

Oswego State University  
**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY**  
**SOC 100**

Instructor: **Prof. Holly Dobbins**  
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Fall 2009, Tues & Thurs 3:55 pm – 5:15 pm  
Office Hours: TTH 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

If you have ever wondered why people do the things that they do, especially when they are together with other people, then you have already engaged in the practice of sociology. We humans, being social creatures by nature, grow up practicing sociology – studying and observing how people behave when they are together. It is how we learn what behaviors are acceptable and which are not. What brings us closer? What draws us apart? Who's part of the in-crowd; who's alienated and from whom? How does all of that impact everyone on various levels?

Together we will try to understand the impact that variables such as gender, family, race, language, culture, belief, economics, social class, education, and social institutions such as government and even media/technology have upon people's relationships and behaviors. Through this journey we will also develop an awareness of both the benefits and the limits of sociology in helping to make better communities.

**SEMINAR OBJECTIVES:**

- (1) To gain a deeper understanding of the field of sociology through exposure to a broad range of topics and contemporary issues presented through lectures, readings, discussions, and writing assignments.
- (2) To develop a "sociological imagination" in order to understand how history, culture, and science are interwoven in the study of social structure and social interaction.
- (3) To gain a greater mastery of some of the research methodologies, skills, and tools of analytical thought (observation and listening, identifying problems, finding relationships, , problem-solving etc.) in the field of Sociology. Students will put these into practice through discussion, debate, presentation and brainstorming the viewpoints, concepts, issues, theories and tools presented in both the seminars and readings.
- (4) To get the most out of higher education through the development of an open mind, critical thinking, improved written and oral communication ability, and through the ability to connect academic study to real-world events and situations.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Henslin, James 2007. *Down to Earth Sociology. Introductory Readings.* The Free Press. (est. cost \$8 used)

Johnson, Alan G. 2008. *The Forest and the Trees. Sociology as Life, Practice and Promise.* Temple University Press: Philadelphia. (est. cost \$8 used)

**Cliffs Quick Review: Sociology.** 2000. Wiley Publishing. (est cost \$2 used)

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. 1892. *Yellow Wallpaper.* (est cost \$3 used)

All of the course books are or will be available both through the Oswego State University Bookstore and Kraftee's Bookstore on 104. However, it should also be noted that you can often purchase these books on-line and used at usually ¾ to ½ the cover price. Some on-line search engines include: abebooks.com, alibris.com, addall.com in addition to amazon.com. You will also need access the internet to read **ON-LINE MEDIA** assignments, follow the links on the syllabus, or make sure to copy websites from the board in class during discussion

**REQUIRED VIEWING/LISTENING:**

**Bill Moyers Journal** PBS WCNY Channel 24, Friday 10:30 pm.

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/index-flash.html>

**Tell Me More with Michel Martin**, National Public Radio (NPR) WRVO 89.9 FM  
Weekdays 1:00 to 2:00 pm or online streamed or podcast:  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=46>  
(Students are expected to listen a minimum of once weekly, preferably T/TH)

RECOMMENDED VIEWING:

**NOW**, PBS WCNY Channel 24, Friday 9:30 pm  
<http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/432/index.html>

**PROFESSOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**CLASS:** You can expect that I will attend class. If, for unseen circumstances, I cannot come to class I will email the class as soon as possible, and will post a note outside the door. Because I commute, please wait the traditional “academic quarter” or **15 minutes** from the start of class time before you depart. Use the wait time for discussion. After that you may depart and take a “READING DAY”, using the time to read for class or meet in study groups. This will only take place in the most extreme of weather conditions. If this situation should arise, please check for class discussion on the Angel website.

**CONTACT:** I have regular office hours. That is the best way to communicate your interests with me. If you do not have an email account or never use it, **get one and learn how to use it!** There may be times when an unexpected change in class could take place and the department may need to notify you. Please make sure I have your current email address.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

✧ **ATTEND CLASS:** Participation is a significant part of your grade, and you cannot participate if you are not here. You must notify me of absences in advance, and excused absences must be demonstrable through written documentation. Because of the natures of T/TH classes, **TWO** unexcused absences will result in a drop of one letter grade for the course. **Excused** absences that become too numerous will also result in a drop in your grade.

✧ **READ AND PREPARE AHEAD:** Nothing is more rewarding than coming to class prepared, and it is so easy to get behind if you miss just one reading deadline. Students are expected to have read each assignment prior to the class date listed in the syllabus. Expect to be quizzed on readings.

✧ **TAKE NOTES:** Good note taking is often the key to good performance and understanding. Students **must take notes in class**. You are required to take notes on all aspects of the course, whether lecture, discussion, film or other activities. If you are not sure what areas should be highlighted, or what the main focus of your notes should be, then ask! Notes on readings and at home viewing will be turned in as part of your “Conversations in Sociology” Log Book.

✧ **PARTICIPATE:** Students are expected to participate in class discussions by drawing on the assigned readings, on their own personal or professional backgrounds, and by sharing other sources of information with the class relevant to the topic (for example newspaper articles, scholarly and scientific literature, or popular literature.) The value of the seminar depends heavily on the nature of our conversation over the semester. Active participation will be reflected in your final grade. The converse is also true.

**GRADING:** Participation can “make” or “break” your final grade, therefore take all assignments seriously. Participation is built into the overall grade that you receive.

**Participation grade guidelines**

A	Student is actively engaged in the class, contributing regularly to class discussions.
B	Student is engaged in the class, contributing often to class discussions.
C	Student is engaged in the class, but rarely contributes to class discussions.
D	Student is not engaged in the class, rarely contributing to class discussions.

E	Student is not engaged in the class, never contributing to class discussions.
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ASSIGNMENTS	DUE	PERCENTAGE
Mid-Term Exam	10/22	25%
Log Book	9/24 & 11/24	25%
Two Issue "Think" Papers	9/24 & 11/24	25%
Final Exam	12/16	25%

Development of written skills will be an essential component of this course. Good thinking skills and good writing skills go together. If your writing skills could use improvement, I would encourage you to make use of the Writing Center. Demonstrable improvement in writing skills throughout the course will be rewarded in your final grade.

**Midterm and Final Examinations:** All students must take both the mid term and final exams. These exams will be based on class lectures, discussions, viewings and readings and will be a combination of T/F, multiple-choice, short answer/essay questions. Note: Exams CANNOT be made up without a doctor's note or other documentation of a legitimate explanation as to why you were unable to attend class. Missing the assignment deadline or exam without previous arrangement with the professor/department chair or a documented emergency will result in a grade of zero.

**LOG BOOK:** This is a hard copy loose leaf journal, separate from your class notebook, that will be turned in periodically for comments and review. It must be loose leaf so that additional pages can be added later, even when turned in for review. The format of the front cover must include the title "Conversations in Sociology," and the student name.

Content will include brief reflections on the class readings, organized by author, as well as reflections upon a relevant topic or sociological issue discussed or covered on PBS or NPR. For each entry, you must identify the source (author, book, tv program, date, speaker), the topic, and then relate what you learned through the experience of listening or viewing that portion of the program and reflecting upon it.

**THINK PAPERS:** These are critical thought papers on a relevant topic or sociological issue taken from readings, class or media. These summary think papers must be no more than two pages in length, and must be turned in with a cover page including a title, your name, course information, and date.

The criteria for such think papers are that they should include: 1) an introduction that concisely states the topic, the thesis question, and the writer's interest in the topic; 2) a body that briefly and equally covers OPPOSING sides of the issue with regard to two or three specific points; and 3) a conclusion that clearly details what the author has learned through the process of researching and reflecting upon the topic. (See detailed handout for further guidelines.)

Late assignments will be marked down each day they are late (e.g. A- to B+), unless you make prior arrangements with the professor and provide documentation of an emergency situation. NO late papers will be accepted more than 5 days after the due date.

Log Book and Think Paper Grading Rubric:

Organization.	How well organized is it?	20%
Clarity.	How clear are the entries?	20%
Completeness.	How complete/on task is the assignment?	20%
Depth.	How deeply does the student reflect?	20%
Fairness.	How well does the student consider both sides?	20%

### GENERAL CLASS POLICIES

**ACCOMMODATION:** Students who require accommodation are very welcome. Please contact me for an appointment to discuss how we can meet your accommodation needs. Be sure to bring your letter from the Office of Disability Services. If you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (226 Hewitt Union x-3358). Alternative testing for students with learning disabilities is available through Disability Services.

**CONDUCT/ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** I expect an atmosphere of mutual respect, regardless of the topics being discussed or the differences of opinion that might exist. This is, after all, the point of higher education – to develop critical thinking skills and become more open to new ideas, even when we may not necessarily agree with them. Please consult your Student Handbook for university policies on conduct, also to know your rights as a student.

If you need help learning the materials, get advice, tutors, or take fewer classes so that you can do well. Cheating and plagiarism always have dire consequences. Cheating and plagiarism most commonly involve either presenting work that is not your own, or passing off as your work something conceived or written by someone else. People have had their degrees and professional certifications revoked, even years after the offense. Ultimately, you do not get away with it; either you are caught – or you find yourself in a job that you are unable to do because you did not learn the necessary skills – which leads to unemployment. Please read the university policy: [http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy\\_text.html#cpji](http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy_text.html#cpji).

**SARCASM / RIDICULE:** Sarcasm and ridicule, hallmarks of the closed mind, are generally employed by people who either cannot or refuse to think critically. Sarcasm does is not a form of humor; it is a means to belittle, denigrate and show disdain for others and their ideas. The purpose of ridicule is to hurt others by making them feel inferior. Use of either sarcasm or ridicule as devices in your papers will result in a zero-grade; their use in the classroom will result in the offending student being asked to apologize to the entire class or to leave.

**USE OF COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** The use of computers (laptops, netbooks) is prohibited during class. All electronic devices including cellphones, iphones, psp's, ipods, mp3's etc., must be turned off and stowed in your backpacks or bags throughout the class session. Do not walk into the classroom with an active device. (If you are experiencing a family emergency and must be reachable, then notify me in advance of the situation and I will give you permission to have your cell phone on vibrate mode.)

**FINAL RULE, HAVE FUN:** Interacting with peers, colleagues, teachers and professors is the fun part of university learning. Relax, speak your mind, and do not be afraid to laugh (or cry).

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:

“If the society today allows the wrongs to unchallenged, the impression is created that those wrongs have the approval of the majority.” Barbara Jordan, *Democratic Convention 1976*

<b>WEEK ONE:</b>	<b>9/1</b>	<b>9/3</b>	<b>What is Sociology?</b>
<b>READINGS:</b>			
9/1	Dobbins: Syllabus		
9/3	Henslin: 1- 19 (Berger & Henslin)		

### ON-LINE MEDIA:

<https://oswego.sln.suny.edu/section/default.asp?id=200909-OSW-SOC-100-810>  
(Angel Course Website)

<b>WEEK TWO:</b>	<b>9/8</b>	<b>9/10</b>	<b>The Sociological Imagination</b>
<b>READINGS:</b>			
9/8	Henslin: 20-28 (C Wright Mills)		
9/10	Johnson: 1-20		

### ON-LINE MEDIA:

<b>WEEK THREE:</b>	<b>9/15</b>	<b>9/17</b>	<b>Practicing Sociology</b>
<b>READINGS:</b>			
9/15	Henslin: 29- 47;48-64		
9/17	Johnson: 20 - 36		

### ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.asanet.org/>

**Monday 9/21 Rosh Hashanah -NO CLASS [Does not affect T/TH classes]**

**WEEK FOUR: 9/22 9/24 Culture and Self-Awareness**

**READINGS:**

9/22 Henslin: 75-83;100-128  
9/24 Johnson: 37-53



**LOG BOOKS and THINK PAPER #1 DUE**

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

Why We Hate Us! By Dick Meyer

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93261726>

**WEEK FIVE: 9/29 10/1 Boxes and Norms**

**Thurs 10/28 Yom Kippur and Fall Break – NO CLASS 9/29**

**READINGS:**

9/29 Gilman: Yellow Wallpaper 7-36 (HOLD DISCUSSION UNTIL THURS)  
10/1 Gilman: Yellow Wallpaper 37-62

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.scribblingwomen.org/cgwallpaper.htm>

**WEEK SIX: 10/6 10/8 Gender Roles**

**READINGS:**

10/6 Henslin: 129-181  
10/8 Johnson: 53-75

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.unifem.org/campaigns/vaw/>

<http://news.mensactivism.org/>

**WEEK SEVEN: 10/13 10/15 Socialization and Review**

**READINGS:**

10/13 Cliffs 1-68  
10/15 Cliffs 141-174

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://maxweber.hunter.cuny.edu/~bseegmil/psych150/lifestag.htm>

**WEEK EIGHT: 10/20 10/22 The Structures of Social Life**

**READINGS:**

10/20 Henslin: 183 -243  
10/22 Johnson 76-110



**MID-TERM EXAM 10/22**

**WEEK NINE: 10/27 10/29 Deviance and Control**

**READINGS:**

10/27 Henslin 245-306  
10/29 Cliffs 69 -86; Henslin 447-457

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

[http://www.cnycentral.com/news/news\\_story.aspx?id=337206](http://www.cnycentral.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=337206)

**WEEK TEN: 11/3 11/5 Inequality**

**READINGS:**

11/3 Henslin 307 – 359  
11/5 Johnson 111 - 129

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_in_the_United_States)

<http://www.splcenter.org/>

**WEEK ELEVEN:      11/10                      11/12                      Social Institutions**

**READINGS:**

11/10 Hanslin 361-410

11/12 JohnsOn 130-151

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/audio/cornelwest.html>

<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/nobels.html>

**WEEK TWELVE:      11/17                      11/19                      Words**

**READINGS:**

11/17 Hanslin 411-433; 458-469

11/19 Cliffs 99 – 112; 175-188

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

[http://www.religioustolerance.org/var\\_rel.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/var_rel.htm)

<http://www.indiancountrytoday.com/>

**WEEK THIRTEEN:      11/24                      Get Up Stand Up**

**READINGS:**

11/24 Cliffs 205-238



***LOG BOOKS and THINK PAPER #2 DUE***

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.graypanthers.org/>

**Weds 11/25 – 11/29 Thanksgiving Recess**

**WEEK FOURTEEN:      12/1                      12/3                      Social Change**

**READINGS:**

12/1 Henslin 471-495

12/3 Cliffs 189-204

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.rwjf.org/reports/grr/026422.htm>

You Tube: Prof. Richard Wilkinson

**WEEK FIFTEEN:      12/8                      12/10                      The Promise**

**READINGS:**

12/8 Johnson 152-170

12/10 Johnson 171-186

**ON-LINE MEDIA:**

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/08/12/medal.of.freedom/>



***FINAL EXAM  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2:00 – 4:00 PM***

**EVENT OPPORTUNITIES: Extra Credit Booster**

Those students who choose to attend an outside lecture or event, that is not part of their other classes, and summarize the experience in **one page or less** may have it considered for extra credit.

**STUDY GROUP: Extra Credit Booster**

Students who form a “study group” and submit a one-page summary that includes who was present, some of what was discussed, and one thing learned will receive 5 points of extra credit for every group meeting summary submitted. (Note: all group members must submit separate summaries.)

**INDEPENDENT RESEARCH: Extra Credit Booster**

Students who take the initiative to conduct internet and other research to explore any topic or issue more deeply and submit the results of their research in a one-page summary that includes both the sites/data and a statement as to why the sites are relevant may receive up to 5 points extra credit to be applied to assignment grades.