

# Syllabus

## Introduction to Sociology

*Sociologist Peter Berger gives the following warning: "People who like to avoid shocking discoveries, who prefer to believe that society is just what they were taught in Sunday school, who like the safety of the rules... should stay away from Sociology."*

### Professor:

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### Texts and Materials:

The textbook for this course is digital and can be located in the UTA bookstore for an access code.

### Course Description:

Sociology is a social science. However, unlike psychology (which focuses on the individual), sociology focuses on human behavior in aggregates -- usually large aggregates, such as ethnic and racial groups, gender aggregates, whole societies, political parties, etc. This course introduces students to basic sociological concepts, research methods and findings, plus theories of human aggregate behavior and the actions of various taken by various types of human societies. Utilizing a sociological perspective, the interrelations among human societies, individuals, organizations, and groups are analyzed. Topics of analysis include culture, social interaction, social institutions, social stratification, community, and various social change strategies. Numerous contemporary social problems and issues are discussed.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

- To provide an introduction to the sociological perspective and to use this perspective to discuss and interpret human behavior.
- To identify and discuss a variety of topics related to social life; such as culture, socialization, deviance, stratification, and social change.
- To provide a strong foundation of sociology as a discipline in preparation for either additional classes within the field or for the enrichment of everyday social interactions.
- To better understand ourselves as an individual within society rather than apart from it.

## Useful Links:

- How to take good notes:  
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html?good+notes=http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html>
- Useful research links (from the UTA Library):  
<http://libguides.uta.edu/sociology>
- Powerful research and bibliography tool (free to UTA students)  
<http://libguides.uta.edu/refworks>

## Assignment and Grade Calculation:

Your grade will be based on nineteen chapter quizzes plus four discussions. The four discussions will occur as one assignment for each of the first four modules. In the last week of the course after taking the final chapter quiz, you have the option of taking a final exam that replaces all your chapter quiz grades for the complete term. In other words, some students may choose to accept the average of nineteen chapter quizzes for the quantitative portion of their overall grade (see below). OR, a student may elect to take a comprehensive (much more detailed) final objective exam in an attempt to replace the chapter quiz grades. In either case, part of your overall course grade will also include your scores on the four discussion posts required during the first four modules of the course. **IMPORTANT!** If you elect to take the comprehensive exam, your grade on that will replace your chapter quiz average, **EVEN IF** your grade on the final is lower than your average for the full set of chapter quizzes! So, be sure it's in your best interest to elect to take the comprehensive final. See the grade distribution for both options below.

Title	Percentage of Course Grade
<b>Quizzes</b> – A quiz will be given after each chapter assessing the content. There will be one quiz per chapter for a total of 19 quizzes throughout the course.	65%
<b>Discussions</b> – The students will be prompted with a discussion question that will cover the content of the first four modules. Students will engage in rich and meaningful discussion with each other.	25%
<b>Critical Thinking Questions</b> – Questions within the chapters for students to answer	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Grading Scale

90% and above: A

80 – 89%: B

70 – 79%: C

60 – 69%: D

Below 60%: F

IMPORTANT!!! The Coordinating Board of Texas Colleges and Universities based in Austin has decided ALL Intro to Sociology courses must include a new segment of material and an associated grade for this material. It WILL be REQUIRED of all course members, but if possible I intend to set it up so it provides only bonus points for each of the four modules already included in the course. I plan at this time that it will not decrease anyone's scores on the other course assessment tools. It will be issued the last week of the course and provide bonus points most likely. More details later.

Students will take the online exam at home, and use their class notes as well as textbook to complete it. The online exam is multiple choice but comprehensive (e.g., it covers materials discussed throughout the entire semester). Students are required to read newspaper articles, watch short films, and examine graphs in order to complete the online exam. It will be timed and students must work alone. It is NOT a group-based assessment. It addresses the following four Core Objectives mandated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

- *Critical Thinking Skills*—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- *Communication Skills*—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- *Social Responsibility*—to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- *Empirical and Quantitative Skills*—to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.

IMPORTANT!!! There is an optional (but perhaps risky) way to make an alternate final overall grade for the course based on the scheme seen just below. The grade created by following this scheme will replace ALL other course grades. The significance of this is that you can not only raise your overall course grade by this alternate method below, BUT ALSO you can LOWER your overall course grade depending on your performance on the following two criteria.

(Be sure to carefully read above regarding conditions.)

Title	Percentage of Course Grade
<b>Final Exam</b> – You have the option to take a comprehensive final exam during the last module of the course to replace the 19 chapter quizzes taken throughout the first four modules.	75%
<b>Discussions</b> – The students will be prompted with a discussion question that will cover the content of the first four modules. Students will engage in rich and meaningful discussion with each other.	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading Scale

90% and above: A

80 – 89%: B

70 – 79%: C

60 – 69%: D

Below 60%: F

### Course Policies:

#### Late Assignments:

Any assignments which are turned in late will have their scores reduced each day they are late unless the student has shown serious reasons in advance to the Coaches for the delay. This practice is frowned upon and only available for extreme circumstances, as you have a week to do the work.

#### Disabilities:

If you require an accommodation based on disability please let me know in private conversation or email during the first week of the semester, to make sure you are appropriately accommodated.

#### Drops from the Roll:

The Professor will not automatically drop any student from the roll. Students wishing to drop must make their own arrangements to do so.

#### Academic Honesty:

Students are expected to conform to UTA's policy on academic honesty. That policy is clearly stated in both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and should be reviewed by each student.

***If you don't know the rules re plagiarism or failure to cite other people's intellectual property, be sure to look these up now. Violations of academic dishonesty in general, and plagiarism, in particular, will be vigorously prosecuted.***

### **Student Success Programs**

The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

## Course Schedule:

Module 1 – Social Foundations	
<b>Week 1</b>	
Read: Chapter 1: Sociology: An Introduction	
Assessment: Chapter 1 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 1
Read: Chapter 2: The Tools of Sociology	
Assessment: Chapter 2 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 1
Read: Chapter 3: Culture	
Assessment: Chapter 3 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 1
<b>Week 2</b>	
Read: Chapter 4: Societies and Nations	
Assessment: Chapter 4 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 2
Module 1 Discussion	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 2
Module 2 – Social Dynamics	
Read: Chapter 5: Socialization	
Assessment: Chapter 5 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 2
Read: Chapter 6: Interaction in Groups	
Assessment: Chapter 6 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 2
<b>Week 3</b>	
Read: Chapter 7: Deviance and Social Control	
Assessment: Chapter 7 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 3
Read: Chapter 8: Collective Behavior, Social Movements, and Mass Publics	

Assessment: Chapter 8 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 3
Module 2 Discussion	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 3
<b>Module 3 – Social Divisions</b>	
<b>Week 4</b>	
Read: Chapter 9: Inequalities of Social Class	
Assesment: Chapter 9 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 4
Read: Chapter 10: Inequalities of Race and Ethnicity	
Assessment: Chapter 10 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 4
Read: Chapter 11: Inequalities of Gender	
Assessment: Chapter 11 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 4
<b>Week 5</b>	
Read: Chapter 12: Inequalities of Youth and Age	
Assessment: Chapter 12 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 5
Module 3 Discussion	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 5
<b>Module 4 – Social Institutions</b>	
Read: Chapter 13: The Family	
Assessment: Chapter 13 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 5
<b>Week 6</b>	
Read: Chapter 14: Religion	
Assessment: Chapter 14 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 6
Read: Chapter 15: Education and Communications Media	
Assessment: Chapter 15 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 6

<b>Week 7</b>	
Read: Chapter 16: Economic Institutions	
Assessment: Chapter 16 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 7
Read: Chapter 17: Politics and Political Institutions	
Assessment: Chapter 17 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 7
Module 4 Discussion	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 7
<b>Module 5 – Social Continuity and Change</b>	
<b>Week 8</b>	
Read: Chapter 18: Population, Urbanization, and Community	
Assessment: Chapter 18 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 8
Read: Chapter 19: Global Social Change	
Assessment: Chapter 19 Quiz	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 8
Complete Signature Assignment	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 8
<b>OPTIONAL</b>	
Comprehensive Final Exam (if applicable)	11:59 p.m., Sunday of Week 8