

SOCIOLOGY, USC, COLUMBIA

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SPRING 2024

SOCIOLOGY 101.1: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY TR 11:40AM – 12:55PM *Erin Davenport*

This interactive class will push students to question the society they live in. Things that seem “just the way things are” have underlying structural and societal significance. In SOCY 101 we will peel back those layers and try to make sense of the world around us using lenses of different theoretical perspectives. Curiosity is key to enjoying this class!

SOCIOLOGY 101.2 INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Professor Brent Simpson*

TEXT: *A Sociology Experiment* (available for one dollar per chapter here: www.sociologyexperiment.com).

CONTENT: This course is a selective survey of sociology. One of the many great things about sociology is its breadth. But that also makes it impossible to cover all the issues that deserve attention in a survey course. Thus, our coverage will be selective. We will focus primarily on questions related to how social order exists (and why it sometimes breaks down); the powerful roles that gender, race, and social class play in your life, how you view the world, and how others view you; and some of the many ways that social networks and other social forces powerfully impact your life (for better or worse), including whether you’ll be happy and whether (and whom) you will marry. The overall goal will be to help you understand how to think like a sociologist and how sociology can be used to make the world better and more interesting.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades will be based on three quizzes (1/3 of your grade) and three exams (2/3 of your grade).

SOCIOLOGY 101.4: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY TR 4:25PM – 5:40PM Erin Davenport

SOCIOLOGY 101.5: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY TR 10:05AM – 11:20AM Professor Joseph Quinn

This course is a broad introduction to the field of sociology. Throughout the semester, we will practice taking a sociological perspective – assessing the effects of context, social forces, and society on individuals, and the effects of individual behavior on shaping social environments. We will discuss how knowledge accumulates in social science by discussing sociological methods of research. Due to the breadth of the discipline of sociology, this course will take a topical approach – discussing some of the most important lines of inquiry in the field.

SOCIOLOGY 101.H01: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Professor Laura Brashears*
Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students

Each of us has an idea of what is meant by the word “society:” the people we live with, the work we do, and the government agencies that touch our lives. We live in particular places, work at specific businesses, and belong to our own groups. And while we must experience society from our own individual perspectives, none of those individual perspectives can encompass the totality of each of our experiences. Sociologists seek to examine the social world through an objective lens, rising above individual experiences to understand the whole. In other words, sociologists do not take the world before their eyes for granted; rather, we use scientific methods to gain a deeper understanding of how “society is inside of man and man is inside society.”

No social endeavor is off-limits to sociologists; we study religion, education, the family, the self, crime, work, economics, politics, organizations, demographic shifts, gender, race and ethnicity and social movements, among other things. We even study how science itself operates as a social entity.

In this course, I will introduce you to a lot of facts that sociologists have collected within quite a few of these areas. While I think these facts are interesting, and important (or I wouldn’t bother teaching them!), I am much more concerned with teaching you how to step

back and examine your world from an “outsider’s” perspective. In other words, you will learn to use the “sociological imagination”, a faculty that allows us to see the way the world is, and to imagine how it might have been, or might become, different. Once you do so, you will be able to develop a deeper understanding of how social factors have influenced you in the past and will continue to influence you in the future.

SOCIOLOGY 101.H02: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **TR** **2:50PM – 4:05PM** ***Professor Laura Brashears***
Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students

SOCIOLOGY 101.H03: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **TR** **4:25PM – 5:40PM** ***Professor Shane Thyne***
Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students

CONTENT: This survey course covers many aspects of modern sociology. The course begins with an overview of the origins of sociology. Then the course covers a survey of sociological research methods and the role of science in sociology. Theoretical perspectives on social life are covered along with sociological treatments of societal institutions. Theories of socialization, deviance, family, group dynamics and organizations are also covered. Student assessment takes the form of four examinations and a short film assignment. Students should gain a grasp of the role of social structures on individual lives and an understanding of the role of sociology in the modern world.

SOCIOLOGY 101.J10: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **ONLINE** **TBA** ***Hanne Van Der Iest***

This Carolina Core course will give you a broad introduction to the field of sociology. Throughout the semester, we will practice taking a sociological perspective – assessing the effects of context, social forces, and society on individuals, and the effects of individual behavior on shaping social environments. Due to the breadth of the discipline of sociology, we will take a topical approach – discussing some of the most important lines of inquiry in the field.

This 100% online course is divided into 14 Modules, covering a range of sociological topics. Each Module contains video lectures, readings, and other media. Each Module also contains a guide detailing its learning goals and the sequence in which materials should be covered. To be successful in this course, you will need to critically process the assigned materials, take diligent notes, and summarize main concepts. Each Module, you will be assessed with a class participation assignment, homework, and a timed test.

SOCIOLOGY 101.J12: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **ONLINE** **TBA** ***Hanne Van Der Iest***

SOCIOLOGY 101.J13: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **ONLINE** **TBA** ***Hanne Van Der Iest***

SOCIOLOGY 101.J14: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY **ONLINE** **TBA** ***Hanne Van Der Iest***

SOCIOLOGY 301.1: SEX & GENDER **TR** **2:50PM – 4:05PM** ***Erin Davenport***

Offers a sociological lens to develop critical ways of thinking about sex and gender as social processes in everyday lives. Students will explore different theories about sex and gender, as well as think about how they operate as social categories in intuitions like government, media, education etc. Students should take this course if they are looking to explore these ideas in a participation-heavy and application-based manner.

SOCIOLOGY 305.1: SOCIOLOGY OF FAMILIES TR 11:40AM – 12:55PM *Professor Jennifer Augustine*

CONTENT: This course focuses on families in the contemporary U.S. from a sociological perspective. We will do so by examining theories and empirical research on the family as a social institution. We begin the course by discussing the U.S. family in historical context, then fast forward to exploring changes in the family over the past several decades and the reasons underlying these changes. Lecture and discussions will address topics such as demographic changes in marital patterns, women's fertility behaviors, the role of women's paid employment and its connection to domestic work and caregiving, the social roles of mothers and fathers, the relationship between parents and their children, and the emergence and significance of "new" family forms, including interracial, same-sex, cohabiting unions, and transnational families. More broadly, we will also examine differences in family life along dimensions of social class, race and ethnic background, and gender, and debate questions about whether recent changes in family life are "good" or "bad." We will conclude with a debate on the future of the family.

SOCIOLOGY 320.1: INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY TR 6:00PM – 7:15PM *Professor Shane Thye*

CONTENT: This course is a broad introduction to social psychology. Particular emphasis is placed on the way groups have an effect on human thought and behavior. We examine topics such as perception, status structures, decision making, cults, persuasion, aggression, love, conflict, resolution, and many more.

REQUIREMENTS: There are three in-class exams, each of the same relative weight. While there will be no cumulative final exam you will find that the concepts in this course will necessarily cumulate. Pop quizzes are given in class and a number of short papers are assigned.

FORMAT: Lecture and discussion

SOCIOLOGY 330.1: SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARANORMAL TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Megan Routh*

"Using theories and frameworks from sociological social psychology as well as sociology of culture, race, and gender, this course will examine why people believe in and interact with paranormal and horror content, who is most likely to do so, and how the sharing of paranormal information is relevant to current discourse about present-day events. We will also examine how paranormal stories and practices can reinforce or repair social inequities."

SOCIOLOGY 360.Y01: SOCIOLOGY OF MEDICINE & HEALTH TBA *Professor Andrea Henderson-Platt*

SOCIOLOGY 360.1: SOCIOLOGY OF MEDICINE & HEALTH MW 2:20PM – 3:35PM TBA

SOCIOLOGY 391.1: SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS TR 2:50PM – 4:05PM *Professor Rebekah Broussard*

Introduction to the methods of social science research, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

SOCIOLOGY 392.1: ELEMENTARY STATISTICS FOR SOCIOLOGISTS TR 11:40AM- 12:55PM *Professor Jun Zhao*

This course is intended to provide an introduction to basic statistical techniques used by researchers to investigate social, economic, and political phenomena. The statistical techniques you will learn are really just tools to effectively organize data and present information about the world.

By the end of this semester, you too will be skilled enough in the art of statistics to address these types of questions. Just as important, however, this course is designed to help you become informed consumers of social statistics. This will involve attaining an awareness of

the many uses of statistics in everyday life, gaining the ability to think critically about the use of statistics, and developing the skills necessary to interpret and critique social scientific research employing these techniques.

SOCIOLOGY 393.1: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY TR 10:05AM – 11:20AM *Erin Davenport*

This course will focus on ideas about society and the way it works that span different contexts and time periods. Students will engage in frequent discussion with peers and deep textual analysis to build confidence in how to theorize and how to engage with theory.

SOCIOLOGY 540.J50: SOCIOLOGY OF LAW TBA *Professor Mathieu Deflem*

This is an online distributed-learning course delivered through Blackboard (100% Web Asynchronous). The course reviews the most important developments in the sociology of law, including both theoretical perspectives and empirical themes. Successive sections of the course specifically focus on: classical contributions in the sociology of law; chapters in modern sociology of law; and a selection of empirical themes of law and law-related processes and structures, including: law and economy; law, democracy, and politics; law and culture; social structure and law; legality and legitimacy; the legal profession; law and social control; and the globalization of law. The approach of the course is rooted in sociological theory.

SOCIOLOGY 557.1: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION & INEQUALITY TR 10:05AM – 11:20AM *Professor Laura Brashears*

Are schools the great equalizer in the United States? We will tackle this “big question” in Sociology of Education and Inequality this semester. To tackle this question, we will first need to think about what we believe education is. We have all had experiences at school, and have developed beliefs about how schools work, why some people achieve more at school, why certain groups have systematically different educational outcomes, and how we might change or improve our education system.

In this class, we will challenge and expand our preexisting beliefs of these issues, by critically engaging with literature in sociology and elsewhere. I encourage you to use our conversations to broaden your understanding of how education works as we think about the role of school structure, families, cultural and social capital, and social networks in creating and reproducing inequality, and then turn our attention to imagining workable solutions to such inequality.

**SOCIOLOGY 557.H10: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION & INEQUALITY TR 10:05AM – 11:20AM *Professor Laura Brashears*
*Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students***

SOCIOLOGY 561.1: REAL WORLD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE MW 2:20PM – 3:35PM *Professor Jaclyn Wong*

In this course students will apply their knowledge of sociological research methods to conduct one quantitative and one qualitative research project. For the first project, students will download, clean, describe, and run bivariate and OLS/logistic regression analyses of General Social Survey (GSS) data. Graduate students may analyze a dataset of their choosing. For the second project, students will design an interview guide, conduct face-to-face interviews, code transcripts, and produce an analysis of themes on a topic of their choice. Both projects require students to write up a scholarly report of their findings. Graduate students will produce reports in the structure of an academic journal article. At the end of the semester, students will make a PowerPoint presentation based on their projects for a virtual research symposium. Grades are based on intermediate assignments building up to the final written research projects, the two final research reports, and the PowerPoint presentation.

SOCIOLOGY 598.1: COGNITIVE MODELS OF CULTURAL DYNAMICS TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Professor Joseph Quinn*

In this graduate-level seminar, students will examine current theories and research about the causes and consequences of cultural meanings (i.e., beliefs), and generate predictions about cognitively plausible determinants of cultural change. The dominant perspective in research on culture emphasizes its stability; by contrast, the main goal of the course is to rigorously interrogate this perspective to develop testable ideas for explaining moments of cultural change – events that are generally viewed as exceptions to the stability rule. Most of our time will be spent discussing readings in cognitive science and social psychology about the mechanisms associated with, and the behavioral implications of, cultural reproduction. Throughout the course, we will strive to link each set of readings back to key theoretical and methodological issues in efforts to study whether, when, and how cultural change might occur.

SOCIOLOGY 729.1: INTERVIEW METHODS MW 3:55PM – 5:10PM *Professor Jaclyn Wong*

In this course students will design and conduct a research project using qualitative interview methods. First, students will learn how to pose appropriate research questions that can be answered with in-depth interview data. Then, students will select an appropriate interview sample and design an interview guide. Next, students will practice virtual and in-person face-to-face interviewing techniques. Finally, students will learn qualitative coding skills, produce an analysis, and write up findings in a format appropriate for a scholarly journal. Throughout the course students will also read exemplary research highlighting class topics, ethics, and reflexivity. Grades are based on intermediate assignments building up to the final written research paper.

SOCIOLOGY 731.1: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SOCIOLOGICAL DATA TR 11:40AM– 12:55PM *Professor Matthew Brashears*

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to more exotic versions of linear models allowing the analysis of data that do not conform to the assumptions of OLS regression. OLS is a powerful technique but makes a number of assumptions that are difficult or impossible to substantiate in many real-world applications. As a consequence, its versatility is more apparent than real. We will explore a variety of alternative “flavors” of regression, as well as one non-regression-based technique, allowing the researcher to address questions in these alternative cases. We will not have time to cover all possible models but will instead explore a selection of models based on their utility in conducting social research and/or their conceptual usefulness in introducing classes of models. We will also learn about implementations of these techniques in Stata.

By the completion of class (i.e., our course objectives) students should be familiar with multiple non-OLS approaches to data analysis, be capable of using these techniques to analyze unfamiliar data and should have continued to develop their skills with appropriate statistical software.
