

SOCIOLOGY (SO)

SO 132 Issues and Investigations in Sociology (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power

This course introduces the student to the discipline of sociology as both a body of knowledge and as a perspective from which to view the world. This course examines the basic concepts, theories and methods of sociology inquiry in the context of a substantive area. The goal is to develop in students an appreciation of the social forces that shape, organize and constitute human behavior.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring

SO 198 Experimental course in Sociology (3 credits)

Experimental courses explore curriculum development, with specific content intended for evolution into a permanent course. A topic may be offered twice before it becomes a permanent course. Students may repeat experimental courses with a different topic for credit.

Typically Offered: As needed

SO 199 Experimental course in Sociology (3 credits)

Experimental courses explore curriculum development, with specific content intended for evolution into a permanent course. A topic may be offered twice before it becomes a permanent course. Students may repeat experimental courses with a different topic for credit.

Typically Offered: As needed

SO 221 Homelessness and Society (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power

This class studies issues of poverty and homelessness in the United States spanning over the past few centuries and focuses on the most recent century's evolution to contemporary social policy. The course emphasizes how poverty and homelessness issues have been framed in popular culture in comparison to evolving social policy, and considers how these collective frameworks have changed over time. The class offers an examination of street survival, how issues of homelessness are defined as social problems, and the various ways societies have attempted to deal with homelessness.

Typically Offered: Once a year

SO 225 Drugs and Society (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior

This course explicates the basic principles of sociology in the context of an investigation of the socio-cultural milieu within which drug use occurs. The aim is to locate patterns of drug use and abuse within a historical, legal and sociological context, to familiarize students with methods of intervention and treatment, and to develop a more accurate appreciation of the effect of various drugs on the individual.

Typically Offered: Once a year

SO 241 Race and Racism in the United States (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Inequality

The making of Race as a social fact is distinctly American. The course will examine current myths about Race that most Americans believe, as well as the historical context for their development. While ethnicity, gender and class are all part of the story and will be discussed; in the US context all of these issues and every racial/ethnic category bears a special relationship to the unique American way of treating every Race and ethnicity in terms of a racialized binary: Black (non-white)/White. The course will examine specific every day aspects of the social production of Race in the US that can be helpful to students in improving their racial awareness and understanding of different racial cultures in the US. We will consider the following questions: How is "Race" itself a social conception? Where did it come from? Why do we draw the color line where we do? Students will leave this class with a heightened awareness of the racism in all of your own everyday lives and how to resolve it.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring

SO 242 Social Problems (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power

This course examines the nature and significance of social problems in contemporary society. The specific problems addressed vary from year to year, but may include poverty, racism, youth alienation, illiteracy, gender-related issues, war and environmental crises. These concrete problems will be studied from a variety of sociological perspectives which address aspects of the social construction of problems; for example, processes through which problems are discovered, defined and publicized. Such processes and the problems they shape will be considered within the context of a sociological overview of historical and structural tendencies in modern societies.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring

SO 243 Capitalism and Slavery (3 credits)

Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Inequality

A long history of scholarship in sociology ties US slavery to the development of capitalism and modern business and finance. This classic work builds on theories by Durkheim and Weber, augmented by new research across disciplines. The argument begins with W.E.B. Du Bois' *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Eric Williams' *Slavery and Capitalism* (1944), and Oliver Cox's *Caste, Class and Race* (1948). While the work of these three Black sociologists grounds important new research, in keeping with a general misperception that Race and slavery are specialty issues, it has not gotten the attention it should. This course is designed to give students a framework for appreciating the centrality of the relationship between slavery and capitalism in the US, and translating that into new ways of understanding how tacit racism, hidden and unacknowledged, is structured into business and society today. This will help students navigate the increasingly diverse worksites of tomorrow

Typically Offered: Once a year

SO 244 Deviance and Social Control (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power*

This course examines the process of deviance in American society and other cultures, with a focus on sociological theories of deviant behavior and deviant groups. The origins, organization and societal reactions to forms of deviant behavior, such as juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, prostitution, pool hustling, mental disorders, violence and white-collar crime, will be examined and discussed. A further focus will be on the problems and possibilities of doing research on deviant groups.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring**SO 246 Criminal and Social Justice (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Inequality*

The issue of crime, punishment, and justice are fundamental topics of our daily lives. Discussions of crime pervade our news, entertainment, public policy, and civil discourse. Likewise, discussions of justice are linked to our perception of crime and its causes. This course will examine the topics of crime, punishment and justice from a critical perspective. We will question our assumptions about what causes crime, what constitute criminal behavior, and our contemporary approaches to dealing with it. This will include cross-country comparisons and discussions of radical approaches. Finally, we will look at uneven applications of justice based on social categories such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexual orientation. As a result, students will have a greater understanding and awareness of the complexities of criminal and social justice, and their relationship to both.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring**SO 248 Human Trafficking and Global Slavery (3 credits)**

It is estimated that there are more than 30 million slaves worldwide, and that this number is expected to continue increasing. SO 248 will investigate the phenomenon of human trafficking and global slavery from a number of frameworks including historical, cultural, economic, and political as well as through a variety of lenses, such as sex, race, religion and environmental. Students will explore the realities of exploitation, objectification, alienation, and violence associated with human trafficking through a mixed methods approach utilizing video, readings and research. The course will explore how businesses and consumers benefit from supply chains that are supported by the forced labors of individuals around the world, and the resulting human and environmental impact of forced labor practices.

Typically Offered: Every two or more years**SO 252 Health, Illness and Everyday Life (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power*

This course explores how our understandings and experiences of health and illness are socially conditioned. It also examines the different levels at which we are oriented to the possibility of illness in everyday life. Hence, studying the social meanings of health and illness provides for a deeper understanding of ourselves and the situations that we inhabit. Through readings from the social sciences, literature and philosophy, as well as films, class discussions and written exercises, students will explore a variety of issues related to understanding the phenomena of health and illness. Course evaluation will be based on written exercises, a final paper and class participation.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 261 Consulting Sociology (3 credits)**

The course will introduce students to becoming a practicing sociologist and to understand how sociology can be applied in various spheres of society. Students will examine the theories, methods, and contexts of applied and clinical sociology, as well as engage applied sociology through class projects. In learning the skills, challenges, opportunities, costs, outcomes and deliverables related to these fields, students will gain an understanding of how sociology can be used as a powerful and impacting tool in a range of ways in society. By engaging in their own class projects, students will be able to better understand how they can apply what is learned in the real world.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 263 Sociology of Work and Organizations (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power*

This course emphasizes sociological principles as they relate to the industrial setting. It reviews traditional and contemporary theories of industrial societies and industrialization. The course analyzes general features of the social system, such as roles, statuses, values, strains and communication. The course stresses the relationship between industry and other institutions in society.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 264 Technology, AI, Society, and Work (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

Technological changes including AI and human machine interaction, have a major impact on the way our society looks and how people function within it. Many such changes, are initially felt in the workplace, as our workplace formation and relations have an indelible impact on social formation and relations. However, the relationship also works in reverse, with human social interaction not only shaping how technology is adopted and used both inside and outside of the workplace, but also comprising essential aspects of technology and AI. Technology, AI, society, and work form a triadic relationship, with each impacting and affecting the other in foreseeable and unforeseeable ways. This course examines this relationship on a national and international level. Through readings, videos, observations and class discussions, students will engage in an exploration of the interaction effects between human social interactional competencies and technology, AI society and work.

Typically Offered: As needed**SO 265 Talk at Work (3 credits)**

The goal of this course is to learn how interaction in the workplace is conducted. Students will analyze different types of interactions in a variety of work settings, institutional and organizational contexts in order to learn how these interactions are conducted, what types of communication and workplace problems emerge through these interactions, and how these can best be prevented. In order to understand the sociological perspective on talk in institutional settings, we will first examine how ordinary conversations are organized, since these informal conversational patterns provide the basis for other types of interactions. Students will learn how to analyze interactions from a sociological perspective using the theoretical and methodological approaches of Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis.

Typically Offered: Every two or more years

SO 266 Culture and Money (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

This course explores the cultural bases and interpretations for monetary exchange across cultures geographically and temporally. It begins with cultures that lack all forms of exchange, e.g. hunter-gatherer cultures, then goes on to discuss the development and theories of monetary exchange from an anthropological perspective. It examines standard (e.g. Keynes, Innes, von Mises and more innovative views of money, e.g. Graeber. Each of these theories of money is evaluated anthropologically, showing the advantages of each depending on the cultural context in which they are evaluated and applied. This course is designed to help students evaluate monetary theory and modern political-economic ideas from the perspective of anthropology across a wide range of cultures and therefore the Diversity designation is requested.

SO 271 Self, Diversity and Society (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Inequality*

This course introduces students to the sociological study of the individual and their relations with society. The idea of "the self" and the nature of social identity will be examined with respect to socialization processes, interaction contexts and culture. Problems in knowing oneself and others will be considered. The relation of individual action and social structure will be studied in connection with a range of topics, such as gender, ethnicity, age and social class. The course emphasizes the role of communication in mediating relations between individuals and the society in which they live.

*Typically Offered: Once a year***SO 272 Animals in Society (3 credits)**

The study of the relationship between animals and society is a relatively new and growing area of interest within sociology. Understanding our relationship to animals as pets, food or other products, as laborers, as subjects in laboratory experiments and as wild animals is particularly important in today's society, where environmental concerns, provision of food for the world's human population, and ethical debates about the use of other beings are current and likely to be increasingly important. Students will use a sociological perspective to explore the relationship between animals and humans in contemporary society. The methodological approaches focused on include: qualitative sociological techniques such as ethnographic field work, interviewing, discourse analysis, auto-ethnography, or visual sociology. The theoretical perspectives used will fall under the general category of social psychology and may include symbolic interactionist, social constructionist, and ethnomethodological.

*Typically Offered: Every two or more years***SO 273 Evolution of Humans and Societies (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

This course examines the nature, origin, and evolution of our species, languages, and societies. We look back through some 17 million years of fossil history up to and through the primate family tree, including the latest great apes, humans. We consider Darwin's prediction in the 19th century that humans probably began in Africa and then examine the evidence that began to accumulate around the world for the origin of early humans. We examine the two major hypotheses for the evolution of Homo sapiens: the Multiregional Theory (that our species originated at many times in many places from Homo erectus) and the Recent Out of Africa (ROA) hypothesis that says that although Homo erectus left Africa several hundred thousand years ago, Homo sapiens left only in the last 50-100,000 thousand years ago and rapidly displaced other members of our genus, e.g. Homo neanderthalensis. With this basis, we examine the evolution of societies and language.

SO 275 Cultures of Business (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Value, Ethics, and Society*

This course examines how values and valuation arise in human societies. It examines how cultures of business arise and how they influence one another and the societies in which the businesses operate. An initial introduction to the science of cultural explanation is followed by an anthropological discussion of stocks, commodities, and derivatives. The course develops and expounds concepts to enable the participants to analyze and apply their knowledge of companies as outputs of societies.

*Typically Offered: Once a year***SO 285 Sociology of Sports (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

Sports play a major role in society. They are a major industry, a major recreational outlet, and one of the main mechanisms Americans and others around the globe use for keeping fit and socializing with friends. This course examines the role sports play in a range of social settings, including professional sports, sports in educational institutions, and sports for personal recreation and leisure activities. The course will cover such topics as inequality, the social construction of race, gender and class through sports, socialization into the culture of sports, sports and identity, deviance and sports (including drug use and violence), the globalization of sports, and sports and the media.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring

SO 287 Media, Culture and Society (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

This course examines how various forms of modern mass media represent the values and lifestyles of American culture, and how we experience the mass media in our everyday lives. The course will look at forms of media in terms of their socio-historical developments, and study how their histories have been shaped by, and helped to shape, the political-economic structure and cultural lifestyles of American society. The course centers largely on sociological analyses of specific audiovisual examples. These analyses will be conducted in class discussion and written exercises.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring**SO 289 Popular Culture in Consumer Societies (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

The course explores cultural dimensions of social life associated with development of consumerism in contemporary societies. The emergence of a "consumer society" and corresponding cultural sphere will be outlined. General themes include the commodity basis of cultural practices, the social control of imagination and desire, and the nature of modernity. Specific topics include the rise of popular culture, advertising as a social institution, socialization and the consumer role, marketplace settings and rituals, consumer movements and critiques, and consumption-related environmental problems. Consumption contexts considered include shopping malls, the modern home, tourism and popular entertainment.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 292 Sociology of Native American Peoples (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

This course introduces students to Native American culture and society, with "American" broadly construed to include North, Central, and South America. Topics to be covered include the pre-history of Native Americans (how and when did humans first arrive in the Americas), and the history of indigenous peoples throughout the Americas since Columbus. It also discusses Native American beliefs and religions, from cultures with rich theistic and supernatural beliefs to communities that lack a concept of God or the supernatural as understood in industrial societies. We look at contemporary Native American cultures, diversity, and their struggles with encroachment on their lands - looking at gold exploration in Brazil, oil pipelines in the US and Canada, and drug cartels in Meso/Central America. We discuss the future of these groups, their languages, and their cultures and why this is important to all Americans, from Tierra del Fuego to Nome, Alaska.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 295 Film and Society (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Inequality*

Film as a medium appears in many different formats and settings from television broadcasts to theaters and from DVDs to computers. Social issues and social relations are presented in virtually unexamined fashion and audiences are expected to draw on cultural presuppositions and understandings to achieve an understanding of the film's themes and contents. The course examines several different film styles in order to better understand the methodologies used by film makers to construct understandability. Film styles to be examined include ethnographic, documentary, social commentary and narrative-fiction. Within these different film styles a number of social issues and social relationships will be considered including, in part, the following: cultural practices and social norms; gender and power relationships; cross dressing and gender transformation; commentary on political and social issues; and, witnessing, truth-telling, trust, honesty and morality in social relationships.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 297 World Religions and Society (3 credits)***Typically Offered:* Every two or more years**SO 298 Experimental Course in Sociology (3 credits)**

Experimental courses explore curriculum development, with specific content intended for evolution into a permanent course. A topic may be offered twice before it becomes a permanent course. Students may repeat experimental courses with a different topic for credit

Typically Offered: As needed**SO 299 Experimental Course in Sociology (3 credits)**

Experimental courses explore curriculum development, with specific content intended for evolution into a permanent course. A topic may be offered twice before it becomes a permanent course. Students may repeat experimental courses with a different topic for credit.

Typically Offered: As needed**SO 300 Community Involvement (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Value, Ethics, and Society*

Students engage in approximately two hours of weekly public service within agencies or organizations in the Greater Boston area. In their journals and class discussions, students reflect on both the purposes of that work as well as on its limits as a response to specific needs within the community and more general problems of social justice. Students also conduct participant observation field explorations at their sites. The course explores issues of social responsibility and citizenship in the professions and business world in relation to the social problems that students become acquainted with through their community work.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring

SO 320 Immigrant Entrepreneurship (3 credits)*Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

Immigrants go to other lands in search of the economic opportunity and financial security not available in their own homeland. Drawn by the lure of jobs, immigrants frequently set course for industrialized countries, where the demand for labor is high. However, once arriving in these countries, many immigrant groups reject the available jobs and strike their own path by entering into entrepreneurship and opening their own businesses. In the US, this pattern has played out countless times, as new groups arrive and take the mantle of immigrant entrepreneurship previously held by past groups. This course will examine the phenomena of immigrant entrepreneurship, taking account of past examples as well as current trends. By studying immigrant entrepreneurship, students will achieve a better understanding of what drives certain immigrant groups to chance everything by opening up their own businesses, and how immigrants are able to use the resources available to them to become successful.

Typically Offered: Every two or more years**SO 324 Sociology of Markets (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Institutions and Power*

This is an economic sociology course that concerns markets. How do people and firms make decisions about market transactions? How do we assign value/prices to items? How do people use money? How are markets constructed, and what is the relationship between the economy and civil life/society? Moreover, why is it that dominant conceptions of market behavior are portrayed as asocial, acultural, and apolitical? Students will learn sociological approaches to economic behavior, which provide a rich understanding of how people and firms engage in market transactions. Students will also learn how sociological approaches contrast with economic approaches as well as how they are compatible.

Typically Offered: Every two or more years**SO 333 Sociology of the Edge (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Culture, Change, and Behavior*

This course employs a sociological perspective to examine edges of experience and, through that examination, to reflect on the production of social order and the social processes which shape our existence. In this course students will be asked to walk in another's shoes - someone who is walking on the edge. Students will be asked to consider, "what is it for them". Why do they do what they do? How do they do it? What is it to go 'in harm's way'? What are some of the particular knowings of those who work and play on the ocean? What is it to be ill or dying? How do we deal with loss and grief? What is it to be oppressed and/or imprisoned? What is it to live/work/play in the belly of the beast? And finally, students will be asked to reflect on what all of the above tells us about ourselves, and our world.

Typically Offered: Once a year**SO 345 Race and Racialization at the U.S.-Mexico Border (3 credits)***Context and Perspectives: Race, Gender and Inequality*

Texas used to be part of Mexico. Relations along the border have been problematic ever since U.S. citizens entered Texas illegally in the 1820s-1830s bringing slaves with them into a Mexican Republic that had outlawed slavery years before. This class considers ongoing troubles at the U.S.-Mexico border since the early history of U.S. incursions into Texas. Treaties such as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo promised the former residents of Texas U.S. citizenship and title to their lands, but were not honored by the U.S., and citizens of Mexican/Spanish descent were illegally stripped of their rights and possessions. This class also studies how U.S. immigration policy has changed over the course of the past hundred years and considers the shaping of contemporary Latin and White "American" cultures. Overall, the course will critically analyze and critique the many common assumptions and stereotypes that drive U.S. attitudes on immigration policies. What if policies were more informed?

SO 398 Experimental Course in Sociology (3 credits)

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Typically Offered: As needed**SO 401 Directed Study in Sociology (1 credit)**

This course presents opportunity for superior students to engage in specialized study. (Allows repetition for credit.)

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring**SO 402 Seminar in Sociology (3 credits)**

This course permits the intensive study of selected topics in small groups of more advanced students. (Allows repetition for credit.)

Typically Offered: Every two or more years**SO 421 Internship in Sociology (3 credits)**

An internship provides students with an opportunity to gain on-the-job experience and apply principles and issues raised in the academic discipline to a work environment. Students are required to attend pre-internship workshops sponsored by the Center for Career Services, meet regularly with a faculty advisor, and develop a final paper or special project.

Typically Offered: Fall and Spring