

Introduction to Sociology
Fall, 2005
Bowling Green State University

“Sociology is not a spectator sport. There is not you and society. There is you, in which society lives. And there is society, in which you live. If you are concerned about an issue, that produces a reality; if you are unconcerned, that produces another reality. There is no way that you can be ineffectual. You and I are the terms of society.”

– with thanks to M. Ventura

Instructor: Dr. Robert Garot, Ph.D. UCLA

Office: 209 Williams Hall

Office Hours: 1-2 Tuesday and Thursday

Course Objectives

Sociology is about windows and mirrors: windows on the worlds of others, which in turn help us see ourselves in new ways. Through this course, I hope that you may come to see both yourself and others through fresh eyes. Specifically, we will apply the sociological imagination to such topics as class, deviance, race, gender, the family and global stratification. This will be achieved through the practices of the liberal arts: reading and writing, investigation and analysis, lecture and discussion. Through this course, students should become more sensitive, informed, and critical members of our society.

Required Readings

There are three required textbooks for the course:

Newman, David M. 2004. Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Ruane, Janet M. and Karen A. Cerulo. 2004. Second Thoughts: Seeing Conventional Wisdom Through the Sociological Eye. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

DeVita, Philop R. and James D. Armstrong. 2002. Distant Mirrors: America as a Foreign Culture. Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thompson.

These are available in the campus bookstore. Additional background readings are provided for students who wish to read further on the week's topic. Also, be sure to check the class website frequently for announcements.

Attendance and Etiquette

Attendance and participation in lecture are integral to this course. Because we will discuss materials not included in the readings, it is essential that you attend every class meeting. I will encourage you to participate in multiple ways during lectures, so come prepared. If you choose to disrupt the class, I will stop the class and wait for you to leave as a courtesy to the other students. This applies especially to the use of cellular phones.

Exams

There will be three multiple choice exams: two midterms and one final. I will drop your lower midterm grade, and double your higher midterm grade. Both midterms will be non-cumulative,

covering the immediately proceeding material, but the final will be cumulative. Exams will be based on lectures and readings from the textbooks. No make-up exams will be given, so you must conform to the times as scheduled for the midterm and final. Further details about the midterm and final exams will be discussed in class.

The Paper

One paper is required for this course, in which you are to analyze a personal experience in terms of the content from one week of the course readings. *The paper is due Thursday, September 29th*. If you are not pleased with your grade, you may revise your paper and hand it in on the last day of class, December 8th, *with the first paper with comments, attached*. In brief, the paper must be typed and double-spaced, and conform to the page length requirements, with one inch margins and a 12-point font; creativity with margins or font sizes should not be attempted. All pages must be stapled together, without special covers or folders, with your topic in the upper right corner of the first page. *No electronic versions will be accepted*. I will be happy to discuss your paper, but I will not read preliminary drafts. Further details about the term paper will be discussed in class.

Discussion/Participation

Discussion boards are available for each week of class, except for the first week and the two weeks after the paper is due. *The deadline for submitting posts is Monday at midnight, as noted on the schedule below*. Each week, your teaching assistant will check that you have submitted 3 questions, and posted at least three responses to other students' posts. Your weekly contribution to the discussion board will be based on the following rubric:

- 10 Well thought out, original, complete.
- 9 Overall, a fine job, with some gaps in thinking.
- 8 Inconsistent, unclear understanding of readings.
- 7 Missing one or more posts.
- 6 Missing two or more posts.
- 5-0 No posts, or marginal/inappropriate posts.

Grading Policy

You will not be graded on a competitive basis, so in theory everyone can do well in the class. However, to earn a top grade, you will be expected to achieve standards of excellence in your work. Points will be distributed as follows:

Mid-Term #1: 25%

Mid-Term Exam #2: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

Discussion/Participation: 10%

Paper: 15%

A: 89.5-100 B: 79.5-89.49 C: 69.5-79.49 D: 55-69.49

Cheating/Plagiarism

Familiarize yourself with the BGSU Academic Honesty Policy on pages 18-27 of the Student Handbook. Any student who violates this policy will be referred directly to the academic dean.

Academic Assistance

Your first source of assistance should be other students in class. Be sure to exchange phone numbers with others, and form study groups. Secondly, come see me during office hours, or contact me with your questions via email. In addition to myself, following are some of the resources available on campus to assist you:

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Writers Laboratory	303 Mosley Hall	22221
Study Skills Laboratory	213 Mosley Hall	28840
Office of Academic Enhancement,	101 University Hall	28943
Counseling Center	320 SaddleMire Student Services Bldg.	22081

Calendar

Please note that the following schedule is tentative, and may change based on how quickly we cover the material. **Be sure to read the assigned materials prior to the day when they are assigned.**

Part I: Seeing Sociologically

Week 1: The Sociological Imagination: 30 pages

August 23rd and 25th

Newman, Ch. 1

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 1-10

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 27-31, The Nacirema

Paper: Begin thinking about the personal experience you will write about.

Week 2: Seeing and Thinking Sociologically: 43 pages

August 30th and September 1st

Newman, Ch. 2

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 41-48, Love Knows No Reason

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 1-3, 100% American

Paper: Write a rough draft of your personal experience.

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by August 29th.

Week 3: The Social Construction of Knowledge: 53 pages

September 6th and 8th

Newman, Ch. 3

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 13-20, Basic Methods Terms

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 32-36, The Koktel Parti

Paper: Write a 1-2 page summary of the readings which you will use to analyze your personal experience.

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by September 5th.

Week 4: Culture and History: 55 pages

September 13th and 15th

Newman, Ch. 4

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 23-28, Winning is Everything

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 4-23, American Cultural Configuration

Paper: Write a 1-2 page analysis of your personal experience using ideas from the readings.

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by September 12th.

Week 5: Deviance: 60 pages

September 20th and 22nd

Newman, Ch. 8

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 157-164, Honesty is the Best Policy

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 162-176, Learning to Hug

Paper: Write an introduction with a thesis, and a conclusion.

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by September 19th.

Mid-Term Review: September 27th

Mid-Term #1: September 29th

Paper due September 29th

Part II: Self and Society

Week 7: Socialization: 52 pages

October 4th and 6th

Newman, Ch. 5

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 77-88, What's in a Name?

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 44-49, Growing up American

Discussion Board: No Required Discussion This Week

Fall Break: October 11th

Week 8-9: The Presentation of Self: 50 pages

October 13th and 18th

Newman, Ch. 6

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 89-98, Beauty is only Skin Deep

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 68-73, Individualism

Discussion Board: No Required Discussion This Week

Week 9-10: Intimacy and Families: 64 pages

October 20th and 25th

Newman, Ch. 7

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 165-184, U.S. Families and Marriage

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by October 20th.

Week 10-11: Education: 28 pages

October 27th and November 1st

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 221-232

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 122-138

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by October 27th.

Mid-Term Review: November 3rd

Mid-Term #2: November 8th

Final Paper Revisions Due November 10th

Part III: United by Divisions

Week 12-13: Social Stratification: 54 pages

November 10th and 15th

Newman, Ch. 10

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 99-112 (optional)

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by November 9th.

Week 13-14: Race and Ethnicity: 61 pages

November 17th and 22nd

Newman, Ch. 11

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 199-208, Immigration

DeVita and Armstrong, pp. 102-109, Reflections on Ethnic Labels

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by November 16th.

Thanksgiving Break: November 24th

Week 15: Sex and Gender: 45 pages

November 29th and December 1st

Newman, Ch. 12

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 113-124, You've Come a Long Way Baby

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by November 28th.

Week 16: Social Change: 42 pages

December 6th and 8th

Newman, Ch. 14

Ruane and Cerulo, pp. 211-218, Technology

Discussion Board: Three questions and three responses due by December 5th.

Final Exams

Regular Class Meeting Time

T, Th, 11:30-12:45

T, Th, 2:30-3:45

T, Th, 4:00-5:15

Final Exam Meeting Time

Mon., Dec. 12, 10:45-12:45

Wed., Dec. 14, 3:30-5:30

Thurs., Dec. 15, 3:30-5:30

Term Paper Guidelines

Your term paper will be comprised of three sections: a one paragraph introduction with a thesis statement, a 2-3 page *description* of your personal experience, a 1-2 page *summary* of the relevant material from the course for your topic, a 1-2 page *discussion* of your experience in light of the readings, and a one page conclusion. Do not use any sources from outside of class for this paper. Deadlines are provided to help you stay on track.

A. Write a rough draft of your personal experience (Deadline: September 1st)

First, think of an experience from your life to analyze sociologically. Perhaps you've had trouble finding a job, like André, or a personal relationship took an unexpected twist, as with Michael and Carole (Newman, 2004:2-3). Or, perhaps you've had a memorable experience coming to recognize your own class position, or experiencing or observing racism, sexism, or deviance. You will probably need to discuss with me or a classmate before you are sure of your topic. Remember that the more gripping the experience was for you, the more likely it is to interest your reader. Examples from previous classes include:

- Maria, who attended an elite, East Coast prep school, wrote about how a summer camp experience with less fortunate young women helped her to recognize her privileged class position.
- Sahir, a woman from India, wrote about how her father, a doctor, was refused service and subjected to racial slurs while looking for a BMW. Later, he bought a more expensive car, and made a point of driving by the BMW dealership to demonstrate his class status.
- Adam, who played basketball on a team composed of white suburban players, wrote of how his team was soundly defeated by an inner-city, African-American team. After the game, his coach refused to shake hands with the opposing coach, and remarked to his players, "That's OK, some day they'll all be working for us."

Now that you have a sense of your topic, *brainstorm*. Write down everything that comes to mind concerning that experience, without any concern for order or coherence. You may think of this step as a web or a free association of ideas. Once you run out of ideas, look over what you've jotted down, and begin to organize it. This could be as simple as writing numbers next to each "blurb," to note the sequence of your description. You may wish to make an *outline* as a road map for your *first draft*. In that draft, describe your experience in as much detail as possible. Instead of summarizing the gist of what was said, try to use exact quotations if what was said was memorable and important. Describe the scene using all five senses, and try to make your characters memorable.

B. Summarize the Relevant Material for Your Topic (Deadline: September 8th)

Find a topic in the course readings that fits your personal experience, and type up all major points. This is akin to the brainstorming work you did for your personal experience, except that this time the process is easier, as the ideas are coming from the text, as opposed to your memories. Next, just as you did for your personal experience, order each of the major points from your notes. You may not wish to emphasize the same points as the readings, or you may wish to order the points differently. Think through the best way to move logically from one concept to the next. Once you have an *outline* of this section, begin writing your first draft.

Again, you may wish to quote especially relevant points, but do not make your paper simply a series of quotes.

For instance, if you are writing about how you came to recognize your class position, you will need to explain what you mean by social class, and how various authors in class have analyzed social class. Avoid the “kitchen sink” approach: merely repeating everything we learned on your topic. Instead, focus particularly on those concepts that are most relevant for understanding your personal experiences. Demonstrate that you understand these concepts, and pose a central question which your descriptions of your personal experiences will address.

C. Make Connections between your Summary and your Personal Experience (Deadline, September 15th)

Now that you have both a description of your personal experience (data) and a summary of the relevant material from class (theory), work to find linkages between the two. You may find that:

- Your data brings to light new ideas, not considered in the theory. Use your data to enhance and expand the theory.
- Your data brings home some key points in the theory. Use your data exemplify key concepts from class.
- Theory provides a wider scope and relevance to your data. Now, thanks to the materials from class, you *see* your personal experience in a new light. Discuss your new awareness.
- Your data contradicts ideas from class. Use your data to refute materials from the readings.

Whichever strategy you choose, be sure that it reflect a *firm grasp* of the readings, and that it is *logical and well argued*.

D. Revise your Personal Experience and your Summary of the Relevant Readings (Deadline, September 20th)

Check out the general writing guidelines attached to this syllabus. Check that the organization, spelling, grammar, and punctuation is sound. Switch papers with a classmate, and provide comments. Show your paper to a writing tutor, and revise further.

E. Write an Introduction to the Paper (Deadline: September 22nd)

Now that you have written the body of your paper, you should be clear on what to include in the introduction. An introduction should be simple and explicit, and describe what you are going to do, and in what order. It should provide a complete “road map” for the rest of the paper. Tell your reader something about the concepts you will explore, the experience you will describe, what you will focus on in the paper, what points you will be making, what you will argue, and what you will conclude. It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person voice and say, “I will focus on ...”, after all, who is writing this paper anyway?

Begin your paper with what journalists refer to as a *lead*: a quote, anecdote or insight to capture and guide the reader’s attention. You should then explain what your paper will do in a thesis statement, in which you *state your concluding argument*. A common form of a thesis statement begins, “This paper will...” An analytic essay is not mystery novel; all arguments should be

clearly stated at the outset. Also, even though your reader will be familiar with the assignment and the readings, you should write as if she is not.

F. Write a Conclusion (Deadline: September 27th)

The conclusion is the most creative part of your paper, where you can express fresh ideas. You may wish to:

- Discuss what you learned from this assignment. What do you know after completing this assignment which you didn't know before?
- Recommend future directions for research. Based on the theory and data you've presented, what future research topics do you propose?
- Discuss C&C: caveats and challenges. What are the shortcomings of your analysis, and could you recommend a more rigorous research program (a survey, experiment, or ethnography) to address these shortcomings?

G. Revise, Revise, Revise (Final Draft Due September 29th)

Very few writers are able to complete a final paper on the first draft. The better the parts of your paper fit together into a coherent whole, the better your paper smoothly flows from point to point without errors in spelling and grammar, the better you will do. This paper will not be graded on a curve, and I would love to give everyone an A.

H. Grading

Your papers will be graded based on the following rubric:

- 15: A thoughtful, creative, articulate work, demonstrating sound knowledge of the readings and good use of sociological concepts, wonderfully integrated with personal experiences.
- 14: Well written, with some minor flaws. Good use of readings and concepts with minimal errors. Personal experiences could use some revision and reorganization.
- 13: Some errors evident in use of readings and concepts, and some problems in description of personal experiences, but a good effort. Overall, the paper makes sense despite the errors.
- 12: Errors are noticeable and interfere with intelligibility. Some concepts may be used incorrectly, and some of the personal experiences may be poorly described or irrelevant to the topic, but the assignment is complete.
- 11: Errors are substantial, and interfere with the logic and intelligibility of the analysis. The description of the personal experience may be unclear or incoherent, and concepts from the readings are not clearly described and applied to the experience.
- 10 and below: Paper is shoddy: probably written at the last minute, with little relevance to the course.
- 0: Plagiarized papers or papers downloaded off the internet.

General Writing Guidelines*

Format and Presentation

Do not skip lines between paragraphs (like I'm doing here). Use Times New Roman or CG Times as your font, 12-point size. Papers must be typewritten, double-spaced with approximately 1" margins. Number all pages. Papers must be stapled. This means no plastic

binders, no folding the edges together and no paper clips. Do not use a cover page. Your name and student ID# (P00#), class meeting time, and paper topic should appear in the upper right corner, and the title should appear in the center of the page. A bibliography is a necessary part of a research paper (see Citation, below), and should be attached at the end. Papers which egregiously fail to follow these guidelines will be returned to the authors without a grade.

General Organization

You should make sure that you read the paper assignment instructions and follow them closely. The most important feature of your paper is that you adequately address your chosen topic. No matter how good your ideas are, if can't demonstrate your understanding of the question, and give an answer to it in your paper, then you will not do well.

The body of the paper must be well organized. *Label each section of your paper as follows in bold: Introduction, Personal Experience, Summary of Readings, Discussion, Conclusion.* You must use paragraphs to divide your thoughts. A paragraph is a set of sentences with one common idea. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and make one main point. Your argument should flow logically from one paragraph to the next. Please use subheadings if they are appropriate or help the reader navigate through different sections of the paper. I should be able to make sense of your paper, in a general way, by reading the introduction, the first sentence of each paragraph, and the conclusion.

Citation

This is sometimes tricky, but by this point in your academic career, it is essential that you do it correctly. It is expected that you will use material from the texts and lecture to analyze your subject. Thus, whether you use direct quotes or paraphrases, you must give credit to the authors of those words, when they are not your own.

If you cite a lecture, do it this way: (Lecture, 11/30/04). However, relying solely on lecture citations for material that is also in the readings reveals to me that your familiarity with the readings is inadequate. So you should be sure to prioritize. Where appropriate, always cite the original source and not my delivery of it in lecture.

In the text, directly quoted course materials from the textbook or reader should be cited in one of the following ways:

“The stereotypes that we learn not only justify prejudice and discrimination but also can produce the behavior depicted in the stereotype” (Henslin, 2001:331).

Or alternately:

James Henslin (2001:331) suggests that, “The stereotypes that we learn not only justify prejudice and discrimination but also can produce the behavior depicted in the stereotype.”

Also, be sure to cite any ideas that you borrow, not just quoted text. For instance:

Many analysts have noted how stereotypes may produce the behavior they depict (Henslin, 2001:331).

When citing from the reader, use the author of the particular article, rather than Ferguson, who is the editor, as in the following:

“To Hawaiians, daily life is neither soft nor kind.” (Trask, 2005:112).

Any direct quotation that is longer than three lines needs to be set off from the body of the paper by indenting and single-spacing. Since your papers will be double-spaced and indented only to begin paragraphs, you will see the contrast. Be careful to differentiate between what the textbook authors are saying themselves, and the other authors that they may in turn quote. Cite accordingly. Do not string quotes together without putting them in context with your own prose. When you use a direct quote, place it in the context of a sentence that includes an explanation of what the quote means and why it is useful in service of the point you are making.

A full reference, including the author’s name, book or article title, publishing information and page numbers will appear in a separate, alphabetically organized bibliography at the end of the paper, under the heading, “References.” Check the reference sections in Newman (pages 537-578), Ruane and Cerulo (pages 239-287), or any of the articles in DeVita and Armstrong as examples.

Style

In general, write as simply as possible. Never use a big word, when a little one will do. Big words don’t necessarily convey intellectual prowess, especially when they are awkwardly used. Your word choice should be appropriate to formal writing: no slang, and no contractions (“can’t”, “don’t”), unless you are quoting others or it somehow better helps you to make your point. You must use words that actually exist, and words must be used correctly. Look up definitions and spellings if you are unsure. Spell check often misses words.

Avoid using the indefinite “you.” You will notice that I am addressing these instructions to you; that is, I am using the second person. That is because I am giving these instructions to a definite person or set of persons. In your papers, unless you mean to address the reader directly, do not use “you” when you mean to use “one” or “we.” Refer to yourself as “I” in describing your experience, and as “we” in your analysis. It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person singular in papers – it is not too informal. Use “we” for the author and the reader together: “We have seen how breaching experiments disturb our taken-for-granted notions about reality.” Never refer to “society” as an active agent (that’s my pet peeve), as in, “Society requires that people follow norms.”

Avoid “a lot” (and by the way it’s not spelled “alot”), and “very.” Hemingway and Morrison do not need them, and neither do you. Don’t confuse “their/there/they’re” or “it’s/its”, or “to/two/too”, or were/we’re/where”, etc. Also please differentiate between “suppose” and “supposed.” These are not interchangeable, and are almost always improperly applied. These are sets of words that give students trouble, so please be careful.

Try to avoid using “he”, “his”, or “mankind” to mean anyone or all in general. If for some reason you have a strong ideological commitment to using “he” as the generic, you may do so, but it is not accurate, and there are other options available.

Make sure that nouns and verbs agree in number. Avoid sentence fragments. Make sure that the sentences you write have subjects and predicates. Verbs are also necessary. Do not leave a clause hanging without these necessary components. Avoid run-on sentences. Make sure that if you link things together in a sentence that you do so by using the proper connective words or punctuation marks. These kinds of mistakes can often be caught by reading your paper aloud. If it sounds wrong, it probably is.

Always follow the parsimony principle. That is, use as few words as possible to make your point.

Process

One way to start is by saying your ideas out loud, and writing them down. Just get the words out of your head and onto the page where you will be able to work with them more easily. I strongly suggest that you write more than one draft of your paper. Most successful papers are begun well in advance of the night before the assignment is due. The best way to start is to just spew out a messy first draft, getting all of your ideas and facts down on paper (if you write long-hand) or your computer screen (if you prefer to word process). Then, a second draft will help you to organize the sections, focus your argument, and refine the content and style.

You must be at this point before you come to see me about your paper. Although I will be unable to read entire drafts, I may be able to discuss with you specific parts of your thesis or analysis, and/or help you with difficulties in transitions between ideas or sections of your argument. Be sure that all spelling and grammatical errors, and the formatting the paper are correct in the final draft. You must proofread your own paper. It is not acceptable to turn in a paper with typographical errors, misspellings, nouns and verbs that do not agree, misused words, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, etc. You may want to rewrite the beginning or end of your paper in the last draft. Often in composing your paper, you will have changed your focus or ideas somewhat by the time you finish. You will want to make sure that these changes are reflected in a new version of your introduction or conclusion.

Finally, re-read your own paper and imagine that someone else wrote it. Does it make sense? Fix it, if it doesn't. You may also want to get someone else to read your paper and give you comments. It is often hard to be objective when you are so close in the writing process. If you have trouble with your writing, get help. I am happy to help you in office hours or by appointment, and the campus has a variety of tutoring services available to you.

Good luck, and start writing now!

*This document adapted with thanks from Dr. Kerry Ferris' Case Study Essay Guidelines.