

# SOC 101.60: Introduction to Sociology

General Education Competency Areas: Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing, Diversity

## Instructor Information

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(Zoom link for office hours: <https://lcsc.zoom.us/j/84258147040>)

## Course Description

This online course is an introduction to the basic concepts, theoretical perspectives, and substantive issues in sociology. You will learn about culture and socialization, social interactions and institutions, social stratification, and social change in order to develop new ways of understanding your life and the diverse lives of others in the context of the broader society. This process will involve your active engagement with assigned readings, online learning materials, and online discussions.

## Engagement Requirements

Regular, active engagement is the key to your success in online classes such as this one. What does this involve? It means checking into the class *several times a week* to carefully read announcements so that you know what is happening each week, including the deadlines for quizzes, discussions, exams, etc. It involves becoming *very familiar* with provided resources, such as this syllabus and other information posted in the modules (particularly the Important Course Resources module and the Week 1 module) so that you are well versed in the course requirements and policies. It means carving out *plenty of time* in your weekly schedule to engage with the course materials (readings, virtual lectures, videos, etc.) in such a way that you can thoughtfully contribute to discussions and do well on quizzes and exams. In summary, it means being just as closely engaged in this class as you would be in an on-campus class—and probably even more so given that online learning requires you to structure your own time in order to get the required work done. Please be very mindful of these points as you begin this course. I want to see you start strong and continue to do well throughout the semester.

## General Education Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to help you develop the competencies stipulated by the Idaho State Board of Education for the Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing component of the General Education Core. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of a particular Social Science discipline (sociology).
- ii. Develop an understanding of self and the world by examining the dynamic interaction of individuals, groups, and societies as they shape and are shaped by history, culture, institutions, and ideas.
- iii. Utilize Social Science approaches, such as research methods, inquiry, or problem solving, to examine the variety of perspectives about human experiences.
- iv. Evaluate how reasoning, history, or culture informs and guides individual, civic, or global decisions.
- v. Understand and appreciate similarities and differences among and between individuals, cultures, or societies across space and time.

This course is also designed to help you achieve required learning outcomes for the Diversity component of the General Education Core. In this regard, upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate the effect of culture on human behavior.

2. Compare one's own worldview with another worldview.
3. Demonstrate how sameness and difference, as constituted through intersections of social categories (e.g. racial, ethnic, religious, regional, economic, and/or gendered backgrounds) shape the human experience.
4. Utilize information about human diversity from a variety of sources.

## Course-specific Learning Outcomes

This course aims to help you gain knowledge and develop skills that will aid you in becoming a critical thinker, a successful student, and an informed, engaged member of society. To this end, you will do the following, which are linked to the above General Education Learning Outcomes as noted in parentheses:

- gain knowledge of how society operates on the micro and macro levels (ii, iv, v, 1, 3, 4).
- learn how to interpret a broad range of human behaviors and social processes by applying key sociological theories and concepts (i, ii, iii, iv, v, 1, 3, 4).
- **develop what C. Wright Mills called a “sociological imagination,” enabling you to understand your life and the diverse lives of others in the context of broader historical trends and social processes** (i, ii, iv, v, 1, 2, 3, 4).
- discuss social phenomena in an informed, critical, and civil manner and in the process gain experience communicating with your peers (i, ii, iv, v, 1, 2, 3, 4).
- write evidence-based essays in which you analyze and interpret social phenomena and apply sociological theories, concepts, and insights appropriately (i, ii, iii, iv, v, 1, 2, 3, 4).

## Overall Goal

I want you to learn something new in this class. Sounds simple, right? Well, in my experience, this isn't always such an easy task. We all have so many taken-for-granted assumptions about how the world works, what constitutes reality, why people behave in certain ways, etc., that it is sometimes difficult for us to recognize when what we've “always known” is keeping us from learning more. I think that all of us—teachers and students alike—need to continually challenge ourselves to learn more about the world in which we live. I believe the way to accomplish this is by questioning popular interpretations of social phenomena, seeking out credible information that will help us answer our questions, and understanding that we can always learn more about any given topic. You should do well in this course if you approach the material with this in mind.

## My Philosophy of Learning

My philosophy of learning derives from my more basic approach to life, which can be summed up in two words: *be curious*. The mark of an active mind is *curiosity*, a genuine desire to learn more about whatever it is you're actively studying as well as the myriad of other things that cross your path or your mind during a given day. Curiosity has driven my own academic pursuits since I was an undergraduate, and that, in turn, influences how I teach and how I hope you will approach the learning process in this class. In emphasizing this quality, curiosity, I am implicitly (and now explicitly) revealing that I think learning works best as a self-motivated, internally driven process. Interestingly, this is at odds with how we (meaning the larger enterprise of formal education) tend to approach teaching and learning in the United States, in that through the process of grading, calculating GPAs, awarding scholarships, etc., we use external rewards to motivate students. I would encourage you to reflect on this and consider the degree to which your own motivation for learning and, in turn, your academic behaviors are driven by internal versus external motivations. You're probably driven by a mix of both, which is understandable given our more general cultural orientation, but I'd encourage you to try to focus on the internal motivations a bit more. In doing so, you will likely notice a perceptual shift in how your approach your schoolwork. For example, instead of *having* to read a chapter, you might find yourself being *interested in* reading a chapter in order to learn more about a given topic, or instead of cramming the night before an exam, you may begin periodically reviewing your notes and thinking about how the new concepts and theories you're learning can be applied to your own life, what you see in the news, etc. If you approach this class in this way, you will begin to see the world around you through the lens of sociology, which will undoubtedly spur further curiosity, likely beyond the bounds of what we cover in this class, and that's exactly the point: from this semester forward, you will be even more curious about the social world, which will hopefully lead to further learning throughout your life.

## Required Readings

*Reading is the cornerstone of your college experience.* Our class dynamic and your learning depend on your active engagement with the assigned readings. What does “active engagement” entail? If you’re like me, it means you may have to read certain passages several times to fully understand them, and you will definitely want to jot down notes (important points, your own insights, questions, etc.) as you read. It also requires that you block off several hours of your weekly schedule for reading for this class so that you can read entire chapters/articles in an uninterrupted fashion rather than bits and pieces in between all of the other things on your daily to-do list. Finally, it involves consciously thinking about key points from earlier readings as you encounter new ones in subsequent readings, integrating various insights as we move through the semester. When you actively engage with readings, you are building your knowledge, changing your understanding of the world, and forging new neural connections in your brain. What an amazing process we undertake when we read with such purpose!

The following **required book** is available at the LCSC Bookstore and from various booksellers online:

Andersen, Margaret L., and Howard F. Taylor. 2020. *Sociology, The Essentials*, 10<sup>th</sup> Ed. Cengage.

**In addition to the textbook, selected chapters and articles are posted on Canvas in the “Readings” module. These readings are also required, and as you’ll quickly learn, they are just as important as the textbook.**

## Assignments and Grading

**Final grades are calculated using a 200-pt. scale based on the following:**

**Quizzes - 20% (40 pts.)** You will take near-weekly quizzes in Canvas to assess your comprehension of the course material (readings, written lectures, videos, etc.). The quizzes will be comprised of approximately 10 questions and will have a time limit of 20 minutes. **Each quiz must be taken by midnight on Sunday during the week for which it is assigned.** *There will be 10 quizzes worth five points each, and your two lowest grades will be dropped.*

**Discussions: Essay Posts – 20% (40 pts.)** You are required to post a relatively brief but thorough **formal essay** in **four discussions**. These posts are worth 10 points each. **There will be a total of eight discussions over the course of the semester, and you will post in two of the first four and two of the second four – your choice of which discussions within those parameters.** (This is to help everyone pace themselves and avoid putting them all off until the second half of the semester.) **Essay posts are always due by midnight on Sundays, which means you have one week to write them.**

**Discussions: Response Posts – 10% (20 pts.)** For the discussions in which you have chosen to post an essay, **you will pick one of your classmates’ essays to respond to in a well-written paragraph or two.** You will write a total of four response posts, one in each of the discussions in which you have chosen to post an essay (i.e., two of the first four discussions and two of the second four discussions of the semester). The response posts are worth 5 points each. Responses can be posted as soon as you and others have posted in a discussion (you have to post your own essay first in order to see what others have written), but keep in mind that since essays are not due until Sunday at midnight, you may not be able to respond to anyone right away simply because others may not post until the last minute. Relatedly, note that discussions will initially close at midnight on Sundays (the deadline for essays), but I will reopen them on Monday mornings. **You will then have until midnight on Wednesday to post a response**, which means you have, at minimum, roughly two and a half days to write a response post in the discussions in which you have chosen to participate.

**Final Discussion: Essay Post – 10% (20 pts)** The final discussion of the semester will be your chance to showcase the sociological perspective you have developed over the course of the semester. *Everyone* will participate in this discussion, which takes place at the end of the semester (Week 15). **You will post an essay, and response posts will be optional.**

**Informal, asynchronous chats – 5% (10 pts)** At a few different points in the semester, you will participate in an informal, asynchronous chat with me and your classmates. These chats will take place in the “Discussions” section of Canvas, but they will not be graded as rigorously as the essays and response posts in the formal discussions. Rather, they are simply a chance for you to informally discuss a particular aspect of a topic we’re covering or to share things like study tips or general advice for how to do well in school, depending on the question(s) I pose for each one. These chats will be open

from Monday through the following Wednesday (nine days) during the weeks they are taking place, and you will receive points for contributing in a productive manner (i.e., posting in a way that shows you're engaged in the topic of the chat and interacting with your classmates in a respectful manner). **There will be three informal chats worth four points each, for a total of 12 points.** As you can see, since this portion of your grade is worth 10 points, this means *there are two extra-credit points (1% of your overall grade)* built into this component of your grade. **The dates/weeks for these chats are not predetermined at the start of the semester; they will be announced at the start of the weeks in which they occur.**

**First Exam - 15% (30 pts.)** The first examination will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or essay questions on material covered during the first part of the semester.

**Second Exam - 20% (40 pts.)** The second examination will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or essay questions on material covered during the second part of the semester.

**Extra Credit: Introductions – 1% (2 pts.)** I need to verify attendance during the first week of class, which we will do with brief introductions. These are required, and everyone who posts by the deadline will receive two points of extra credit.

**Extra Credit: Plagiarism Test – 2% (4 pts.)** You can earn extra credit by completing the Indiana University Plagiarism Tutorials and successfully passing a Certification Test. You will find the tutorials and complete instructions for how to take a test on this webpage: <https://plagiarism.iu.edu/index.html>. **You can earn this extra credit by forwarding your certification email from Indiana University to me ([leearles@lsc.edu](mailto:leearles@lsc.edu)) by the end of Week 4 (that Friday by midnight).** (Simply forward me the email they send you, which will include a certificate stating that you have passed the test. Note that you can take the test as many times as necessary if you don't pass it the first time you attempt it.)

### Important notes about the required coursework

- Please carefully read the section in this syllabus titled, **"Discussions: How they work, how they are graded, and how to do well on them,"** for details on how the discussions work and the expectations for your posts.
- **Any information from the readings and videos is fair game for quizzes and exams**, whether or not it is explicitly covered in our discussions or in the virtual lectures I post. Also, be aware that **in the virtual lectures, I sometimes introduce ideas not covered in the textbook, other readings, or videos, and I may explain certain concepts in a slightly different way, so it is essential for you to read both the assigned readings and the virtual lectures** (you can also listen to the virtual lectures if you like, but I recommend reading them, too).
- **Review sheets will be posted in advance of the exams**, and prior to that, important concepts, theories, and key points for each broad topic will be included on the Overview page of each weekly module in Canvas, so you'll be aware of the especially important information to focus on as you read and take notes.
- **The weekly quizzes cover the readings, Powerpoint slides, and lectures for each week; they are not cumulative.** They tend to emphasize key terms (specific concepts, theories, and methods) and their application.
- **Quizzes and exams are open-note and open-book, but they will be timed, so you must be well prepared for them and pace yourself while taking them in order to do well.** Their intended purpose is to make sure you understand the assigned readings, lectures, videos, etc. In order to do this, you need to fully engage with those course materials, taking notes as you read, listen, and watch.

## Overall grading scale, based on 200 total points at the end of the semester

A = 93-100% (185-200 pts.)	C = 73-76% (145-152 pts.)
A- = 90-92% (179-184 pts.)	C- = 70-72% (139-144 pts.)
B+ = 87-89% (173-178 pts.)	D+ = 67-69% (133-138 pts.)
B = 83-86% (165-172 pts.)	D = 60-66% (119-132 pts.)
B- = 80-82% (159-164 pts.)	F = 59% or less (118 or below)
C+ = 77-79% (153-158 pts.)	

This point system is intentionally simple. Interestingly, I've occasionally had students complain that there are "too few points" in the class, but that reflects a basic misunderstanding of how the math works. Any grading scheme can be reduced or increased to any point total, so if it would make you feel better to have 2,000 points in the class rather than 200, you can do that—just add a zero on the end of every grade you earn and then divide by 2,000 instead of 200 at the end of the semester. Joking aside, I keep my grading simple and transparent so that you always know exactly where you stand.

### An important note on how grades appear on Canvas

Canvas will not necessarily show you the correct percentage grade for exams or for your cumulative grade in the class. This is simply because I sometime embed extra-credit points in the exams. For example, even though you can see above that the first exam is worth 30 points, it may actually have a total of 31 or 32 points that are possible. In that case, Canvas will automatically divide your raw score by 31 or 32, but since the exam is actually worth 30 points in my grading scheme, the percentage grade Canvas shows you will actually be a bit lower than what you've actually earned. I will try to remember to remind everyone of this after each exam, but keep in mind that this will also mean that your overall grade that Canvas displays will be slightly lower than it actually is (by 1-2 percentage points) after you've taken the exams. However, you can trust that I know how the point system works (and now you do, too), so rest assured that it is your total points, not the percentage that Canvas displays, that I will use at the end of the semester when I enter final grades.

Also, because of the way the discussions work, with you having wide latitude in choosing which ones you want to participate in (recall that you get to choose which two of the first four and which two of the second four you want to do), Canvas will think that you have earned zeros on the ones you have chosen not to participate in, which will make your grade look lower than it actually is until you have actually participated in two discussions. This will be corrected once we get through the first four discussions, because at that point, Canvas will automatically drop your two lowest scores (which, again, will be zeros, because those will be the two discussions you chose not to do), and your grade on that first set of discussions (Discussions 1-4) will then be calculated using the grades you earned on the two that you *did* choose to participate in. This process will then start over again for the second four discussions (Discussion 5-8), meaning, again, that your grade on those will not necessarily be accurate until we get through all four, two of which you will have done. What this all means is that you need to remind yourself to *ignore the percentage grade for discussions* that Canvas displays until we're completely through each set (or until you have participated in two of the four in each set, as required). However, this does not mean you won't know your grades on the discussions. For each one that you participate in, your grade will be  $x/15$  points given that the main essay posts are worth 10 points and the response posts are worth 5 ( $10 + 5 = 15$ ). Divide " $x$ " (the score you earn) by 15, and that's your percentage grade on a discussion.



## Discussions: How they work, how they are graded, and how to do well on them

With regard to how the discussions work in this class, they are not discussions in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, *they are forums where you will share formal pieces of writing and also offer thoughtful responses to each other, demonstrating close engagement with the course readings in the process.* Here's how they work: Nearly every week (with the exception of the first week, exam weeks, and during weeks when we are spending two weeks covering a particular topic) I will post a question or group of related questions in a discussion for you to ponder and then, if you choose to participate in that discussion, write about in the form of a **brief, formal essay, i.e., several (usually three or four) well-organized paragraphs that form a coherent whole.** As noted above in the "Assignments and Grading" section, there are a total of eight discussions, and you will participate in four of them, two of the first four (Discussions 1-4) and two of the second four (Discussions 5-8). **In addition to these eight regular discussions, there will be a final discussion at the end of the semester in which everyone will post an essay.**

The deadline for posting essays in the discussions is midnight on Sundays, so if you want to participate in a given discussion, **you must post an essay by then.** After that initial deadline, I will reopen the discussion on Monday mornings, at which point everyone will spend some time Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday reading through the essays that were posted in order to learn from your classmates, and **if you posted an essay in the discussion, you will need to post a response to ONE of your classmates' essays by Wednesday at midnight.** *Please note that if you did not post an essay in a discussion, you will not be able to read the posts in that discussion until Monday morning when I open up the discussion so that everyone can read the posts.* (I do this by noon on Mondays and usually a bit earlier.)

### How to write your essays and response posts

Your essay posts in the discussions should be **relatively brief but formal pieces of writing**—the equivalent of roughly 500-800 words (two to three double-spaced pages in a Word document) written in paragraph form, in which you directly answer the question(s) I pose in the prompt. *I strongly recommend writing your essay in Word or in a Google doc first, so that you can edit it, run spellcheck, and save it on your computer, and then cut and paste it into a discussion post so that it is neatly formatted and in final form when you post it.* **Please note that once you post your essay, you will not be able to edit it, so it must be in final form before you submit it.** Also note that it is perfectly fine and expected that your essay will be single-spaced (because that's the default in Canvas) but be sure that each paragraph is indented or that the paragraphs are separated by a double space so that the paragraph structure of your essay is clear. (To ensure a double space in Canvas submissions when typing or cutting and pasting directly into a text box, use "shift + return" on your computer's keyboard where you want a double space between paragraphs.)

In your essay posts, **you must provide evidence that you have done the readings** and reviewed the virtual lecture, watched any video clips that I may have posted, etc. **by using sociological concepts, applying them appropriately, and explicitly citing the textbook and/or other assigned readings using properly formatted APA in-text citations.** *(Read that sentence again; it's very important.)* **Avoid simply giving your own opinion on the topic, and you should not under any circumstances utilize Wikipedia or any other summary sources of information online.** **Again, the point of these essays is for you to engage with the course readings, virtual lectures, and videos and demonstrate that you understand those assigned materials and are learning how to think sociologically.**

Once the weekly deadline for posting essays has passed (which, again, is Sunday at midnight), I will re-open the discussion on Monday morning so that everyone can read the essays that have been posted. **Then, if you posted an essay in the discussion, you are required to choose one – and only one – of the other essays in the discussion to respond to in a way that builds on it in a meaningful way and/or constructively criticizes it.** These response posts should be no longer than a paragraph or two (approx. 250-400 words.). Your response can take a variety of forms, but the best approach is to select one or two main points that a classmate has made in their essay, and either build on that point or points with another point or two of your own and **at least one reference to the course readings** to illustrate your points, or constructively criticize a point your classmate has made by presenting counter evidence and/or a more nuanced interpretation based on your understanding of the course materials, again, with direct references to relevant course readings. It is up to you to choose which of your classmates' essays you would like to respond to, but be sure you

read all of the responses that have already been posted so that you aren't simply repeating what someone else has already written. That said, sometimes several of you may make a similar point in different ways, which is perfectly fine.

**The one thing you should *avoid* doing in your response post is simply stating that you agree with the author of the essay to which you are responding and/or only providing an anecdotal point of your own. *You need to build on what he or she has written in a way that broadens, deepens, and/or corrects his/her points in a sociological manner, with direct references to the readings using APA-style in-text citations.*** Please also note that in asking you to constructively criticize your classmates' posts, *I am not asking you to correct the mechanics of their writing (grammar, spelling, etc.)*, nor do I want you to. That is my job as part of the grading process. **What you need to focus on is their content and use that as the basis for demonstrating your own ability to explain key points about the topic in a sociological manner.**

**On the off chance that you are the only person who has written an essay for a particular discussion** (unlikely, but not impossible given the degree of choice everyone has in which discussions they participate in), **you will respond to your own essay in that discussion, further building on the points you have made in a sociological manner** (for example, providing more elaboration of a point you made by integrating key terminology or insights from the readings that you thought about after you wrote your initial essay).

*In summary, you should approach the discussions as a forum to exhibit what you are learning in the course, using formal academic writing. You should not treat the discussions as a back-and-forth exchange of opinions. Using your best writing, providing evidence of having done the readings, properly citing key concepts and direct quotes using APA in-text citations, and being courteous are all key.*

### **How discussions are graded**

With regard to the specific points attached to discussions, **your formal essay posts will be graded on a ten-point scale.** A score of 7.5-8.5 (equivalent to a C or B) is about average, so please don't wonder why you're not earning a full 10 points on your essay posts. The discussions are not simply a case of "do the assignment, earn all the points." Instead, these posts are graded like any other essay would be. If you think about how the points translate into a percentage grade, earning 8.5 points on an essay post is equivalent to 85%, a B, which is a good grade. In this way, you can see why earning 10 pts. is not likely. After all, that would be 100%, an A+, and few people earn an A+ on essays of any kind in any class. That said, every semester at least one person does, indeed, earn all 10 points on an essay post, and sometimes more than once, so it is certainly possible.

**I will grade your essays according to the thoroughness with which you have addressed the question(s) posed; the extent to which you offer a critical, sociological analysis/interpretation and use terminology correctly; the extent to which you have integrated and correctly cited course readings, virtual lectures, and videos into your posts; and the quality of your writing** (good grammar; proper capitalization, spelling, and punctuation; proper use of quotation marks and citations; and organization). **These criteria are incorporated into a rubric in Canvas that translates as follows:**

- **"A"s (9-9.9)** are reserved for truly superior work that illustrates depth, breadth, and nuanced comprehension of the course material and nearly flawless writing.
- **"B"s (8-8.9)** are assigned to above-average, well-written work that answers the questions posed in a sociological manner.
- **"C"s (7-7.9)** are an indication that more detail and analysis are needed and/or your writing needs improvement.
- **"D"s (6-6.9)** are a sign that you did not adequately meet the requirements of the essay and/or your writing needs major improvement.
- **"F"s (0-5.9)** are an indication that you did not meet the requirements of the essay and/or your writing is unacceptable.

*Additionally, if you do not include at least one direct reference to the readings, integrating and explicitly citing, with an APA-style in-text citation, either a relevant direct quote or a relevant concept/idea/theory from one or more of the assigned readings, you will receive no higher than 8 points on your essay post (because of how the rubric works).*

**Your response posts will be graded on a five-point scale.** If you post a well-written response that elaborates and/or critiques the point(s) one of your classmates has made in a way that substantively adds to the thread in a sociological manner and integrates and explicitly cites at least one of the course readings, you will earn 4-5 points (see the description of “B”s and “A”s above). If you post a few sentences that aren’t much more than an affirmation, a brief criticism, or an anecdote, without substantial evidence to illustrate your point, or if you don’t bother to post a response at all, then you will earn 0-3.9 points (F, D, or C, as described above). *Similar to how the essay posts are graded, in order to earn more than four points on a response, you must include at least one direct reference to an assigned reading using a correctly formatted APA in-text citation.*

You can review the rubric for the discussions, which includes the criteria and associated points for both essays and response posts, in Canvas. **Recall that in any given discussion that you choose to participate in, you will be writing an essay post and a response post, so the point total in the rubric for each discussion is 15 points (up to 10 possible points for the essay post and up to 5 possible points for the response post).** The rubric is included with all of the discussions so that you can review it for a reminder of the specific requirements *before* writing your essays and response posts, which I strongly encourage you to do.

**As previously noted, there will be a total of eight discussions before the final, full-class discussion near the end of the semester and, again, each of you is required to post a formal essay and response in four of those eight, two of the first four (Discussions 1-4) and two of the second four (Discussions 5-8). Everyone will then post an essay in the final, full-class discussion, for which response posts are optional. Therefore, you will each be writing a total of five essays as well as four responses to others’ essays.**

### **Sources and in-text citations**

Although I require you to use APA in-text citations, **do not include a “References” section at the end of your essays.** The reason for this is simple: **you are to reference only the assigned course readings** (and videos) **so I will know exactly what sources you are citing because I will immediately recognize the authors’ last names in your in-text citations**, so including a “References” section is just extra effort that I would rather see you put into the content of your essays and responses.

Please note that not all of the assigned readings that I have posted include page numbers (online articles, for example, do not have page numbers), and some articles/chapters are reprints that may not have a date listed. If there is a date available, it will be noted somewhere on the first page of the PDF or webpage. (In some cases, I have written in the publication date myself, so look for it on the first page of the PDF in those cases.) **However, for those articles and chapters that do not have a date listed, you should simply note the author’s last name and the designation “n.d.” for “no date” where the date would normally appear in the in-text citation. As required for APA style, you need to include a page number in your in-text citations for direct quotes, and for those articles/chapters that do not include page numbers you instead refer to paragraph numbers if you include direct quotes.** Of course, anything you cite from the textbook should be accompanied by a complete APA in-text citation, since you can easily reference the authors’ names and the date of publication (Andersen & Taylor, 2020) and a page number when needed (for direct quotes).

**I have included a link to the Purdue OWL APA in-text citation style guide in the Writing Resources section of the Important Course Resources module in Canvas. Please refer to that guide in order to correctly format your in-text citations.** That link will take you to “The Basics” page, and then you can navigate to the “Author/Authors” page in the guide for a wider variety of examples of different types of sources, including those without page numbers.

If you ever want to cite or directly quote my virtual lectures or Powerpoint slides, you should cite those as follows: (Earles, 2023). As with any source, if you include a direct quote of anything I’ve written, it must be enclosed in quotation marks. That said, it is crucial for you to demonstrate direct engagement with the course readings, so you should not rely solely or even primarily on my lectures and slides as sources of information for writing your essays and responses.



***Integrating and directly citing the readings and demonstrating your own, independent understand of them is a key requirement for the discussions.***

Finally, when citing any of the YouTube videos or documentaries that are included in the weekly modules, you can simply refer to those by title, with the title italicized, as required by APA style. (Note: this is not how to correctly cite a film or video using an APA in-text citation, but it will suffice for our purposes in this class.)

## **Policies on Late Work and Make-ups**

***Exams cannot be taken late except in cases of documented emergencies or other serious extenuating circumstances, such as severe illness.*** You must take the exams during the availability periods noted in this syllabus. (See the Course Schedule below for those dates, and they are also noted in Canvas when each exam is posted.) ***In all but the direst of circumstances, you need to communicate with me prior to when the exam availability period ends in order for me to consider a request for an extension.***

***Quizzes cannot be made up.*** Your two lowest grades are dropped, which is meant to account for any and all possible reasons you might miss one or two of them (or if you simply do poorly on a couple of them).

***Discussions cannot be made up.*** You need to post by the deadline each week (Sunday at midnight for essays, Wednesday at midnight for responses) for the particular discussions you choose to participate in. ***Remember that you must participate in four discussions total, and you have to participate in two of the first four (Discussions 1-4) and two of the second four (Discussion 5-8).*** You will not receive extra credit or make-up credit for participating in more than two discussions in each group (1-4 and 5-8), and you also will not receive credit for any responses posted in discussions for which you have not also written an essay; ***you must post both an essay and a response in the SAME discussion.***

***The final discussion can be made up only in cases of documented emergencies or other serious extenuating circumstances, such as severe illness.*** As with the policy on exams, in all but the gravest of circumstances, you must contact me prior to the deadline for the final essay in order to request an extension.

***If you ever experience technical difficulties with Canvas that prevent you from posting in a discussion by the deadline, taking a quiz, etc., email me immediately with a Word version of your discussion post attached*** (again, this is why I highly recommend writing your essays in Word or Google docs and saving those files on your computer) ***or a screenshot of what's happening if something is preventing you from taking a quiz/exam.*** That way, I will have a date/time-stamped record of the incident and will therefore see that your essay was completed on time or that you were trying to take a quiz/exam before the deadline. ***Again, document the incident by emailing me right away, before the deadline in question, and then use Canvas Help or contact E-Learning Services or the IT Helpdesk to get to the bottom of the issue.***

This policy on make-ups may *seem* inflexible, but because you know right now, at the start of the semester, when everything is due, and because you also have a great deal of flexibility in terms of which discussions you choose to participate in, there is no reason, short of a true emergency or other very serious issue, that you should not be able to get the required discussions, quizzes, and exams done on time if you check into the course a couple of times a week, keep track of due dates, and plan accordingly. Also, remember (from the "Assignments and Grading" section above) that there are extra-credit opportunities and that your two lowest quiz grades are dropped. I intentionally provide those extra-credit opportunities and drop your lowest quiz grades to account for the fact that you may forget to take a quiz or forget to post a response in one of the discussions for which you posted an essay, etc.

All of this said, again, if you do happen to face a true emergency or very serious issue sometime during the semester, contact me via email ([leearles@lsc.edu](mailto:leearles@lsc.edu)) ***as soon as possible***, and we will work together to figure out a path forward. I would emphasize that timely communication is very important. I will not be able to make exceptions for issues that I become aware of days or weeks after the fact.

## Academic Integrity

**All of your written work, ideas expressed therein, and quiz/exam answers must be your own work.** Following standard practice for academic writing, you will, of course, be asked to integrate and cite insights from assigned readings, but you must do this in an original way (i.e., you must think about the material *yourself* and synthesize the material *yourself*) and not rely on summary sources of information such as Wikipedia or any of the variety of websites that you might google to look up sociological concepts and theories. You are also not permitted to use any form of artificial intelligence to complete discussions or quizzes/exams or to have someone else write a discussion post or take a quiz/exam for you. ***The point of taking a college class is for you to grapple with assigned readings and other course materials and demonstrate that you have gained an independent understanding of them.***

With the preceding points squarely in mind, any instance of plagiarism, cheating, or other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. **If you plagiarize in a discussion post, you will receive a zero for that discussion grade,** and I may report the incident to the Vice President of Student Affairs, which will result in a formal sanction. **In the most egregious cases, for example, copying verbatim from one of the readings, my slides/lectures, or a webpage and presenting a sentence or passage as your own writing, or slightly rewording on online source such as Wikipedia or another website, I reserve the right to assign you a failing grade for the entire course.** *To reiterate, you may fail the course if you plagiarize in a discussion post.*

To address a relatively new form of academic dishonesty, **if I suspect the use of artificial intelligence or that someone else has written a discussion post for you, you will be required to take an oral exam on the same material as the discussion in question.** Depending on the outcome of the oral exam, you may be subject to the same sanctions noted above for other forms of academic dishonesty (a zero on the discussion and/or outright failure of the course and a formal report filed with the V.P. of Student Affairs).

Also—and this should go without saying—you **are not allowed to consult with anyone (classmates, roommates, etc.) while taking quizzes and exams.**

The best approach for avoiding academic dishonesty is to carefully read the assigned chapters/articles, give them some thought, and then put ideas into *your own words* in a way that demonstrates that you understand the material, and, when appropriate, cite key ideas and paraphrases and occasionally include especially relevant direct quotes from others, properly cited and noted with quotation marks around exact phrasing and introduced with a signal phrase or contextualized in some other way. **For a review of how to properly integrate information from the assigned readings in your writing, reference the “Writing Resources” section of the “Important Course Resources” module in Canvas.** It contains articles and guides on how to properly integrate and cite sources and avoid plagiarism, including a link to the Indiana University Plagiarism Tutorials, which you can complete for extra credit (as noted above under “Assignments and Grading”).

**Finally, another aspect of academic integrity has to do with the final grade you earn in the class.** Final grades are based on the total points you earn throughout the semester on graded assignments as well as any extra credit you may earn, as detailed in the “Assignments and Grading” section of this syllabus. **Under no circumstances should you ask for extra points to be awarded or for additional extra credit opportunities at the end of the semester in the event that your final grade is not as high as you were hoping that it would be** (for the purposes of scholarships, sports eligibility, or any other reason). Doing so would be asking me to treat you differently than I treat your classmates, which would be unfair to them and therefore ethically problematic. If you ever have any questions about your grades on particular assignments (discussions, exams, quizzes) and/or believe that I have made a grading error, you can address your concerns to me, in writing (via email), within one week of when the assignment has been graded. Any such questions or concerns should be specific and reference the grading criteria (and rubric, if applicable) for the assignment. If warranted, we will then meet to discuss your concerns/questions in order to clarify how the assignment was graded.

*If you have any questions about what the terms “academic dishonesty” or “plagiarism” mean or entail, please ask me for an explanation or clarification.* As the old saying goes, ignorance of the law (or basic concepts and policy in this case) is no excuse. Please do not jeopardize your academic future by engaging in such foolish behavior.

## Documented Accessibility Needs

If you have a documented need for accommodations to ensure accessibility, please let me know during the first two weeks of the semester, and we will work together to ensure appropriate accommodations.

## Contacting Me and Office Hours

If you have questions about the course material or would like to further discuss any of the topics we are covering, please come chat with me during my office hours, **Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00-4:00**. Office hours are specifically for students, so don't be shy about using them – they're meant for you! If you would like to schedule a specific meeting time during those office hours, send me an email a day or two in advance, and I'll pencil you in for your preferred time. Otherwise, you can simply drop by my office, Spalding Hall 222.

**If you prefer to meet on Zoom, please email me a couple of hours in advance**, so I know you want to meet that way, and I'll be happy to hop on Zoom during my office hour. Here is the link to use: <https://lscs.zoom.us/j/84258147040>. When you click on that link, you will enter a virtual waiting room at first, and I will then let you into the virtual meeting space as soon as I can (it may be a few minutes if I'm already meeting with another student).

**If you cannot meet during my regular office hours, I'm happy to set up an appointment with you for a different day/time.** You can email me such a request.

**If you need to contact me for quick questions or to relay information to me outside of office hours, the best way to reach me is via email at [leearles@lscs.edu](mailto:leearles@lscs.edu).** (Please note, *this is not an lmail address*. Your email may automatically enter an lmail address when you start typing my name or address, but make sure you are actually sending your email to my [leearles@lscs.edu](mailto:leearles@lscs.edu) address. Otherwise, I may not receive it.) I check email on weekdays before 5 p.m. and will typically respond within 24-48 hours. If your question/issue requires more than a brief response, I may request that we schedule a meeting to discuss things further. Also, this should go without saying, but when emailing me (and any of your other professors) be sure to compose your email as you would to any other professional contact. Include a subject line, a proper salutation ("Dear Prof. Earles"), and use good writing. **All of this noted, before sending an email, please be sure to first review this syllabus as well as the FAQs page in Canvas, both of which contain the answers to most basic questions about the course.**

## Course Schedule

*This course schedule is subject to change, depending on our progress in covering the material as well as external events beyond our control.* It is your responsibility to stay abreast of the course announcements and note any changes that I might make. **The assigned readings for each week are listed here, as are the due days/dates for discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.** Sometimes I include additional readings within the weekly modules (for example, a link to a short article on an external website) in addition to the required readings listed here, and I almost always include videos in the weekly modules. **You should consider all of the learning materials included in the weekly modules required viewing and/or reading in addition to the assigned readings listed below.**

*Your active engagement with the assigned readings and the discussions is key to your success in this class.* The readings for each week must be completed *prior* to when you contribute to that week's discussion so that you are able to participate in discussions in an informed manner, integrating and citing relevant concepts and ideas from the readings. The readings listed for each week include **chapters from your textbook** (noted below by the initials of the authors' last names, "A & T," for Andersen and Taylor) and **individual chapters/articles that are posted in the "Readings" module in Canvas** (noted below by the author's last name and title, which is also how they appear, in alphabetical order, in the "Readings" module).

**The basic weekly schedule is as follows:** Every Monday by around noon, I post a module on the **Modules** page in Canvas. These modules will contain a virtual lecture (in written and audio format), PowerPoint slides, videos, etc.; the weekly quiz (during weeks those are scheduled); and the discussion questions/topic for the week. **You must take the quiz by Sunday at midnight, and the discussion is initially open until Sunday at midnight, which, as previously noted, is**

the weekly deadline for posting essays for those who choose to participate in a given discussion. I then re-open the discussion from Monday morning (by noon) until Wednesday at midnight so that everyone can read the essays that have been posted and those who are actively engaged in the discussion (i.e., those who have posted essays) can post their responses by the Wednesday midnight deadline. This means that the basic pace of the course is to spend one full week squarely focused on each topic, during which everyone is reading the assigned chapters and reviewing the material in the module, and students who have chosen to participate in that week's discussion are writing their essays. Those students will then post brief responses to their classmates in the discussion during the first part of the following week, at which point we will already be moving on to the next topic. **The exceptions to this basic schedule are during the weeks we are covering culture and socialization and race and ethnicity since those topics each span two weeks.** During the weeks on these topics, the quizzes are due on the Sunday at the end of the second week of coverage, and there is only one discussion, which takes place during the second week. **Also, as you can see below, there are no new discussions during exam weeks or during Week 14, although we may have informal chats during one or more of those weeks.**

The two exams will be available starting at noon on the Monday of the weeks they are scheduled (Weeks 7 and 13) and will remain available until the following Monday at noon (i.e., one full week).

## Week 1 (1/16): Introduction to the Course

**Readings:** Syllabus (this document you are reading right now)  
Cohan, "Finding Success in Your Second Semester"

**Introductions:** Everyone posts in the "Introductions" discussion by noon on Friday (Please note: This is not a regular discussion, *but it is required for attendance verification*. You will earn two points of extra credit for posting by the noon deadline.)

## Week 2 (1/23): How sociologists see the world: The sociological imagination and social theory

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 1  
Mills, "The Promise"  
Strassman, "'I Blame Myself': Retirement remains out of reach for millions of Americans"  
Thompson, "Why American Teens Are So Sad"

**Discussion 1:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. (Remember, you can choose whether or not to participate in this discussion, but you must participate in two of the first four discussions.)

***\*Quiz 1 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.***

## Week 3 (1/30): How sociologists study the social world: Social research methods

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 3

**Discussion 1:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**Discussion 2:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. (Remember, you can choose whether or not to participate in this discussion, but you must participate in two of the first four discussions.)

***\*Quiz 2 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.***

## Week 4 (2/6): Culture, socialization, and the life course

### Readings: A & T, Ch. 2

Henslin, "An Overview of U.S. Values"

Samuel, "7 Keys to True Success"

Dimock, "Defining Generations [...]"

Parker and Igielnick, "[...] What We Know About Gen Z So Far"

(Recommended: Bialik and Fry, "Millennial Life [...]" )

**Discussion 2:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**\*No quiz or new discussion this week.**

**\*Extra Credit (optional): Indiana University Plagiarism Certification Test due by Friday at midnight**

## Week 5 (2/13): Culture, socialization, and the life course (continued)

### Readings: A & T, Ch. 4

A & T, Ch. 5 (pp. 121-125 only)

Twenge, "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?"

(Recommended: Abi-Jaoude et al., "Smartphones, social media [...] youth mental health")

**Discussion 3:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. *If you have not yet posted in a discussion, you must post in this one and the next one (Discussion 4) in order to meet the requirement of posting in two of the first four discussions.*

**\*Quiz 3 (on Weeks 4 and 5) must be taken by midnight on Sunday.**

## Week 6 (2/20) The structure of society, from the micro to the macro level

### Readings: A & T, Ch. 5 (pp. 104-116)

A & T, Ch. 6 (pp. 126-130, 139-147)

Ritzer, "An Introduction to McDonaldization" and "The Irrationality of Rationality"

**Discussion 3:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**Discussion 4:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. *If you have not yet posted in two discussions, you must post in this one in order to meet the requirement of posting in two of the first four discussions.*

**\*Quiz 4 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.**

## Week 7 (2/27): FIRST EXAM

### Readings: Catch up and review

**Discussion 4:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**\*FIRST EXAM available from Monday, February 27, at noon to Monday, March 6, at noon**



## Week 8 (3/6): Social control, deviance, and crime

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 7

Chambliss, "The Saints and the Roughnecks"

**Discussion 5:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. (Remember, you can choose whether or not to participate in this discussion, but you must participate in two of the second four discussions.)

***\*Quiz 5 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.***

## Week 9 (3/13): Social stratification and social class

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 8

Woolf et al., "How Are Income and Wealth Linked to Health and Longevity?"

Baker, "A Town's Housing Crisis Exposes a 'House of Cards'"

Becker, "Evidence Grows of Poverty's Toll on Young Brains, Academic Achievement Gap"

Reardon, "No Rich Child Left Behind"

**Discussion 5:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**Discussion 6:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. (Remember, you can choose whether or not to participate in this discussion, but you must participate in two of the second four discussions.)

***\*Quiz 6 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.***

## Week 10 (3/20): Race, ethnicity, and social stratification

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 10 (pp. 235-256)

Korver, "Privileged"

Jones, "Levels of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and a Gardeners Tale"

**Discussion 6:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

***\*No quiz or new discussion this week.***

**\*\*Spring Break (3/27-3/31)\*\***

## Week 11 (4/3): Race, ethnicity, and social stratification (continued)

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 10 (pp. 256-267)

Bailey et al., "How Structural Racism Works—Racism as a Root Cause of [...] Health Inequities"

Darity et al., "What We Get Wrong About Closing the Racial Wealth Gap" (Read these sections:

"Introduction" and Myths 1 and 2 [pp. 1-14], Myth 7 [pp. 37-41], and Myth 9 [pp. 45-50])

Gallagher, "Color-Blind Privilege: The Social and Political Functions of Erasing the Color Line [...]"

**Discussion 7:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. *If you have not yet posted in a discussion in this second set (Discussions 5-8), you must post in this one and the next one (Discussion 8) in order to meet the requirement of posting in two of the second four discussions.*

***\*Quiz 7 (on Weeks 10 and 11) must be taken by midnight on Sunday.***

## Week 12 (4/10): Gender and social stratification

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 11

Espiritu, "All Men Are Not Created Equal: Asian Men in U.S. History"

**Discussion 7:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**Discussion 8:** Post an essay by midnight on Sunday. *If you did not post in two of the last three discussions (Discussions 5, 6, 7), you must post in this one in order to meet the requirement of posting in two of the second four discussions.*

**\*Quiz 8 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.**

## Week 13 (4/17): SECOND EXAM

**Readings:** Catch up and review.

**Discussion 8:** Post a response by midnight on Wednesday if you posted an essay in this discussion.

**\*SECOND EXAM available from Monday, April 17, at noon to Monday, April 24, at noon**

## Week 14 (4/24): Society and the environment

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 16 (pp. 425-433 and 440-441)

Zaveri et al., "How the Storm Turned Basement Apartments into Deathtraps"

**No discussion this week.**

**\*Quiz 9 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.**

## Week 15 (5/1): Social change and social movements

**Readings:** A & T, Ch. 16 (pp. 442-452)

Meyer, "How Social Movements Matter"

**Final Discussion:** Everyone posts an essay by midnight on Sunday (responses not required).

**\*Quiz 10 must be taken by midnight on Sunday.**

## Finals Week (5/8): What have we learned this semester?

**No readings or discussion this week. I will share closing thoughts on the course in response to your final discussion posts.**