

SOSC1859
EXPLORING SOCIETY
Spring 2024

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Class Hour: Mon & Wed 12:00- 13:20 @ RM 2502

I. Course Aims

In his Invitation to Sociology (1963), Peter Berger describes a sociologist as one who is "concerned with understanding society in a disciplined way." This disciplined understanding leads us to see our everyday world in a new light, a light that C. Wright Mills calls "the sociological imagination"—the intersection of biography and history or the connection between personal troubles and public concerns. In this course you will take the first steps in developing your own sociological imaginations. With such imaginations you will better understand your fellow human beings in the social settings in which you find them and, just as importantly, learn to interact with them in more rational ways.

II. Intended Learning Outcome

| Intended Learning Outcomes | Intended Learning Activities |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An appreciation of the importance of sociology for understanding modern societies.• Basic understanding of sociological ideas and concepts• The ability to think sociologically• Develop the ability to propose and analyze sociological questions independently | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By discussing the relevance of sociological ideas in our lives• By reading the works of prominent sociologists• By undertaking a number of in-class experiments, exercises and discussions that will encourage you to see how your own behaviour is shaped by groups, culture and organizations |

III. Required Textbook

Ritzer, George, and Wendy W Murphy. Introduction to sociology. SAGE publications, 2019.

E-Book can be purchased at HKUST bookstore at 18% discount.
Library access: E-copy reserved for 2 hours at library

IV. Evaluation

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Final Grade Breakdown | |
| Midterm Exam | 25% |
| Group Project | 20% |
| Quiz | 10% |
| Final Report | 35% |
| Attendance & participation | 10% |

Attendance & Participation (10%)

Your attendance will be essential to participate in-class quiz which counts towards your participation grade. Quiz will be administrated during the class to record attendance. Please bring your laptop or cellphone to participate the in-class quiz.

Honesty is important. Please do not fake attendance or assist others to do so. You are also subjected to grade penalty (5 points off final grade) if you are caught in both scenarios.

To facilitate a lively and interactive learning environment, you are expected to participate in in-class discussions and group activities. You can also make effective contribution to collective learning by engaging in discussions on class, participating in polling, and providing thoughtful feedback through Menti.com. At the same time, be mindful to maintain proper discipline and behave in a responsible manner in class.

My teaching assistant will keep a record of the frequency and quality of your participation.

| Mark Range | Descriptors |
|------------|---|
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works collaboratively in a group setting in ways that are effective or productive.• Address all the questions with reflective thoughts.• Contributes to the understanding of the issues among your group. |
| 3-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begins to work collaboratively in a group setting or does so only somewhat appropriately.• Address some of the questions with reflective thoughts. |
| 1-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not work collaboratively in a group setting.• Your participation is marginal. |
| 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No participation at all. |

Quizzes(10%)

We will have 3 unannounced quizzes spread randomly over the semester. They will worth 10 points each and best 2 scores will count toward your final grade. Those quizzes assess your learning from the lectures, focusing on your basic conceptual understanding of the course material. Those quizzes consisting of multiple choices and short answers will be administrated on Canvas and take no longer than 10mins. No need to stress out and over prepare it if you attend the lecture attentively.

Mid-term Exam (25%)

The midterm consists of mainly multiple-choice questions to be answered in class. You are allowed to bring a one-page double-sided note to the exam.

In this course, no make-up exam will be granted. Only exceptions: officially documented surgical procedure, emergency room visit, or mandatory quarantine requirement (in this case, a doctor's note stating you are ill do not suffice). All made-ups consist of **an oral session that cover all materials in the course.**

Group project and Final Report (25% +30%)

The final project comprises two components: (1) a group Project (20%) and (2) an individual report (35%). Within this project, student teams will have the opportunity to select a sociological topic of personal interest. Each team member will be responsible for conducting separate interviews with their respective family members or relatives (or people at least 10 years older).

Students are expected to complete a comprehensive research report and deliver a group presentation by utilizing the interview data and other quantitative data they have gathered. The objective is to share their insights and understanding of the chosen sociological topic. For instance, they may explore the how their parents or grandparents met and factors influencing varying perspectives on marriage among individuals from diverse cohorts or societies.

Further guidelines for final project will be disseminated in due course.

V. Content and Schedule

INTRODUCTIONS

| Week | Dates | Lecture, readings, Movies, and Activities | Reading |
|---------|-------------------|---|---------------|
| Week 1 | Jan 31st | Introduction to The Course | |
| Week 2 | Feb 5th & 7th | Thinking Sociologically | Chapter 1 & 2 |
| Week 3 | Feb 14th | How sociologists do research | Chapter 3 |
| Week 4 | Feb 19th & 21st | Social structure and social interaction | Chapter 5 |
| Week 5 | Feb 26th & 28th | Organizations, Societies, and Global Relationship | Chapter 6 |
| Week 6 | Mar 4th & 6th | Social Stratification | Chapter 9 |
| Week 7 | Mar 11th & 13th | Global Stratification | Chapter 10 |
| Week 8 | Mar 18th & 20th | Sex and gender I | Chapter 11 |
| Week 9 | Mar 25th & 27th | Mid-term | Documentary |
| Week 10 | April 8th & 10th | Sex and gender II | Extra Reading |
| Week 11 | April 15th & 17th | Family | Chapter 12 |
| Week 12 | April 22nd & 24th | Education | Chapter 13 |
| Week 13 | April 29th | Social change and the environment | Chapter 22 |
| Week 14 | May 6th & 8th | Student Presentation and Feedback | |

RULES AND PROCEDURES

Course Policy

1. Cheating and plagiarism are strictly forbidden. These violations of academic integrity will result in serious consequence besides failing the class, like a note on your official transcript about cheating, which will significantly impact your future career. You can find the university's regulations on academic integrity from the following website: <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/student-1.html>.
2. Attendance and participation requirements and exam arrangements are subjected to change if the university switches to mixed mode teaching in the middle of the semester.
3. Late submission will be subject to a penalty of 20% deduction of grade per day.
4. Assignments and exams will be graded by TA. If you have disputes about the grade, you can ask for a blind re-evaluation by the instructor in a four-day time window after the grade is released (refer to future class announcements for further details). After the re-evaluation, your grade may increase, decrease, or remain the same. So, think carefully before you file for a grade dispute on exams.

Email Policy:

1. Please email the instructor for any issues related to the course content and grade.
2. Please email the teaching assistants (both) for questions regarding Canvas, Zoom, Library, and class attendance.
3. Please title your email SOSC1850-Your Name-Issues. You will NOT reach out to us via Canvas Inbox.
4. During the workdays (Monday-Friday), we will try to respond to your email within 24 hours. Please send us a reminder if you do not hear back from us in two days. Expect a delay in response until the next workday if you contact us during the weekend or holidays.

Special Notes

1. A special note to **students are considering taking another course by Prof. Zheng**: As Understanding Globalization classes, it is unavoidable that there will be some overlap between these two classes. I do not encourage you to take both classes. It is better that you get a broader perspective in the social sciences by taking classes from other professors. If, however, you do decide to take both classes, please allow other students in class to answer questions that you may already know the answer to from Sosc2290. I do appreciate your cooperation with this.
2. A special Note to **Final Year Students**. This is an introductory core course, and it is designed primarily for First Year Students. Their English and study skills may not be as developed as yours and they may be taking a social science course for the first time. I care that every student performs well, so I will be making special efforts to go slowly and make frequent summaries of what we have covered so that they can follow. I do appreciate your patience while I do this. I encourage you to take more advanced classes if you feel that this course is too introductory for you.

Special Needs

We are still in the midst of pandemic. If you think you need extra help, please reach out to special education needs at <https://sen.hkust.edu.hk/>.

**The syllabus is subject to change.