

**Introduction to Sociology**  
**MWF 10:10 – 11:00 am**  
**Room SS352**

**Professor: Amit Kapoor**  
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**Office: SS 319**  
**Hours: M-W 11:00am to 1:00pm, and by appointment**

## **I. Course Objectives**

### **Description:**

Why do you do the things you do? Why do you only face certain problems and not others? Why are only a few people wealthy? Why are so many people poor? What part do you play in making other people rich? What part do you play in making other people poor? Why does the “richest and most powerful” country in the world have so many homeless? Why is suicide the third leading cause of death among teenagers in the U.S.? Do you know what part you play in the war on drugs? Do you know how society controls you? Do you know how you control society? Do you know what problems others create for you? Do you know what problems you create for others? Do you consider yourself to be living in “free and democratic” society? How do you tell?

If you already fully know the answers to such questions then this course is not for you. This course provides an introduction to the sociological perspective and explores how sociology can be used to examine human nature, human society, and human problems. Sociology helps answer all of the above questions and many more. The sociological perspective shows us what social institutions are, why they are so important, how they influence our lives, what part we play as individuals and as a community in society, and why we interact with each other only in certain ways.

The course learning objectives will include: developing an understanding of basic vocabulary, concepts, knowledge base, and principles of sociology; understanding the scientific method; demonstrating an understanding of the major theoretical paradigms used by sociologists; and exercising critical thinking skills through assigned readings and activities.

### **Expectations:**

My expectations of students are to: 1) learn key concepts; 2) be able to apply concepts in class discussions and in student work; 3) think critically and analytically about how these concepts relate to you and others; 4) treat everyone in class (including me) with professional respect and courtesy; 5) be honest and honorable in fulfilling all course work; and 6) refrain from engaging in rude or disruptive behavior, which also means not using cell phones, etc. during class.

## II. Grading:

Your course grade will be determined by the following: 1) first midterm exam worth 80 points; 2) second midterm exam worth 135 points; 3) final exam worth 150; and 4) in-class exercises 35 points.

### **Exam dates:**

Exam dates may need to be changed depending on where we are. Roughly, the first exam will be February 22<sup>nd</sup> and the second exam March 21<sup>st</sup>. The final for this class is scheduled (by the university) for May 9<sup>th</sup> (last day of finals week). However, as a class we could arrange it to take place on the last day of class, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is up for discussion.

### Exam make-up:

If you miss an exam for reasons of official school-related events, serious illness, important family obligations, or death in the family, you will be able to take a make-up exam. However, in most such cases I will require to be informed ahead of time to the extent it is reasonably possible. PLEASE note that if you do miss an exam, the make-up exam will be different from the one given in class.

## III. Rules and regulations:

**PLEASE NOTE:** The University requires you to have a current/active University of Montana email account. I will expect you to use this account for class related matters.

### Attendance:

I will expect you to attend regularly. I understand that sometimes missing class is unavoidable. I will assume you have a good reason to miss and so you do not need excuses. In general there will be no make-up work for any missed in-class assignments.

### Student Rights:

Because life just happens and we all have to deal with unexpected situations, I will make myself available to students as much as possible. I invite and encourage you to stop by my office during office hours or make an appointment. I also welcome brief drop-in visits at your convenience. Basically, if you find my office door is open, please feel free to stop in. Please note that if your question or concern has to do with missed course work or exam, it is always better to inform the instructor beforehand whenever possible.

In addition, if your question or concern cannot be resolved by me, please contact the Chair of the department:

Professor James Burfeind  
james.burfeind@umontana.edu  
Social Science 331  
406-243-4811

Disability or Need for Special Accommodations:

Students with disability or need for special accommodations who require modification for any course related activity should contact me as soon as possible. If, for any reason, you do not want to contact me about this, please contact the Chair of the department as soon as possible. See contact information above.

**IV. Course Materials**

We will use the following textbook for this class:

Introduction to Sociology (6th Edition) Anthony Giddens  
This textbook is available at the University bookstore.

In addition, you will find some readings marked as online reading.\* These will be available on the Sociology Department webpage. Details later.

**V. General schedule:**

- Week 1: [1/23]      What the heck are we doing here? What's this interaction thing about?
- Week 2: [1/28]      What is Sociology. Read chapter 1. Asking and Answering Sociological Question. Read Chapter 2.
- Week 3: [2/4]        Culture and Society; and Socialization. Read chapters 3 and 4. Also read pages 520-530 in text book. Online reading\* McDonaldization
- Week 4: [2/11]      Social interaction; and Groups. Read chapters 5 and 6.
- Week 5: [2/20]      Please note NO CLASS Monday 2-18 ☺  
Conformity/Crime. Read chapter 7. **Exam 1 (2/22).**
- Week 6: [2/25]      Gender Inequality. Read chapters 10 and 18. Online reading\* A Look Behind the Veil.
- Week 7: [3/3]        Ethnicity and Race. Read chapter 11. Online reading\*
- Week 8: [3/10]      Stratification. Read chapter 8. (possible additional readings)
- Week 9: [3/17]      **Exam 2 (Friday 3-21-08)**

	Global Inequality. <u>Read</u> chapter 9. (possible additional readings)
Week 10: [3/24]	Spring Break!!
Week 11: [3/31]	Government, Politics, and SM. <u>Read</u> chapter 13. Online readings*
Week 12: [4/7]	Work and Economy. <u>Read</u> chapter 14
Week 13: [4/14]	Family. <u>Read</u> chapter 15. Religion and society. <u>Read</u> chapter 17
Week 14: [4/21]	Urbanization and Environment. Read chapter 19
Week 15: [4/28]	Globalization. Read chapter 20. Online readings*