

SOCIOLOGY 201: Introduction to Sociology

Instructor: Elaine Leeder

Contact Information: leeder@sonoma.edu

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General Education: Satisfies D1 (Individual and Society)

Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course aims to familiarize students with the basic concepts utilized in understanding society and the place that we, as individuals, fit in that society. To these ends we will study American society and social institutions, while learning to view both from a theoretical and critical sociological perspective. We will look at various aspects of social life, including our behavior in large and small groups, the place of the individual in social-historical perspective, the nature of socialization, deviance and the social-structural conditions of inequality as they are reflected in race, gender, class, sexual orientation and gender expression. Further, we will explore the field of social change and social movements as these forces try to influence the course that society takes.

Course Objectives

1. To give students a working definition of sociology as a social science
2. To explore and define basic sociological concepts and terms
3. To develop a definition of the major schools of sociological thought: structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interaction
4. To develop a beginning critical perspective on the structure of our society
5. To begin to explore the bases of inequality in American society
6. To begin to develop a cross-cultural perspective to social problems
7. To begin to understand what the idea "The Sociological Imagination" means
8. To begin to look at various social institutions such as the family, prisons, and mental hospitals from a critical and sociological perspective

Course Format

The large lecture class will meet on Monday and Wednesday for fifty minutes. In these meetings there will be lectures, films, guest speakers and large class discussion. You are required to participate in a once-a-week fifty-minute small section meeting that is facilitated by a student assistant. Your specific time is designated by your section number (the three-digit number following Sociology 201). Please remember your section number since most of the course activities are dependent on your knowing that number. The format of large and small groups is used to help you understand the intersection of your personal lives with the sociological perspective.

Required Readings

Please see the course syllabus.