

## **Introduction to Sociology (SOC 1301) Syllabus**

---

### **Course Information**

Course Title: Introduction to Sociology

Class Section: SOC 1301

Class Location and Time: Tuesday & Thursday: 10:00am-11:15am [GR 2.302](#)

---

### **Professor Contact Information**

Zachary R. Simoni, PhD

Office location: [GR 2.232](#) (North side of the building)

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:30p – 4:30p, and by appointment.

E-mail: [zrs160030@utdallas.edu](mailto:zrs160030@utdallas.edu)

### **TA Contact Information:**

Jewel Love

Email: [jnl140330@utdallas.edu](mailto:jnl140330@utdallas.edu)

Office Location: [Green Hall 2.512](#)

Office Hours: by appointment

\*\* Please craft e-mails that are professional in style and nature. It may take up to 48 hours to respond. I will not respond to emails after 7pm. \*\*

---

### **Course Description**

The objective of this course is to introduce you to the discipline of sociology. This class will provide you with the opportunity to learn the basic concepts and theoretical perspectives that the practitioners of sociology use every day. More importantly, this class will invite you to critically examine the social world in which we live and help you make sense of social issues outside of our personal experiences.

---

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

- 1) Increase student's awareness and understanding of the society in which we live, the social phenomena which we observe, and the world in which we live;
  - 2) View social phenomena specifically from a sociological perspective;
  - 3) Employ a comparative perspective on human societies and other social phenomena;
  - 4) Present alternative explanations or theories of social phenomena;
  - 5) Examine scientific research, various types of research, appropriate methods, technologies and data that sociologists use to investigate the human condition;
  - 6) Examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures;
  - 7) Recognize the structural, systemic factors which affect the quality of life of persons of different ages, gender, social class, sexual orientation, disability, and racial/ethnic backgrounds;
-

- 8) Address the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural and global forces on human society;
  - 9) Encourage one to think for oneself by obtaining information through appropriate sources; and, finally,
  - 10) Consider alternative explanations and solutions for contemporary social issues.
- 

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

Ferris, Kerry and Jill Stein. 2016. *The Real World: An Introduction to Sociology*. 5th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton. w/InQuizitive.

Ebook:

<https://ncia.wwnorton.com/ebook-realworld5>

(\$45 w/InQuizitive)

OR

Paperback:

ISBN: 978-0-393-26430-2

(~\$94 w/InQuizitive)

---

### **Course Requirements:**

**InQuizitive Lessons:** In each chapter folder, there is a link to the learning program, InQuizitive. This program has been empirically shown to help students get the most out of studying for the class by assisting students review the chapter material, as well as, apply/practice their new found sociological knowledge. Students will be required to complete 13 of the 15 InQuizitive lessons as I drop the lowest 3 grades. However, students are recommended to complete as many as possible. Grades will be assigned based on the percentage of each unit completed (100% - 10pts, 90% - 9pts, etc.). Instructions to access and use InQuizitive are below. I understand this work may seem tedious at times, but I can assure you it will help you understand the material and do better on the exams.

Please follow these instructions CAREFULLY as failure to do so may influence the ability to record your scores. You must wait until the Blackboard Learn course site opens on the first day of class in order to register.

1. Click on the InQuizitive link in our Blackboard Learn course. This should be located under Week 1's folder. You will need to wait until 1/8 to do this since the Blackboard site is not available to students until that date.
2. Wait for the box that prompts "Have you already registered?"
3. Select "No, I need to register, purchase, or sign up for trial access."
4. Enter your name, your *school email address*, and create a password.
5. As you complete registration, you'll have three access options:

If you already have a registration code—Enter your registration code and click the "Register my code" button at the bottom of the box.

If you want to purchase digital product access online—Select “I want to purchase access” option and click the “Show Purchasing Options” button.

If you want to try digital products before purchasing—Select “I want to sign up for free trial access” option click the “Sign Up For Trial Access” button.

Lastly, if you have trouble with InQuizitive, please submit a ticket to the following web link before contacting me: <https://support.wwnorton.com>.

**Theoretical Writings:** The goal of the theoretical paper assignments is to apply theoretical perspectives from the course to a film/video. *Each writing is worth 50 points* and should be a full 2 pages. You are required to complete **TWO (2) theoretical papers over the course of the semester** for a total of 100 points. Theoretical writings will be available after week 4. At this point, students should have a basic understand of the key theoretical perspectives in the course. Students may complete as many papers as they like, however, only the top two paper grades will count toward one’s final grade. Thus, if a student completed 3 papers with the following scores: 30, 45, 48. I would only record the 45 and the 48 and that student would receive a 93 out of 100 for the theoretical paper component of the course. Hence, if you don’t like a grade, you are encouraged to write additional papers, to increase your score. You are encouraged to write additional papers if you are not happy with a grade, taking my comments into consideration when writing your next paper. Typically, I’ll have papers graded within a week of the due date. Students must complete their first paper before the midpoint of the term: the end of week 8. The second paper is due before the end of week 16.

**Directions:** Theoretical papers provide students with the opportunity to properly apply a theoretical perspective to a pressing social problem in American society by analyzing a film. Students must choose one of the three main theoretical perspectives (Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Symbolic Interactionism). Considering theories are supported by empirical evidence, students may not make their own theory. In other words, imagine a strong adherent of that social theory is sitting next to you as you watch the film. You may even consider a well-known theorist within a theoretical perspective (i.e. Durkheim, Marx, Weber etc.) What would they say or argue about the given social problem after watching the film? Another way to think about this is to “put on the lens” of the theoretical perspective. Students must choose from the documentary list provided below. The list is also located on BBL with links provided.

The paper should be a well-written full 2-pages (double spaced, 1” margins, 11 pt. Cambria – or similar – font) and conform to ASA publication style. An abstract or title page is not needed. Do not make your paper “longer” by altering margins, adding space between paragraphs, using a larger font size, or added phrases/statements/sentences that do not add quality to the paper. Please see the information and rubric below for more clarification. Also, there is a template available on BBL.

*This is not a film summary*; students must integrate theoretical ideas into your paper, not just summarize the film, or play film critic. I want to know you developed a theoretical insight from the film, *not your personal opinion about the film*. Also, keep personal anecdotes to a minimum. Assignments should be done in the student’s own words. Copy-pasting from the ebook/book will be considered plagiarism and disciplinary action will be taken according to the guidelines specified in the UTD student handbook.

### Suggested Paper Organization:

*Intro Paragraph:* In a short and concise paragraph (3 to 4 sentences), briefly summarize the film and state which theoretical perspective (functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism etc.) you chose. Be as concise as possible here because most of your points will come from the body of the paper, not the intro. I've already watched the film so there is no need to put a lot of time and effort in this section. One or two sentences should be enough to address the social problem in the film. Be concise!

*Body of the Paper (3 to 4 paragraphs):* Briefly outline the main tenets of your chosen theoretical perspective or theorist's perspective. For instance, one could describe what functionalism is as concisely as possible. Again, don't waste too much space on the definition part. I'm more interested in the application of the theory as that will benefit you and strengthen your sociological imagination going forward. Utilizing the theoretical perspective, describe how your theoretical perspective would describe this social problem. In other words, imagine someone who held a theoretical perspective (Functionalism, Conflict Theory, Symbolic Interactionism etc.) were sitting next to you as you watched the film. Imagine that they were always talking during the film making comments here and there. What would they say and how would they approach the social problem?

Students are encouraged to apply key theoretical concepts to help structure their paper. For instance, Functionalism argues about the importance of social integration in society and how modernity affects social relationships. Analyze the film using these concepts as tools. For instance, one of the films you can watch, "Prison State," involves the criminal justice system. A student could choose functionalism and describe the functions of the criminal justice system in modern society or discuss how the prison system hampers social integration into society. The last paragraph of the paper should critique the theoretical perspective and address any limitations of the theoretical perspective in terms of the film. Lastly, for the sake of space and time, you don't have to write a concluding paragraph.

### Grading Rubric:

A= The paper is well written and accurately describes the chosen theoretical perspective considering the film while accurately using key concepts. The theoretical perspective is insightfully critiqued.

B= The paper is well written and organized, however depth is lacking and some of the concepts are not well understood/addressed.

C= The paper is adequately written but hard to follow at times, mostly summarized the film and little theoretical depth was discussed.

D= The paper is poorly written, and does not incorporate any relevant material.

F= The paper is poorly written and did not incorporate any relevant material. The paper relied on opinions and personal anecdotes. I was annoyed reading this paper because it did not follow any of the instructions, nor did it discuss theoretical perspectives.

### Documentary Choices:

Generation Like (2014)  
The Wounded Platoon (2010)  
Two American Families (2013)  
Immigration Battle (2015)  
Growing up Trans (2015)  
Dropout Nation (2012)  
The Cost of Low Prices (2013)  
Growing Up Online (2008)  
The Persuaders (2004)  
Medicating Children (2004)  
Haze (2016)

**Short Assignments:** There will be **10 graded in class assignments** throughout the term. I assign short activities aimed to further evaluate sociological ideas. I act as a guide and resource through the experience. Sometimes I simply show a video and allow people to discuss a topic in groups with provided questions. Other times, I have students answer questions individually. On other occasions, I have structured activities that require more involvement. Work can only be completed in class unless documentation of an excused absence is provided. Approximately 15/20 minutes will be given during the week to complete the work. In terms of group work, I grade individuals based on how well I observe participation within the group. A rubric is provided below, which helps to guide students in light of my expectations for the assignments. In terms of group work, I understand some people are shyer than others (myself included) so one does not have to be overly talkative in order to receive full credit. Listening and engaging with classmates is sufficient, however discussion is certainly encouraged.

Full Credit= Student participated in group work, listened to their classmates, completed the assignment to the best of their ability and articulated their points in a respectful and civil manner.

Half Credit= Student barely completed the assignment or was not attentive to other students in the classroom/their group.

Zero Credit=Student did not engage with other students and spaced out during class time or looked at their phone doing unrelated activities.

**Section Exams:** There will be **THREE (3) exams** during the semester covering material from in class lectures and readings. Exams consists of 30 multiple choice, matching and true/false questions, each worth 3 points. Exams will be given in class. The purpose of the exam is to test your conceptual and factual knowledge about the section material covered.

InQuizitive	13 graded x 10pts each	= 130pts	100-97%=A+
Assignments	10 x 5 each	= 50pts	96-93%= A
Theoretical Writings	2 graded x 50 pts each	= 100pts	92-90%= A-
Exams	3 exams x 100 pts each	= 300pts	89-87%= B+
Attendance	Collected at each class	= 26pts	86-83%=B
			82-80%=B-

---

If you have any questions on the gradebook, please calculate your grade by hand, before emailing me.

---

## **Course & Instructor Policies**

### Communications:

All official email correspondence will be sent ONLY to the [zrs160030@utdallas.edu](mailto:zrs160030@utdallas.edu) address. All students are responsible for ensuring that the correct e-mail address is listed in Blackboard by the beginning of Week 1. It is your responsibility to make sure a valid email UTD address is provided. Failure on your part to do so can result in you missing important information that could affect your grade.

### Accommodation of Religious Beliefs:

Religious beliefs shall be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements. Please notify me in advance if there is a conflict.

### Reasonable Accommodations:

It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 3.200. They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at [studentaccess@utdallas.edu](mailto:studentaccess@utdallas.edu).

### Make-up Policy:

I only allow makeups if there is documentation of a technical error or an extreme emergency. Documentation of a technical error entails an email from IT or a screenshot indicating the date of issue. Proper evidence of a medical emergency is required for make-up exams and assignments. In the case of a technical error, the student must provide screenshot evidence of the error with a message in Blackboard including the date and time of the error.

### Academic Honest Policy:

Faculty expect all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not limited to, acts of abetting, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Candidates are expected to honor the Academic Code of Conduct as detailed UT Dallas Student Catalog 2017-2018. Please consult this resource for additional information regarding the specific procedures to be undertaken when a student violates the UT Student Code of Conduct - UTDSP5003.

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Let me make it clear: if you cheat or plagiarize you will fail the course and your name will be forwarded to the University Compliance Office. Please don't do it.

Reservation:

I reserve the right to make changes in this syllabus to better serve the class's needs. Any changes will be announced in advance.

\*\*\*Course Calendar on next page\*\*\*

## Intro to Sociology Course Calendar Spring 2018:

Date	Topic	Weekly Objectives
Week 1	Sociology and the Real World	Read Real World Chapter 1 InQuizitive Lesson 1
Week 2	Studying Social Life	Read Real World Chapter 2 InQuizitive Lesson 2
Week 3	Cultural Crossroads	Read Real World Chapter 3 InQuizitive Lesson 3
Week 4	Self and Interaction	Read Real World Chapter 4 InQuizitive Lesson 4
Week 5	Life in Groups	Read Real World Chapter 5 InQuizitive Lesson 5 <b>Exam 1 on Thursday in Class</b>
Week 6	Deviance	Read Real World Chapter 6 InQuizitive Lesson 6
Week 7	Social Class	Read Real World Chapter 7 InQuizitive Lesson 7
Week 8	Race and Ethnicity	Read Real World Chapter 8 InQuizitive Lesson 8
Week 9	Constructing Gender/Sexuality	Read Real World Chapter 9 InQuizitive Lesson 9
Week 10	Spring Break	Relax
Week 11	Politics, Education and Religion	Read Real World Chapter 10 InQuizitive Lesson 10 <b>Exam 2 on Thursday in Class</b>
Week 12	The Economy and Work	Read Real World Chapter 11 InQuizitive Lesson 11
Week 13	The Family	Read Real World Chapter 12 InQuizitive Lesson 12
Week 14	Leisure and the Media	Read Real World Chapter 13 InQuizitive Lesson 13
Week 15	Health and Illness	Read Real World Chapter 14 InQuizitive Lesson 14
Week 16	Populations, Cities and the Environment	Read Real World Chapter 15 InQuizitive Lesson 15

Finals		<b>Exam 3 during Finals Time Slot</b> Date, Time and Location: TBA
--------	--	---

\*\*\*Course calendar is subject to change at the Professor's discretion.