaps in knowledge or process.

**D = Marginal Work**

Your work demonstrates a superficial understanding of the material and is barely acceptable.

### E = Unacceptable Work

Your work fails to demonstrate any substantial understanding of the material.

The most common source of conflict between professors and students is grading. I expect all students to submit work that they believe is worthy of full credit, but unfortunately, many students will NOT receive full credit on their assignments. Most students want to earn the highest marks possible (especially in introductory courses that fulfill general education requirements), but the University and other institutions expect professors to make distinctions between each student's performance and combat grade inflation. These competing expectations put professors in a difficult position, and students can become demoralized by a single poor grade and disengage from the whole learning process (which is also bad for professors!).

To combat this potential source of conflict, I try to be as transparent as possible with all grading matters (without violating FERPA laws). I encourage students to ask questions and seek clarification on assignments before submitting them; students who misunderstand the instructions will still be held to the same grading standards as others. In some cases, I may agree to review an outline or rough draft of an assignment and offer feedback prior to the final submission. Feedback will be given on all assignments that fail to earn full credit so that students can better understand the material and improve their future performance. Please contact the Professor immediately if you believe a grading mistake has been made.

The University policies regarding grades can be found online (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>).

### **ATTENDANCE:**

You are required to attend every scheduled class session and will receive a grade based on your attendance record. You should NOT schedule appointments, meetings, trips, or other activities that would require you to miss some or all of class. Students who arrive late or leave early may lose points at the Professor's discretion.

Any student who fails to attend at least one of the first two class meetings and has not contacted the Professor will be dropped from the course. I will do my best to ensure that these students are disenrolled before the end of the drop/add period so that they can find another class (if desired), but they will not be allowed to re-enroll in this section of the course.

Students who have court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) or accommodations through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) must contact the Professor as soon as possible to discuss how these circumstances will affect their ability to attend class and complete assignments, and the Professor will work with students to establish the appropriate accommodations. Students must provide supporting evidence or documentation with their request (e.g., court paperwork or DRC Accommodation Letter). More information about DRC accommodations can be found in the "Accessibility Accommodations" section at the end of this syllabus. All other requests for excused absences are granted at the Professor's discretion.

Students may request an excused absence due to religious holidays, military obligations, professional development activities, or participation in university-sponsored activities, but these requests must be made at least 2 business days before the relevant class period(s) and should be accompanied with some kind of supporting evidence or documentation. Requests for excused absences are granted at the Professor's discretion.

If you believe you will be unable to attend class due to some kind of exceptional circumstance, please contact the Professor before the relevant class period(s) to explain the circumstances. Exceptional

circumstances are limited to any emergency which can be clearly documented, including, but not limited to: a death in the family, medical emergency/illness requiring medical attention for the student or family member, or related urgent issues beyond the student's control. In some cases, students may be asked to send supporting evidence or documentation directly to the Professor. For other circumstances, the Professor will ask students to follow the procedures for the Dean of Students Office Instructor Notification form (<https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/>), which also includes submitting supporting evidence or documentation for your circumstances. **Students who miss class without prior notification or due to medical reasons must submit an Instructor Notification request to the Dean of Students.** The Dean of Students Office will review your documentation and make a recommendation as to whether your circumstances should warrant an excused absence. However, the Professor reserves the right to accept or reject the Dean of Students recommendation.

The complete University policies regarding absences and make-up work can be found online (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext>).

### **ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:**

There are a number of circumstances - physical or mental, temporary or long-term - that can make completing the course requirements unduly difficult for some students. The University has a process for identifying students in need of accommodations, and there are a wide variety of accommodations available (<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/accommodations/>). If you need accommodations for successfully completing this course, you must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC).

Any students who are registered with the DRC and wish to use their accommodations in this class must use the DRC portal to send a current accommodation letter to the Professor in a timely manner. Then, the student and the Professor will discuss how the accommodations will be applied to the coursework and the conditions that must be met in order to access the accommodations. Students cannot utilize their DRC accommodations in this class until they have discussed, agreed to, and signed an Accommodation Plan with the Professor.

### **TEXTBOOK:**

I have chosen an open-source textbook that is available for free online and required for all students:

OpenStax. *Introduction to Sociology 3e*. OpenStax CNX, 2021.

<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e>

### **GATOR EVALS:**

The University expects students to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on a variety of criteria. These evaluations, called GatorEvals, are typically open during the last week of the semester, and students will be notified via email and Canvas notifications when they are open. GatorEvals can also be accessed directly at <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summary results of these evaluations are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

GatorEvals are primarily used in three ways: the Professor's annual performance review, the Professor's Tenure and Promotion materials, and/or for teaching and mentoring awards. In other words, the audience for these evaluations are professors and administrators. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>.

The Professor may also request anonymous feedback from students during the semester. These evaluations give current students an opportunity to provide feedback that might improve their course

experience before the semester ends. The Professor will review these evaluations, and may make changes to the course based on the feedback provided.

## **APPROXIMATE COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Module 1: What is Sociology?**

Required Textbook Readings:

Chapter 1: An Introduction to Sociology

Required Supplemental Readings & Activities:

Develop Peer Evaluation rubric with team (*in-class activity*)

“Work Interest Assessment,” via [UF CHOMP](#) (*bring results to class*)

“21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers with an Undergraduate Degree in Sociology,” by the ASA

Team Research Assignment 1: Sociologists at UF

### **Module 2: Methods of Social Research**

Required Textbook Readings:

Chapter 2: Sociological Research

Required Supplemental Readings & Activities:

“Understanding Concepts, Variables, and Attributes,” by Persell and Cao

“How to Read a (Quantitative) Journal Article,” by Krippner

Finding and Reading Journal Articles using UF Libraries (*in-class activity*)

Complete Peer Evaluation 1

Team Research Assignment 2: Using Surveys for Hypothesis Testing (*completed in stages*)

### **Module 3: Culture and Social Organization**

Required Textbook Readings:

Chapter 3: Culture

Chapter 4: Society and Social Interaction

Chapter 5: Socialization

Chapter 7: Deviance, Crime, and Social Control

Chapter 6: Groups and Organizations

Required Supplemental Readings & Activities:

“The Nacirema,” by Miner (*in-class activity*)

“How and What to Code,” by Gibbs and Taylor (*for Team Research Assignment 3*)

“Themes Don’t Just Emerge – Coding Qualitative Data,” by Yi (*for Team Research Assignment 3*)

Team Research Assignment 3: Conducting a Breaching Experiment

## **MIDTERM**

### **Module 4: Social Stratification and Inequalities**

Required Textbook Readings:

Chapter 9: Social Stratification in the United States

Chapter 10: Global Inequality

Chapter 11: Race and Ethnicity

Chapter 12: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

Required Supplemental Readings & Activities:

SPENT Simulation Game (*in-class activity*)

Implicit Association Test (*bring results to class*)

Crowe et al. 2011. "The Case Study Approach" (*for Team Research Assignment 4*)

Encyclopedia of Case Study Research (*for Team Research Assignment 4*)

Complete Peer Evaluation 2

Team Research Assignment 4: Mapping Inequalities

### **Module 5: Institutions and Social Change**

Required Textbook Readings:

Chapter 8: Media and Technology Chapter 13: Aging and the Elderly Chapter 14: Marriage and Family Chapter 15: Religion

Chapter 16: Education

Chapter 17: Government and Politics Chapter 18: Work and the Economy Chapter 19: Health and Medicine

Chapter 21: Social Movements and Social Change

Required Supplemental Readings & Activities:

Film: "Made in L.A." (*in-class activity*)

Complete Peer Evaluation 3

Team Research Assignment 5: Institutional Problems and Solutions

## **FINAL EXAM**