



## SC101: Intro to Sociology

### Course Description:

This online course introduces the student to the study of society and the interaction of the individuals within a society. Major areas of study include the concepts and theory of sociology, culture, social structure, and social change.

### Instructor:

Robert Gee, (207) 947-4591 x381

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Office hours: online, by appointment, or after class meetings.

### Class Schedule:

Mod 2: October 29 to December 21, 2018.

The course is delivered online in Edvance360. Lessons and activities are asynchronous and divided out by week according to the schedule below.

### Course texts:

All reading assignments are available in Edvance360. Additional materials may be assigned as the term progresses. Any additional material will be provided in the same manner.

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001 (as PDF)  
OpenStax, *Introduction to Sociology 2e*. OpenStax CNX. May 28, 2018.

<http://cnx.org/contents/02040312-72c8-441e-a685-20e9333f3e1d@9.6>.

*Serial*, Season 1, <https://serialpodcast.org/season-one>

### Instructional Methods:

This course will feature a combination of lecture, discussion, and debate during class time, supported by audio, video, and pertinent presentation tools that pertain to weekly topics. It will also encourage experiential learning and independent research to broaden the perspectives we are developing in our weekly meetings. It will use Edvance360 to catalog weekly assignments, administer assessments, communicate to students, and manage grades.

### Course Objectives:

This course, by necessity, engages with themes that are not always comfortable to talk about. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to create a learning space that is both safe for us to entertain provocative questions and wide-ranging, often unpopular opinions, but also respectful of one another—embracing as both valid and valuable all our diverging ideas and perspectives. A classroom is, in and of itself, a form of community, an association of individuals united for a purpose. We can be challenged, therefore, to be ever mindful of the nature of individual and group dynamics in the room, and what they might have to tell us about the nature of larger communities. That said, here are some specific objectives for the course:

- Appreciate the theoretical frameworks that support modern sociological study and the contributions of past and present practitioners who have cultivated them.
- Understand the origins of the discipline of sociology and how it informs institutions, social structures, and individuals.
- Observe and analyze how societies are constructed, endure, and change.
- Contextualize the dynamics of social institutions such as families, education, religion, politics, economics, deviance, and technology, using sociological methods.
- Recognize identity, status, roles, socialization, social structure, bureaucracy, social movements, collective behavior, globalization, social mobility, and social stratification using sociological concepts and methods.
- Develop a sociological lens with which to view modern media and popular culture and how they filter news, sports, food, education, politics and the arts.
- Explain contemporary social inequality and grouping, alienation, and discrimination based upon gender, age, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, and social class.
- Think critically and develop an ability to critically assess sources of data, analytical frameworks, and scholarly conclusions.
- Develop written and oral communication skills through the presentation, discussion, and application of complex concepts and ideas.

### **Tentative Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 1 & 2.

Ehrenreich, Introduction

*Serial*, episode 1

Introductions, course overview.

The origins of sociology, key theoretical frameworks

Sociological tools and modes of research and analysis

Quiz 1: complete in Edvance360 by midnight on Sunday, Nov 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Week 2**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 3 & 5

Ehrenreich, chapter 1

*Serial*, episodes 2 & 3

The origins, ingredients, and functions of culture

Project proposals and group selection

Socialization, nature and nurture, stages of development, and learning

Quiz 2: due Sunday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

Research Proposal due Sunday, Nov 11<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

**Week 3**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 4 & 6  
 Ehrenreich, chapter 2  
*Serial*, episodes 4 & 5

Social interactions and social structure

Groups, societies, and their uses of culture

Quiz 3: due Sunday, Nov 18<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

**Week 4**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 7 & 9  
*Serial*, episodes 6 & 7

Social deviance and crime

The realities of social stratification

Midterm Exam: due Sunday, Nov 25<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

**Week 5**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 11 & 12  
 Ehrenreich, chapter 3  
*Serial*, episodes 8 & 9

Race and ethnicity

Gender, sexuality, and the politics of identity

Quiz 4: due Sunday, Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> at midnight.

**Week 6**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 17 & 18  
 Ehrenreich, Conclusion  
*Serial*, episodes 10 & 11

Government and politics

Work and the economy

Quiz 5: due Sunday, Dec 9<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

Final Essay: due Sunday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

**Week 7**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapter 16

*Serial*, episode 12

Education: Perceptions, realities, and approaches to teaching and learning

Social issues, demographics, and the sociology of Maine

Quiz 6: Due Sunday, Dec 16<sup>th</sup> at midnight

## **Week 8**

Readings: *Introduction to Sociology*, chapters 8 & 21

Monsters of our own creation: technology, media, and social media  
Presentations

Activism, progress and social change

Final Exam: Due Thursday, Dec 20<sup>th</sup> at noon.

## **Assignments and Grading:**

**Quizzes:** There will be six (6) quizzes given in Edvance360 at the end of each week that does not include an exam (Week 4 and Week 8). They will include questions relating to your weekly readings as well as issues and examples raised in lectures, discussions and debates during class time. Questions will be designed to gauge your wholistic participation in the course as well as your consumption and understanding of course content. The quizzes will collectively represent 15% of your final grade.

**Exams:** There will be two (2) exams during the eight week term—one roughly half way through and another during the last week. Like the quizzes, the exams will be taken in Edvance360. This way you can work in a comfortable space, on your own time, and consult all of the course materials to respond to questions. Be aware, though, that this is only an advantage if you are familiar with all the course materials already. Waiting until the exams to try to do the readings and answer the questions will be excruciating if even possible—but perhaps a torture that you deserve should you pursue such a strategy! The exams will each be worth 20% of your final grade.

**Participation:** A central component of participation is, obviously, presence. You are expected to keep up with course readings and assignments. Should personal circumstances impede your ability to maintain conventional participation standards you need to make me aware immediately so that we can devise an alternative method for you to remain active and engaged in the course. The more subjective component of participation is what you contribute to the class. Are you making substantive contributions to discussions, asking informed questions of your instructor and classmates, and engaging respectfully with what others have to say? Or are you taking up space (actual or virtual!), dividing focus between your phone and the clock, and speaking only when there is an opportunity to disrupt? You do not need to raise your hand and answer every

question posed to score well here—but if you make yourself an obstacle to other people’s learning, you will see that reflected clearly in this portion of your grade. Participation will be worth 15% of your final grade and will reflect your performance in both formal and informal discussion threads.

**Research Project:** You will conduct some sociological research, examine existing literature on a topic of interest, develop and analyze data, and form some conclusions as to the potential applications, flaws, biases, and perspectives of your findings. You will propose your topic and report on the results of some preliminary research in a brief proposal essay, due at the end of week 2. You will then report on your research process and findings in a broader essay, due at the end of Week 6. Finally, working in groups that will be based on generalized sociological themes—you will prepare presentations that elaborate on your individual research and demonstrate how it fits into a broader discussion of your group’s theme and the content we have explored in the course. More detailed assignment descriptions and rubrics will be available in Edvance360. The whole project will comprise 30% of your final grade. Within that, the proposal essay will be worth 5%, the final essay 15%, and your group presentation 10%.

As with all Beal College courses, it is expected that between your readings, written work, quizzes and exams you will be dedicating about 2 hours of additional time per week for every hour of class time, or about 10 hours, to responsibly keeping pace with the course.

In summary:

Quizzes:	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	15%
Research Project:	
Proposal	5%
Final Essay	15%
Presentation	10%
Total:	100%

Assignment grades will be managed and always available to the student through Edvance360, and final letter grades will be determined in accordance with the Beal College grading scale articulated on page 27 of the Course Catalog.

([https://www.bealcollege.edu/images/assets/docs/Beal\\_College\\_Catalog.pdf](https://www.bealcollege.edu/images/assets/docs/Beal_College_Catalog.pdf))

**Late work:** This is a career-oriented school and in the professional world for which you are training deadlines matter. Therefore, we would be remiss in our training if they did not matter here as well. If you will miss a deadline for the submission of work you need to make me aware *in advance* of that deadline. Crises emerge and tragedies happen and I can be understanding when they do. But you must make me aware of situations as they happen and let me know how you intend to maintain your obligations to the course as you deal with unexpected life events. If I haven’t seen or heard from you within a week of an assignment due date, it is a 0. Also, I will not

accept an essay for which I have received no proposal. Nor will I accept them if submitted simultaneously.

**Research Support:** Donna Bancroft and the Beal College Library are resources that all students should utilize. Donna maintains a resource page for this course at:

<http://bealcollege.libguides.com/Sociology> You can also link to this page from our course page in Edvance360. She can also help you to navigate the MARVEL databases that provide access to some of the most recent and important sociological work being published. She can be especially helpful in providing materials to help you identify and cultivate a research topic and conduct a review of pertinent literature on that topic.

**Student Conduct:** Please consult the Course Catalog, beginning on page 22, for the Beal College Code of Conduct. Naturally, any standards of decorum that apply to the Beal campus generally also apply to your conduct in this class. Also note that Edvance360 will be considered a part of this class—any contributions to discussion threads or submission of written work will be held to the same standards of decorum and professionalism that are maintained in the classroom itself, regardless of where you may be sitting when you make them.

**Academic Dishonesty:** From the Beal College catalog, pp. 23-24:

“Beal College does not condone the practice of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating on an examination or a quiz, copying a paper and submitting it as one's own, plagiarism and collusion or aiding in academic dishonesty. Plagiarism includes using the words and thoughts of another author without the author's approval, representing that author's work as one's own, and not crediting the original author. This includes copying from Internet sources. For example, a student cannot copy all or part of an article and put it into his or her own paper without putting the copied material in quotation marks and clearly citing the source.

“Any student accused of academic dishonesty may be brought before the Academic Advisory Committee and the instructor to analyze and interpret facts as they pertain to the offense. Disciplinary academic action taken for the offense of academic dishonesty may include a grade of zero on an assignment, withdrawal from the course with a grade of ‘F’, suspension, a mandatory program change, expulsion from Beal College or other actions.”

**Tutoring and Accommodations:** The Beal College catalog directs students to their instructor, the program director, or the registrar to request tutoring support or accommodations where necessary. I hope that you will feel comfortable enough to approach me directly should you have any difficulties with the course content, design, or pace. If not please feel free to notify Sue Hawes, Dean of Education, or Stephanie Mishou, Registrar, so that we can begin to coordinate the appropriate forms of academic support to ensure your success in the course and beyond.

**Announcements:** I will use Edvance360 to communicate any changes to the course schedule, including delays or cancellations of class sessions, amendments to assignment descriptions or rubrics, and additions or adjustments to weekly readings and course materials. I will also post research materials and further readings for students based on their research proposals and

maintain a space for students to ask questions of me and converse with one another outside of the classroom. When class is not actively in session, it will be continuously running in Edvance360.

**Fire Procedure:** When the fire alarm sounds, all faculty, staff, students, and visitors are required to evacuate the building. Exit the building by means of the designated exits, as quickly as possible.

When the alarm sounds:

- Remain calm and focused.
- Keep talking to a minimum
- Walk. Do not run. Do not panic.
- Close all doors as you leave.
- Exit in an orderly fashion with no more than two people abreast.
- Be prepared to assist people with special needs.

Instructors are to bring their attendance sheet and escort their class from the building. Direct students to use the closest exit and remain together as a group. If smoke hampers your means of exit, find an alternative route.

All faculty, staff, students and visitors should meet near the light pole at the far left corner of the parking lot near I 395. Do not return to the building until cleared to do so by the Crisis Team or the Bangor Fire Department.