

Sociology 131: Principles of Sociology
Sec. 2: T-Th: 9:30-11:00; AB1, Room 304
Spring 2008; 3 credit hours

Instructor: Dr. Douglas H. Constance **Office Hours:** T/TH: 12:30 - 1:30;
Office: 311D AB1 Monday 10:00 -12:00 or by
Phone: 936-294-1514 appointment.
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Required Texts:

John Macionis, **Society: The Basics**. Ninth Edition.
John Steinbeck, **The Grapes of Wrath**

Course Description: This is an introductory level class that provides a general overview of the discipline of sociology. The class begins with a historical summary of the development of sociology and then moves on to cover the substantive areas such as theory/methods, culture, socialization, social interaction, groups, and deviance. The middle section of the class deals with issues of inequality related to social class, race, ethnicity, and gender. The last portion of the class focuses on the societal institutions of marriage and the family, religion, education, politics and the economy, as well as population and social change. This class uses the novel “Grapes of Wrath” as a teaching tool to help students apply various sociological concepts to societal events. During the class students will demonstrate basic computer skills such as downloading and sending files and searching the internet.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To acquire a working knowledge of basic sociological concepts and principles.
- 2) To use the novel “The Grapes of Wrath” to illustrate the link between history and sociology.
- 3) To develop a “SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION.”
- 4) For students to learn to apply sociological concepts to their lives and social events.
- 5) For students to learn to think critically about their lives and social events.

Exams and Quizzes: There will be five quizzes and three exams during the semester for a total of 400 possible points. The three exams will be worth 100 points each and will cover the readings and the lectures. The exams will be true/false and multiple-guess. The five quizzes will be worth 25 points each and will also cover the readings and the lectures. The lowest quiz score will be dropped. The remaining four quizzes will be worth a maximum of 100 points. The quizzes will be true/false, fill in the blank, multiple guess, and short answer. Students may make-up missed exams if they notify the professor ahead of the exam date and provide documentation regarding his/her absence for the exam.

Extra Credit: Students will have the opportunity to choose TWO of THREE possible 10 point extra credit opportunities. The first extra-credit opportunity will be to volunteer at a community service organization for at least five hours and write a two-page paper that describes the sociological aspects of the volunteer experience. A contact number and phone number at the volunteer site is also required. For the second extra credit you need to use concepts you have learned from class and in the chapter on deviance and interpret deviant behavior you have witnessed as part of your college experience. The requirements for the paper will be down loaded from Blackboard. The third extra-credit opportunity is to attend the “Study Skills Workshop Series” sponsored by the SAM Center. This is a series of six one-hour weekly study skill sessions

designed to improve your student skills. Call the SAM Center at 294-4444 to register for a session time. You will receive 1 point for each session you attend. If you complete all six sessions you will receive a total of 10 points. The SAM Center will provide you a “card” of attendance that must be provided to me on or before the final exam. A study guide will be provided. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these extra credit opportunities.

Grading: Final grades will be curved according to the highest total points out of the possible 400. For example, if the highest grade in the class is 377/400 total points, then $A = .90 \times 377 = 339$ points; $B = .80 \times 377 = 270$; $C = .70 \times 377 = 243$; $D = .60 \times 377 = 218$; and $F =$ below 218.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes and participate fully in class activities. A record of attendance will be maintained by the instructor. Punctual attendance is also expected of each student. Please be respectful and arrive to class on time. Students are expected to show appropriate cause for both absences and tardiness and are also expected to initiate action to satisfy all missed class work. Failure to do so will affect grades.

Instructor Evaluations: Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive an F for that assignment with more severe sanctions as appropriate.

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center and then arrange a conference with the instructor at the very beginning of the semester in order that accommodations can be made to assure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

Religious Holidays: The Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. “Religious Holy Day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. Students should contact the instructor as soon as possible regarding any missed classes due to “Religious Holy Days”.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students shall arrive to class on time and be respectful to their other students. If a student needs to arrive to class late or leave class early the student will

make the professor aware of these needs prior to class time. All cell phones, iPods, and beepers must be turned off and stowed away while in the classroom. Students who disrupt the class will be contacted by the professor to adjust their behaviors. In extreme cases students who cannot comply with these requirements can be removed and resigned from the class.

Visitors to the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to the class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor is allowed to remain in the classroom.

Schedule of Reading Assignments, Quizzes, and Exams:

Week of:

Jan. 14: Macionis: Ch. 1 - Sociology: Perspective, Theory, and Method
Steinbeck: Ch. 1-5

Jan. 21: Macionis: Ch. 1 - Sociology: Perspective, Theory, and Method
Steinbeck: Ch. 6-10

Jan. 28: Macionis: Ch. 2 - Culture
Quiz 1: Thursday 31st.

Feb. 4: Macionis: Ch. 3 - Socialization: From Infancy to Old Age
Macionis: Ch. 4 - Social Interaction in Everyday Life
Steinbeck: Ch. 11-13

Feb. 11: Macionis: Ch. 5 - Groups and Organizations
Steinbeck: Ch. 14-16
Quiz 2: Thursday 14th.

Feb. 18: Macionis: Ch. 6 - Sexuality and Society
Macionis : Ch. 7 -Deviance

Feb. 24: Macionis: Ch. 7 -Deviance
Exam 1: Thursday the 27th.

March 3: Macionis: Ch. 8 - Social Stratification
Steinbeck: Ch. 17-20

March 10: Spring Break

March 17: Macionis: Ch. 9 - Global Stratification
Deviance Extra Credit due Tuesday the 18th.
Quiz 3: Thursday the 14th.

March 24: Macionis : Ch. 10 - Gender Stratification
Steinbeck: Ch. 21-23

March 31: Macionis : Ch. 11 - Race and Ethnicity
Macionis Ch. 13 - Family and Religion
Steinbeck: Ch. 24-25.

- April 7: Quiz 4: Tuesday the 8th.
Macionis: Ch. 14 - Education, Health, and Medicine
- April 14: Exam 2: Tuesday the 15th.
Macionis: Ch. 12 - Economics and Politics
Steinbeck: Ch. 26-27.
- April 21: Macionis: Ch. 12 - Economics and Politics
Macionis: Ch. 15 - Population, Urbanization, and Environment
Steinbeck: Ch. 28-30 (finish)
- April 28: Macionis: Ch. 15 - Population, Urbanization, and Environment
Quiz #5: Thursday, May 1st.
- May 5: Macionis: Ch. 16 - Social Change: Modern and PostModern Societies
Volunteering Extra Credit Due on Tuesday the 6th.
- May 12: **Final Exam: Tuesday, May 13 from 8 - 10 a.m.**