Welcome to SOC 105: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Albright College – Reading, PA
Tentative Syllabus for Fall 2003

Instructor: Charles M. Brown
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Class Meeting Times and Location: Teel 114: M, W, & F: 9:00 - 9:50

A Little About Your Instructor

I thought it might be nice to provide a small introduction to myself since we will be spending the interim together. A certain amount of mystique is always good, so I won't tell you everything (besides, I'm sure that you wouldn't be interested anyway). For starters, I was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon and Washington). I received my Bachelors degree in sociology from Oregon State University, my Masters degree from the University of South Florida, and my Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University. I also spent two years as a visiting assistant professor at Ohio University before accepting a full time tenure track position here at Albright College in the Fall of 2001. My major research interests in sociology include culture, religion, and popular culture. My master's thesis was a formulaic analysis of the lyrics and major themes of Conservative Christian speed/thrash metal music. My dissertation (the book that is written for the Ph.D.) incorporates interviews, participant observation, and secondary literature to analyze the production of contemporary evangelical Christian culture, especially popular culture, and how various tensions within the industry are recognized and mediated. My hobbies include snow skiing, playing softball, listening to music (everything from alternative to classical although I am getting into industrial techno), reading, computers, and playing the guitar (both electric and acoustic).

Course Description

"Sociology, what's that?" I have been asked this question numerous times as an undergraduate sociology major and a Ph.D. student. Most confuse sociology with social work (a field that is actually an offshoot of sociology) or some type of counseling. Although sociologists may participate in these activities, the field is much broader.

Sociology is the study of social life and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. It investigates the structure of groups, organizations, and societies, their information, development, and interactions. Since all human behavior is social, the subject matter of sociology ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mob, from crime to religion, from the divisions of race, gender, and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture, from the sociology of work to the sociology of sport. In fact, few fields have such broad scope and relevance. This is nice because sociologists are largely free to conduct research in any area that interests them. It is a field that synthesizes from all of the other social sciences including psychology, philosophy, anthropology, political science, economics, and history. Furthermore, sociology has
generated other disciplines including social work, criminal justice, and communication studies. All of these were, at one time, part of the field of sociology.

This course is designed to provide an opportunity for the student to develop a general sociological understanding and perspective with which to evaluate, interpret, and understand the behavior of individuals and groups in society. This requires developing, what C. Wright Mills calls, a "Sociological Imagination." This course will help you to develop and apply the sociological imagination in everyday life.

We will begin by looking at a brief history of the emergence of sociology and its fragmentation into three paradigms. This will enable the student to understand the reasons for the development of sociology as a science and why it is practiced today. The historical context will also provide the student with a look inside the sociological imaginations of the early theorists. We will then move on to discuss some of the main topics that sociologists seek to understand and explain including: culture and socialization; stratification; racial and ethnic inequality; the family; and gender. We will also discuss the ways in which sociological research is conducted.

Text & Other Readings

Course Prerequisites
There are no prerequisites for the course other than an open mind and a desire to participate in class.

Course Objectives
1. To help students develop a "sociological imagination" and teach them how to apply it in everyday life.
2. To teach students how individuals develop and maintain societies.
3. To expose students to the sociological terms, concepts, and theories that are helpful in understanding and critiquing society.
4. To foster a greater understanding of how and why individuals act the way they do, and how these actions affect society. Conversely, to foster an understanding of how society sometimes shapes the actions of individuals.
5. To foster critical thinking skills.

Course Requirements
Each student is responsible for completing all class assignments, exams, and readings. This means that if you are absent, you should check with me as soon as possible to make sure that you did not miss any assignment changes, etc. Each student is also responsible to attend each class period. The instructor reserves the right to move exams and assignments at his discretion. Missing an exam or assignment because it has been moved IS NOT A VALID EXCUSE! IF YOU MISS AN EXAM OR ASSIGNMENT FOR THIS REASON YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MAKEUP THE WORK AND YOU WILL FAIL TO RECEIVE ANY POINTS!

Quizzes
Three quizzes worth 15 points each will be administered. The purpose of the quiz is to expose you to the kinds of questions that will be on future exams and allow you to adjust your studying habits early on without jeopardizing a major exam grade. All quizzes will be multiple choice in format and ARE NOT CUMULATIVE. Quiz 1 will cover chapters 1-2; Quiz 2 will cover chapters 4, part of 5, 6 and 7; Quiz 3 will cover chapters 8-11.
**Exams**
Each student will take three exams worth 50 points each. **NOTE: EACH EXAM IS CUMULATIVE WHICH MEANS THAT YOU WILL BE TESTED ON ALL MATERIAL COVERED UP TO THAT POINT.** The exams will most probably consist of multiple choice questions and an essay question or two. I warn you, my lectures will deviate from the text from time to time. The exams will cover both the lecture and reading material. Therefore, you must read the material and attend the lectures. **LATE EXAMS WILL NOT BE GIVEN** unless the student receives prior permission or an emergency warrants the situation. Students who miss an exam for these reasons must contact the instructor within 48 hours of the exam in order to schedule a makeup. **Make up exams will be all essay in format.** You will need a pencil for the exams.

**Preparatory for Research Assignment**
(1) Each student will be responsible for turning in one "preparatory for research" assignment worth 15 points. The purpose of the assignment is threefold: (1) to help students develop proper methods of research by teaching them the skills necessary to formulate a research question and hypothesis, conceptualize and operationalize variables, and identify independent and dependent variables, (2) to familiarize students with the sociological databases and journals that are available for research, and (3) to teach students how to use the computer and the sociological abstracts to access information. Each student will pick a topic for "research" and locate five scholarly articles from sociological journals or books that relate to that topic. A one page assignment sheet identifying the topic and the five articles will be submitted. We will go over the assignment in more detail at a later time at which point I will provide a handout.

**Extra Credit Assignment**
We are living in an age of computers and it is obvious that anyone who wishes to succeed in today's world needs to feel comfortable using them. Because of this, and because I may need to contact you at some point in the semester, I am providing you an opportunity to gain an easy 2 points. **NOTE: This will be the only extra credit assignment given, so be forewarned!** Begging and pleading at the end of the semester will do no good!!! Here's what you need to do: email me using your own email account. In the "subject line" please type your first and last name and be sure to provide the following in the body of the message: (1) the class number & Section (Soc. 101: 8am); (2) your name; (3) phone number; (4) your major; and (5) email address. You must complete this assignment within the first four weeks of the first day of the class. Late emails will not be credited. This assignment is worth 2 points.

**Methods of Evaluation**
Grades will be determined by percentages in the following manner:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>63-66%</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Under 60%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

You can calculate your current grade at any point in the semester by dividing the number of points you have earned by the total amount of points possible and referring to the scale above. Thus, if you achieved a “20” on the quiz and a “40” on the first exam, then you would calculate your current grade as follows: 20 + 40 = 60 divided by 75 (25 possible points for the quiz and 50 for the first exam) = .80 Using the scale above you can see that you are currently earning a “B-”.

3
Student Resources
Some students require special needs from time to time or throughout their college career. Below are some important resources that you should take advantage of if you require assistance. I would encourage anyone who has special needs to drop by and see me (if you feel comfortable doing so) so that I can better understand your situation and work with you more effectively.

Students With Special Needs
Albright does not have a formal, separate program for students with learning or other disabilities. However, the College does attempt to make reasonable accommodations for students with special needs. Students with such needs should contact Student Services at 921-7611.

Academic Learning Center/Writing Center
The Academic Learning Center provides a comprehensive program of academic support services including individual student tutors, study group sessions, instructional interns, and academic progress sessions. The Writing Center is available to students of all disciplines who need assistance with their written work. The Writing Center is supported by the English department. Interested students are encouraged to call the English department at: 921-7810.

Some Further Guidelines
First, if you have any questions, please ask. Chances are if you do not understand something, half the class does not either. I will not think you are stupid because you ask questions. On the contrary, if you knew all about sociology, you would not be here in the first place. Also, your questions tend to liven up the class and make it more interesting for all of us. If for some reason you do not feel like asking the question during class, stop me after class. If you do not have time after class, please make an appointment, we can find another time.

Second, I expect you to exercise proper manners while in class. This means that you should not talk during class to another student while I or another student is addressing the class. This means that you should arrive on time and not leave early. This means that you should not sleep in class, read the newspaper, listen to music, etc. NOTE: THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUBTRACT POINTS FROM ANY STUDENT WHO REFUSES TO EXERCISE PROPER MANNERS IN CLASS. FURTHERMORE, POINTS MAY BE SUBTRACTED IN THE AMOUNT THAT THE INSTRUCTOR SEES FIT. IF MEMBERS OF THE CLASS LEAVE EARLY, THE INSTRUCTOR MAY, AT HIS DISCRETION, BEGIN ADMINISTERING POP QUIZZES TOWARD THE END OF THE CLASS PERIOD.

Third, I consider your class participation to be very important. Please feel free to ask questions offer suggestions and/or comments, etc. If you disagree with me, fine. Feel free to say so. I only ask that you provide a rational and/or evidence for your position. In other words, don’t simply say, “I disagree with you because I just don’t think you are correct,” give me a reason why you disagree.

Fourth, cheating of any kind is not allowed. Any student who appears to the instructor to be cheating will receive an automatic "F" for the entire course and s/he will be turned in to the appropriate academic authorities.

Fifth, each and every class is important. My lectures do not always follow the text. I may disagree with the text and may present material not found in the text. Lectures count more than text on exams. Therefore, YOU SHOULD ATTEND EACH AND EVERY CLASS.
Finally, I do not grade on a curve. This means you have more to gain by cooperating rather than competing with each other. I would like you to get to know the students in your discussion group really well. You should exchange addresses and telephone numbers with each other and try and form a study group. As a group you can help each other with the class material, particularly in studying for exams. You also can come into my office as a group and we can talk over things that are not clear.

**Majoring in Sociology**

Some students may be interested in sociology as a major. I would be happy to talk to you if you have any questions. I also have a pamphlet that I can give you published by *The American Sociological Association* that can tell you what sociology is, what sociologists do, and where sociologists can be employed. It is an interesting (not to mention useful) field, and worth checking out!!! You can also go to the following link to learn more about what kinds of jobs are available for those who have majored in sociology: http://www.abacon.com/socsite/careers.html
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1
Monday: Introduction to the Course
Wednesday: Chapter 1: The Sociological Perspective and Research Process
Friday: Chapter 1: The Sociological Perspective and Research Process, Continued

Week 2
Monday: !!!!!!! LABOR DAY: NO CLASS !!!!!!!
Wednesday: Video - Obedience
Friday: Chapter 2: Culture

Week 3
Monday: Chapter 2: Culture, Continued
Wednesday: Chapter 2: Culture, Continued
Friday: Chapter 3: Socialization
QUIZ 1

Week 4
Monday: Video - Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment
Wednesday: Chapter 3: Socialization, Continued
Friday: Catch up Day

Week 5
Monday: EXAM #1
Wednesday: Chapter 4: Social Structure and Interaction in Everyday Life
Chapter 5: Groups (Only read Pp. 150-154)
Friday: Chapter 4: Social Structure and Interaction in Everyday Life, Continued

Week 6
Monday: Chapter 4: Social Structure and Interaction in Everyday Life, Continued
Wednesday: Chapter 6: Deviance and Crime
Friday: Chapter 6: Deviance and Crime, Continued

Week 7
Monday: Chapter 6: Deviance and Crime, Continued
Wednesday: Chapter 7: Global Stratification
Friday: Chapter 7: Global Stratification, Continued
!!!!!!! PREPERATORY FOR RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 4:00 P.M. !!!!!!!
Week 8
Monday:  !!!!!!!! FALL BREAK: NO CLASS !!!!!!!!
Wednesday:  Chapter 7: Global Stratification, Continued
Friday:  Chapter 8: Social Class in the United States
        QUIZ 2

Week 9
Monday:  Chapter 8: Social Class in the United States, Continued
Wednesday:  Chapter 8: Social Class in the United States
Friday:  No Class

Week 10
Monday:  Catch Up Day
Wednesday:  EXAM #2
Friday:  Special Lecture

Week 11
Monday:  Chapter 9: Race and Ethnicity
Wednesday:  Chapter 9: Race and Ethnicity, Continued
Friday:  Chapter 9: Race and Ethnicity, Continued

Week 12
Monday:  Chapter 10: Sex and Gender
Wednesday:  Chapter 10: Sex and Gender, Continued
Friday:  Chapter 10: Sex and Gender, Continued

Week 13
Monday:  Chapter 11: Families and Intimate Relationships
Wednesday:  Chapter 11: Families and Intimate Relationships, Continued
Friday:  Chapter 11: Families and Intimate Relationships, Continued

Week 14
Monday:  Chapter 12: Education and Religion
        QUIZ 3
Wednesday:  !!!!!!!! THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS !!!!!!!!
Friday:  !!!!!!!! THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS !!!!!!!!

Week 15
Monday:  Chapter 12: Education and Religion, Continued
Wednesday:  Chapter 12: Education and Religion, Continued
Friday:  Catch Up Day

Week 16
!!!!!!! CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM: ???? @???. !!!!!!!!


**Student Information:**
Please answer the questions below and write your answers on the 3x5 note card provided by the instructor:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Major (spell out please)
4. Class standing (Freshman, Sophomore, etc.)
5. Where are you from?
6. Do you know anyone that has taken this course before? If so, who?
7. Have you transferred from another college or university? If so, which one?
8. How many semesters have you attended Albright?
9. What other sociology courses have you taken?
10. Do you belong to a fraternity or sorority? If so, which one?
11. Are you involved in Albright sports? If so, which one(s)? (Don't include Intramural sports)
12. Do you work? Where? How many hours per week?
13. E-mail & phone number
14. Why did you take this class?