



Shanghai Jiao Tong University

SO900 Introduction to Sociology

Instructor:	Caitlin Slodden, Ph.D	Email:	cslodden@brandeis.edu
Instructor's Home Institution:	Brandeis University	Office:	TBA
Office Hours:	TBD		
Term:	May 27-June 27, 2019	Credits:	4 units
Classroom:	TBD	Teaching Assistant(s):	TBD
Class Hours:	Monday through Thursday, 120 mins per teaching day		
Discussion Sessions:	2 hours each week, conducted by teaching assistant(s)		
Total Contact Hours:	66 contact hours (1 contact hour = 45 mins, 3000 mins in total)		
Required Texts (with ISBN):	Conley, Dalton. 2017. <i>You May Ask Yourself</i> , 5 th edition. Electronic Edition. ISBN: 978-0-393-63033-6 Ferguson, Susan. <i>Mapping the Social Landscape</i> . 8 th Edition. Sage Publications. ISBN: 9781506368283		
Prerequisite:	None		



Course Overview

The goal of sociology is to offer insights into our social environment. How do we distribute wealth, income and other resources? How do we organize political authority and economic power? Why are there class, gender, and racial inequalities in American society? How do we socialize people to “fit in” with those around them? How do we produce and consume culture? This course introduces students to these and other sociological topics as well as to the major theories and methods of the discipline used to make sense of such social phenomena. Students are encouraged to bring their own sociological insights to class as we challenge common assumptions about the social world.

Sociology enables us to critically assess taken-for-granted assumptions about everyday life and to systematically explain the social processes that shape our lives. In this course, you will learn to think sociologically by examining how people socially construct reality. Beginning on the first day of class, students will begin to develop their “sociological imagination” by examining the social nature of a number of issues and behaviors, many of which may at first appear to be the results of “human nature,” or strictly the result of individual motives and personal choices. Through course readings and discussion, we will explore the relationship between the individual and society and come to understand how social norms, systems of inequality, and social institutions shape people’s life chances and outcomes.

This is a survey course designed to introduce students to sociology. To accomplish this goal we must privilege breadth over depth, frustrating as it can be at times! As your professor I have three main objectives for an introductory survey course 1.) teach and encourage you to hone their sociological imagination inside and, more importantly, *outside* of the classroom; 2.) introduce you to the discipline—*what* do sociologists study?; *how* do they study aspects of our society? and *why*?!; and 3.) and pique your curiosity about the social world so that you continue to study sociology in courses that are designed to delve deeper into specific areas of inquiry/institutions (education, family, gender, etc.).

Learning Objectives:

1. Recognize the ways in which social contexts shape individual and group behavior.
2. Rigorously engage with core questions of inequity, identity, justice, and social meaning.
3. Relate sociological frameworks to pressing social, economic, and political issues and policies.
4. Understand, develop, and extend theoretical frameworks for critically and systematically engaging with social phenomena.
5. Practice participant observation as a means of data collection and analysis to address research question(s).

Grading Policy:

In-Class Midterm, Final Exam	30%, 35% , respectively
Observation Paper	15%
Attendance and Participation	20%



Grading Scale is as follows:

Number grade	Letter grade	GPA
90-100	A	4
85-89	A-	3.7
80-84	B+	3.3
75-79	B	3
70-74	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
65-66	C	2
62-64	C-	1.7
60-61	D	1
≤59	F (Failure)	0

Course Policies:

Please arrive ON TIME for class and don't leave early; it is disruptive to me as well as your fellow classmates. Our class meetings are VERY short (50 minutes!) so I will begin promptly with important class announcements/news that I won't have time to repeat so don't miss them!

Technology: **Please ensure that your cell phones are shut OFF during class...**they are highly distracting to everyone. If I see phones being used in any way I will assume it's an emergency and ask you to step outside of the room to finish your business.

Communication: The syllabus is a guide; it is not set in stone and readings will undoubtedly be tweaked depending upon our pace and progress. My verbal or emailed instructions supersede the schedule of classes below.

Academic Honesty: The written work you hand in must be your own thoughts and expressions. Please review Brandeis' policy on academic honesty and plagiarism in the student handbook. I hold a strict position with respect to plagiarism/cheating and incidences will be reported to the Dean's office.

Academic Support: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis please see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations.

A Note On Attendance: Your regular attendance will be reflected in your grades! There will be material on exams that you can only get from class lecture/discussion. You may not miss more than 1 class. For some



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talking is difficult but it certainly doesn't go unnoticed when you make every effort to participate which includes any/all of the following: actively listening, asking questions, contributing to discussions, and emailing me if you find any relevant news articles, etc. that highlights a course topic.

Grading Policy: It is very important that you complete the exams and written work ON TIME. If you are seriously ill or have an emergency, I will need to hear from you BEFORE THE EXAM(S). I will not administer exam a second time if you are unaccounted for on the day of the midterm and/or final. Late papers/assignments will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade every day that it is past the due date.



Class Schedule (Subject to Change)

Before First Class: Conley textbook, chapter 1 pages 14-22

C. Wright Mills, “The Promise” (excerpt)

Gaines, Donna, “Teenage Wasteland: Suburbia’s Dead-End Kids”

NOTE:

SF = Susan Ferguson reader

*Reading with ** will be provided*

Date	Topic	Readings To Complete for the Following Class
Day 1	Welcome! The Sociological Imagination	Davis and Moore, “Some Principals of Stratification” SF 23 Marx and Engles, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” (4-page excerpt) SF 5 Palmer, Nathan. 2013. “The Power Behind ‘Illegal Immigration’” ** Williams, Christine. “Shopping as Symbolic Interaction” SF 19 Anderson, “Code of the Streets” (excerpt) **
Day 2	Sociological Theories	Conley textbook, chapter 2 Best, Joel. “Damned Lies and Statistics” ** Tankersly, “Here’s Why An Accurate Census Is So Important.” <i>New York Times</i> , March 27, 2018 ** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalization homework questions
Day 3	Conducting Research: Sociological Methods	Miner, “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema” ** Becker, Howie. “Culture: A Sociological View” SF10
Day 4	Material & Nonmaterial Culture	Trask, Haunani-Kay, “Lovely Hula Hands.” SF 12



		McDonalds in Hong Kong** Williams, "Quality Time, Redefined" <i>New York Times</i> , April 29, 2011. **
Day 5	Material & Nonmaterial Culture	Conley textbook, chapter 4 Lareau, Annette. "Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural Growth" (excerpt) SF 55 Granfield, Robert, "Making It By Faking It" Kane, Emily, "No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That!" SF 13
Day 6	Socialization & Social Interaction	Conley textbook, chapter 5, pages 156-176 [stop @ Network analysis] Gladwell, Malcolm. "The Law of a Few" from <i>The Tipping Point</i> ** Klinenberg, <i>Palaces for the People</i> , Introduction and chapter 1 **
Day 7	Groups, Networks, & Social Infrastructure	Conley textbook chapter 6, 190-216. Horowitz, Allen. "Normality." ** Rosenhan, "Being Sane In Insane Places" SF 6 Conrad, "Medicalization and Social Control" (skim)
Day 8	Social Cohesion, Deviance, and Stigma	Putnam, Bob, "The American Dream: Myths and Realities" from <i>Our Kids</i> (excerpt) ** Conley textbook, pages 247-top of 257 Wright and Rogers, "Persistent Poverty and Rising Inequality" ** Semuels, "Poor at 20, Poor for Life." **
Day 9	The Prison Industrial Complex; Stratification	Study for Midterm
Day 10	MIDTERM	Shapiro, Tom. "Race, Homeownership, and Wealth." SF 25



		Rank, Mark, “As American As Apple Pie: Poverty and Welfare.” ** “Some Colleges Have More Students From Top 1% Then Bottom 60%” <i>New York Times</i> , 1/18/17 **
Day 11	Stratification and Mobility	Domhoff, William, “Who Rules America?” SF 24 Wolfe, Tom, “The Mermaid Blushed” from <i>I Am Charlette Simmons</i> (excerpt) **
Day 12	Social Class	Conley, start chapter 9, pages 334-end. You can finish at a later date; this should be used as a resource for you so read as you feel would be a helpful supplement to lecture and class discussion. Bonnilla-Silva, Eduardo, “New Racism: Color Blind Racism and the Future of Whiteness in America.” ** Kim, “Out of Sorts: Adoption and (Un)Desirable Children.” SF 33
Day 13	Race and Ethnicity	Bonacich E., “A Theory on Racial Antagonism: The Split Labor Market” ** “Genetic Ancestry Tests Don’t Change Your Identity, But You Might.” <i>PBS</i> , 7/18/18 Conley textbook chapter 8, pages 280-300
Day 14	Race and Ethnicity; Gender	C.J Pascoe, “Dude You’re a Fag”: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse. SF 29 Boswell and Spade: Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture: Why Are Some Fraternities More Dangerous Places for Women?” SF 21 Ford and England, “Hookups, Sex, and Relationships at College” (short piece) **
Day 15	Gender	



		<p>Weber, Max. “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” SF 44</p> <p>Conley, chapter 14, pages 558-571</p> <p>Goldstein, Amy. Janesville: An American Story, excerpt <i>The Washington Post</i>. April 15, 2017. **</p> <p>Neuman, Scott, 2018. “Amazon’s Cashier-Less Seattle Grocery Store Opens to the Public” <i>NPR</i> **</p>
Day 16	Work and the Economy	<p>Loe, Meika. “Working at Bazooms: The Intersection of Power, Gender, and Sexuality.” SF 9</p> <p>Chin, Margaret. “Asian Americans, The Bamboo Ceiling, and Affirmative Action” **</p> <p>Conley, chapter 14, pages 550-558</p> <p>Silva, Jennifer. “Working Class Growing Pains” **</p> <p>Hochschild, Arlie. “The Emotional Geography of Home and Work.” **</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last day to turn in your observation paper.
Day 17	Work & Discrimination; Work & Family Balance	<p>Wingfield, Amanda. “Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences With Women’s Work” SF 42</p> <p>Conley textbook, chapter 15, pages 575-586</p> <p>Mills, C. Wright, “The Power Elite” SF 35</p> <p>Zweigenhalf and Domhoff, “Diversity in the Power Elite” (skim) SF 36</p> <p>Clawson, Dan, “Dollars and Votes” (excerpt) **</p> <p>Sobieraj, Sarah. Feb. 28, 2014. “Wrath of the Talking Heads: How the Outrage Media Affects Politics” <i>PBS</i>. **</p>
Day 18	Power, Authority, and the Media	<p>Anderson, “The Cosmopolitan Canopy” SF 58</p>



		Sternheimer, Karen, "Politics, Civility, and Social Change" Blog**
Day 19	A Divided America: Hope and Healing?	Study for Final Exam
Day 20	FINAL EXAM	Good luck and enjoy the rest of the summer!