Instructor
Rob Balch, SS 325  
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Office Hours
Tuesday: 10:10-12:00 & 1:10-4:00  
Wednesday: 10:10-12:00 & 1:10-4:00  
Thursday: 10:10-12:00

Teaching Assistants
Michelle Johnson, SS 326  
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Kathryn Sears, SS 326  
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The TA’s will conduct a review session before each exam and will be available during their office hours to answer questions about the lectures, readings, and exams. They also will keep the records of exam scores and extra-credit points, so any questions about these matters should be directed to them.

Course Description
Sociology is the study of human social behavior. Sociologists are especially interested in groups, from families and street-corner gangs to entire societies and global social systems. In this class we will examine how groups are organized, how they operate, how they change, and how they influence the thoughts and actions of their members. We will also look at people who don’t play by the rules, and how people organize to resist those who make the rules. In addition, some attention will be given to the research methods sociologists use to study groups and social processes. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

• use sociological concepts to describe face-to-face interaction, small groups, communities, complex organizations, and societies, as well as how these phenomena change over time
• apply basic sociological theories to understand historic and contemporary social issues
• understand and evaluate the methods sociologists use to collect and analyze empirical data

Required Reading
Rodney Stark, Sociology (10th ed.). Thomson Wadsworth, 2007. You are required to read 18 of the 21 chapters. See the course outline below for the reading pertaining to each lecture as well as chapters to be covered on each exam.

Examinations
There will be three midterms and a comprehensive final, each consisting of multiple-choice questions. The first exam is worth 20% of your grade; the next two exams are worth 25% each; and the final is worth 30%. The first test counts less because it covers only two chapters, and the final is worth more because it will cover the entire course. Please note that the amount of reading for each test increases significantly after the first exam. The final exam is not optional, and I will not drop your lowest score. Tentative exam dates are listed on the course outline below. If I have to reschedule an exam I will give you plenty of notice.
You may take an exam early or late, but you must have a compelling reason and provide documentation. If you need to reschedule a test, you must contact me before the exam to make other arrangements. If you miss an exam without my approval, you may make it up but your score will be reduced by five percentage points. The one exception is the final exam which cannot be taken early.

Exam questions will come from both lectures and the text. To do well on the exams you will need to attend class and do the readings. My lectures will parallel topics in the textbook but they will cover different material.


**Study Guides & Review Sessions**

Shortly before each exam I will provide a study guide covering the concepts, theories, and research studies from both class and the textbook that I expect you to know. The study guide will be posted on the Sociology web page where you found this syllabus. The best way to use it is to read the required chapters and review your notes before the study guide is posted, then use it to focus your studying after you have a good grasp of the material.

After the study guide is posted the teaching assistants will conduct an optional afternoon or evening review session. The purpose of the review is to clarify concepts, theories, and research findings. Do not expect the TA’s to tell you what will be on the exams or to provide capsule summaries of lectures you missed. Before each review session you should read all the assigned chapters and review your class notes so you know what questions you need to get answered. Come prepared. If there are no questions, the TA’s will cancel the session.

**Attendance & Class Notes**

I do not take attendance but I do test over class material, much of which is not in the book. I do not post or loan my notes, and only under exceptional circumstances—with my approval—may you borrow notes from a TA. Attending class and learning to take good notes are important if you expect to do well in this class. If you are unable to take notes because of a disability, or if you must miss a significant number of classes, it is your responsibility to find someone to take notes for you.

**Exam Grades**

Exam scores will be posted on the Sociology website. Scores will be recorded as number and percent correct: 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, etc. Extra-credit points (see below) will be shown here as well.

You will be identified by a code consisting of the first letter of your last name and the last four digits of your Griz Card number. Know your code! You are required to put this code on each exam and every extra-credit paper. No code, no grade, no exceptions.

After scores have been posted you can get your answer sheet from a TA but the exams will not be returned. You should see one of the TA’s to go over the exam because the final will be comprehensive. The final exam will not include the same questions but it will cover the same material, so reviewing old exams is a good way to prepare. However, the exams may not be copied or leave the Sociology Department.

**Extra Credit**
There will be several evening sessions, each lasting one to two hours. Each will be worth one percentage point to be added to the average of your four exam scores. To receive credit you must write a one- or two-page response to a question about the main points of the video and turn it in before you leave. The questions will be easy, but points are not guaranteed–your answers must be readable, clear, and correct. **You also must put your code on your essay to get credit.** Showings will start at 7:10 p.m. and you must watch the entire video. **Late arrivals will not receive credit.** The schedule will be posted and announced in class once it is finalized. No other extra credit will be offered.

**Final Grades**

Your course grade will be determined by the weighted average of your four exam scores, plus your extra-credit points. For example, if the average of your exam scores equals 87% and you have four extra credit points, your final score would be 91%. Letter grades will be based on the following cutting points: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, etc. I do not use plus-minus grading. According to the University Catalog you may request an Incomplete if you have a passing grade and are unable to complete the course due to circumstances beyond your control. By university policy the possibility of losing financial aid is **not** a valid reason for taking an Incomplete.

**Failure to return borrowed materials** will result in an Incomplete. If the materials are not returned by the end of the following semester, the incomplete will be changed to an F.

**Class Rules**

To help make this class worthwhile for everyone, please observe the following courtesies:

1. Be on time for class. If you come in late, please find a seat that doesn’t require disrupting others to get to it even if it means sitting on the floor.
2. Please keep the chitchat down–it’s very distracting those around you, and for me too.
3. Turn off your cell phone.
4. Put away your newspaper. The only news that matters will issue from my silver tongue.
5. If you have to leave early, please sit close to the door.
6. Do not begin packing up until the lecture is finished!!

**Course Outline**

Required reading appears in parentheses after the heading for each section of the course. This is only a tentative outline – actual topics and dates may vary from those listed below. Changes will be announced in class and you are responsible for keeping abreast of those changes.

**The Sociological Perspective (Ch. 1)**

Aug. 27 Overview of the course
Aug. 29 Social relationships in a hypothetical street gang

**Society & Culture (Ch. 2)**

Aug. 31 Using field research to study a utopian society
Sept. 3 Labor Day holiday
Sept. 5 Culture
Sept. 7 Social structure & social integration
Sept. 10 Power, authority, & social disintegration
Sept. 12 Normative culture in everyday life
Sept. 14 Anomie: When the rules don’t work
FIRST EXAM – Monday, Sept. 17 (Ch. 1 & 2)

Micro Sociology: Studying Social Interaction (Ch. 3)
Sept. 19 Symbolic interactionism: How interpretations of events influence social behavior
21 Self-fulfilling prophecies as symbolic interaction
24 The experimental method: Self-fulfilling prophecies in the classroom
25 Group dynamics in the laboratory: Problems with the Asch experiment

Macro Sociology I: Studying Societies (Ch. 4)
Sept. 28 Social surveys & government records: Good data & bad
Oct. 1 The Industrial Revolution and the origins of macro sociology
3 Functionalist theory: Social systems & group survival
5 Conflict theory: Ideology, power, & privilege

Macro Sociology II: Formal Organizations (Ch. 20)
Oct. 8 The organizational age & rational systems: Prisons & rehabilitation
10 Subverting the rational system: Inmate subcultures

Socialization & Social Roles (Ch. 5 & 6)
Oct. 12 Learning group culture: The socialization of children and adults
15 Scripts and improvisation: The dramaturgical model of social interaction
17 Extreme resocialization: The Heaven’s Gate cult
19 Making sense of mass suicide: The demise of Heaven’s Gate

SECOND EXAM – Monday, Oct. 22 (Ch. 3, 4, 20, 5, 6 – Note that Ch. 5 will not be covered in lectures)

Deviance & Crime (Ch. 7 & 8)
Oct. 24 Deviance & deviant labels
26 Immigration, social disorganization, & crime
29 Collective efficacy: Neighborhoods & crime

Social Stratification (Ch. 9 & 10)
Oct. 31 Caste, class, and social mobility
Nov. 2 The reality of class in the U.S.
5 The U.S. upper class: Power, privilege, & group boundaries

Race & Ethnic Relations
Nov. 7 Caste, class, & racial violence in the 19th century South
9 Origins of the African-American “underclass”
12 Veterans’ Day

THIRD EXAM – Wednesday, Nov. 14 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Social Institutions: The Family & Religion (Ch. 13 & 14)
Nov. 16 The American family: Divorce, diversity, & the “culture wars”
10 Trends in American religion: Secularization & revival
21 Thanksgiving vacation begins
26 The Mormons: From new religious movement to mainstream church
Social Change (Ch. 17)
   Nov.  28    Technology, social change, & social solidarity
   30    Economics & social change: From *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft*

Population & Demography (Ch. 18)
   Dec.  3     Demography: Births, deaths, and migrations
   5     Population, environment & social organization: The case of Easter Island (Ch. 20)
   7     World population growth

Social Movements (Ch. 21 – required although not covered in class)

FINAL EXAM – Tuesday, Dec. 11, 8:00 a.m.!!, in J 304 (Ch. 13, 14, 17, 18, 21 + review of old material)