

ASOC 17A00 - INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed as a general introduction to sociology, this course will give you a first broad presentation of the specificities of the discipline within the humanities and social sciences, of some of its main theories and research practices, and of the different topics it addresses to describe and analyze the world we live in. As we will see, as a non-normative, empirical and analytical approach, sociology provides essential methodological and theoretical tools to reflect upon the state and transformations of the contemporary world, but also to better understand one's position in society and the motives of one's action. It helps question the "given" dimension of reality and allows to develop scientifically-based critical thinking. After a first week dedicated to the definition of sociology's scientific perspective on social life, we will present two of the main dimensions structuring the latter – norms and inequality – then proceed thematically focusing on the main institutions and forms of organization. Each week, you will therefore be introduced to the main methods of sociological investigation, to major and consolidated empirical results on a given topic, to classical sociological theory about it, and to more contemporary research (and sometimes controversies).

ENSEIGNANTS

Bruno COUSIN, Marc PALILLO, Julie PEREIRA, Shi-Rong LEE, Alexis BAUDOUR, Laure CREPIN, Siyu LI, Nassima ABDELGHAFOUR, Alexandra ANA, Jean-Baptiste CHAMBON

LANGUAGE OF TUITION

English

SEMESTER

Spring 2020-2021

COURSE VALIDATION

Your overall grade will be determined by 5 written assignments. In the context of the discussion sessions, whose grade counts for 2/3 of the overall grade: you will be asked to provide every week a few notes about the text assigned for reading (this notes will be graded twice and count for 34% of the discussion sessions' grade), you will have to write and present a collective observation note (33%), and to sit for a mid-term exam graded by your discussion teacher (33%). In addition, at the end of the semester you will have to sit for a final exam, which will count for 1/3 of the overall grade.

PEDAGOGICAL FORMAT

Lectures and discussion sessions: The organization of the course is twofold. The weekly lectures will present the main theoretical perspectives on a given topic. They will cover major substantive areas of sociological inquiry. While focusing on a specific empirical topic every week, the lectures will explain how sociology addresses them and

contribute to their understanding; they will also highlight similarities in the sociological approach to these different questions. All semester long, you will thus be introduced to the various forms of reasoning and the different empirical methods commonly used in the discipline. In addition, the discussions, a hands-on approach, will provide you with the opportunity to grapple with both texts and methods. Key readings as well as important techniques of data collection in the social sciences will be either presented or thoroughly investigated. Overall, the aim of this course is to equip you with the necessary knowledge to navigate the current scientific debates about the topics discussed. Attendance, academic honesty and plagiarism Class attendance is mandatory for the discussion sessions and highly recommended for the lectures. As in the rest of the program, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be accepted in this course. All work submitted is clearly understood to be original and to be entirely your own. All citations should be put between quotes, and all ideas, languages, information and other materials you borrow from someone else should be duly acknowledged. Please, be aware that all papers and memos are scanned with antiplagiarism software and that your teachers are advanced scholars familiar with thousands of publications... Do not try to beat them and the technology, it's a lost cause. (Unfortunately, every year someone tries and sees their academic experience ending in tears: please, do not sabotage yourself!)