



University of Pittsburgh
Race, Class, and Gender
(SOC 1365)
Fall 2022

Course Syllabus

Meets: TuTh 8:00am - 9:15am in 2200 Posvar Hall

Instructor: DaShanne Stokes, Ph.D.

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Please use university email for course-related communication.

Office Hours: Fridays 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and by appointment.

COURSE ROADMAP

This syllabus is designed to serve as a roadmap for your success in the course. It provides information about course expectations, readings, assignments, grading, communication, and the course schedule. Please use it as a first reference when questions arise. If you cannot find the information you need, please reach out—I am happy to help.

STUDENT SUPPORT

I want you to succeed in this course, and I encourage you to reach out whenever you have questions or encounter circumstances that may affect your learning. The earlier you communicate with me, the more effectively I can help. I welcome students from all backgrounds and am committed to creating a respectful and supportive learning environment.

Welcome to Race, Class, and Gender!

This comparative course draws together a multidisciplinary set of readings to examine the intersection of race, gender, sexuality, and social class. Readings include sociological theories, empirical research, and case studies. We will use comparative, theoretical, and empirical

approaches to examine how these categories are constructed, experienced, and organized, and how they are associated with differences in life chances and patterns of inequality. We will examine sociological theories of social construction and how they differ from explanations that attribute these categories to innate biological differences. We will study major sociological explanations for the persistence and change of inequality, including the interaction of these categories with social institutions such as the economy, schools, and family, as well as with individual experiences. We will similarly examine how race, gender, sexuality, and class organize identities, interactions, groups, and social institutions.

This course emphasizes sociological inquiry into the world around us. Throughout the semester, we will investigate questions such as:

- What are race, class, gender, and sexuality?
- How do race, class, gender, and sexuality interconnect to shape our lives and institutions?
- How do sociologists explain the social construction of race, class, gender, and sexuality?
- Why does discrimination persist and how does it change over time and place?
- How do social identities evolve?
- What does it mean to be a member of a group, or a member of multiple groups?
- How do social institutions and relationships shape our identities, beliefs, attachments, and conflicts?
- How do we shape social structures and how do social structures in turn shape us?
- How are power and inequality organized within and across societies?
- How and under what conditions do social arrangements persist, change, or undergo transformation?

We will approach these questions using sociological concepts, theories, and empirical research.

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE, WE WILL EXAMINE:

1. **Social structure and social interaction** — how institutions, organizations, groups, relationships, and everyday interactions organize social life.
2. **Social inequality and stratification** — how social resources, opportunities, status, and power are distributed and reproduced across societies.
3. **Culture and socialization** — how people develop shared meanings, identities, beliefs, practices, and patterns of behavior.
4. **Institutions and social organization** — how major institutions, including education, religion, government, the economy, and family, shape individual and collective life.
5. **Race, class, gender, and sexuality** — how social categories and identities are constructed, experienced, and organized within particular historical and cultural contexts.
6. **Power, conflict, and social change** — how power operates within and across institutions and societies, how inequalities are maintained, and how individuals and groups respond to or transform existing arrangements.
7. **Historical and global perspectives** — how colonialism, imperialism, globalization, and other historical processes have shaped contemporary institutions, identities, and social relationships.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By taking this course, students will learn how to:

1. **Explain** major sociological concepts, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings relevant to the study of race, class, gender, and sexuality.
2. **Apply the sociological imagination** to analyze relationships between individual experiences ("personal troubles") and broader social conditions ("social problems").
3. **Apply and evaluate sociological theories and concepts and evaluate** their usefulness in explaining social behavior and social phenomena.
4. **Analyze** how social structures, institutions, and social processes shape individual experiences and collective life across micro, meso, and macro levels.
5. **Explain** how social phenomena are socially constructed, reproduced, and transformed across different cultural and historical contexts.
6. **Analyze how power, hierarchy, and inequality operate within and across societies**, including the ways race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexuality, colonialism, imperialism, and globalization have shaped social life and institutions.
7. **Evaluate sociological claims and empirical evidence**, recognizing the strengths and limitations of different explanations, research findings, and forms of evidence.
8. **Apply sociological knowledge and evidence to contemporary social problems, including communicating sociological insights clearly to non-specialist audiences.**

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The course is informed by the American Sociological Association's "Sociological Literacy Framework," which emphasizes the integration of sociological concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical evidence, and disciplinary skills. Course activities, discussions, and assessments are designed to give students opportunities to develop sociological skills, apply sociological knowledge, evaluate evidence, and communicate sociological ideas.

The course also incorporates research-informed teaching practices that support the development of foundational knowledge and higher-order skills through retrieval, application, analysis, feedback, and connections between sociological ideas and real-world experiences.

Learning is assessed throughout the course, both formally and informally. In addition to graded assignments and examinations, class discussions, activities, questions, and other forms of participation provide opportunities for me to assess students' developing understanding, identify areas that may require clarification or additional practice, and provide feedback during the learning process.

This is an evidence-based sociology course examining competing explanations of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Because sociologists investigate different kinds of questions and diverse

social phenomena, the course considers multiple competing theoretical and empirical explanations and emphasizes the strengths, limitations, and appropriate uses of different theories and methods. Perspectives and theories are not presented as absolutes to necessarily be accepted or rejected, but rather to be critically examined with sociological methods and empirical evidence. Students are expected to analyze competing explanations, evaluate evidence, identify assumptions, and distinguish empirical findings from normative claims. The goal is to develop students' ability to analyze sociological explanations and evidence, not to require agreement with any particular political or normative position.

This course also incorporates a published sociology teaching resource developed by the instructor and peer-reviewed for inclusion in the American Sociological Association's TRAILS: Teaching Resources and Innovations Library for Sociology. The Short Sociological Analysis is adapted from this resource and is designed to help students apply sociological concepts and theoretical perspectives to concrete experiences while analyzing how larger institutional and social forces shape those experiences.

Throughout the course, students have repeated opportunities to practice the forms of sociological reasoning emphasized in the learning objectives—including applying concepts and theories, evaluating explanations and evidence, making connections across levels of analysis, and communicating sociological arguments—before demonstrating those skills in graded assessments.

Course Materials

Required:

Ferguson, Susan J. 2020. *Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Social Class: Dimensions of Inequality and Identity*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Weber, Lynn and Heather Dillaway. 2002. *Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: Case Studies*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill. Note: This set of readings by Weber and Dillaway will be posted on Canvas.

I recognize that the cost of course materials is an important consideration for students. Students are not required to purchase the textbook, but they are responsible for obtaining access to the assigned readings.

Please use the edition listed above. Assigned readings and page references correspond to this edition, and earlier editions may not contain all of the assigned material. Students may purchase, rent, borrow, or otherwise obtain access to the text.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Successful participation in this course depends on consistent preparation, engagement, and

practice. Students are expected to:

- Attend and participate in class discussions, activities, and other opportunities for active learning.
- Complete assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss and apply course concepts.
- Engage actively with course material by asking questions, contributing ideas, listening carefully to others, and responding thoughtfully to course activities and discussions.
- Complete assigned work by the stated deadlines and follow instructions for assignments and assessments.
- Stay informed about course announcements and materials posted through the university's learning-management system and email.
- Take responsibility for their learning by preparing for class, seeking clarification when needed, and using available resources and feedback to improve their understanding and performance.

Because the course emphasizes the development of sociological reasoning and analytical skills, participation is not limited to attendance. Students will have regular opportunities to practice applying concepts, evaluating evidence, discussing sociological questions, and connecting course material to social phenomena.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Learning through participation

Sociological thinking is a skill that develops through practice. Class meetings therefore provide opportunities to apply concepts and theories, evaluate evidence, discuss sociological questions, and learn from the perspectives and contributions of others.

Attendance and active participation are important components of the course. Students should come to class prepared to engage with the assigned material and participate in discussions, activities, and other opportunities for practice and feedback.

Participation can take many forms, including:

- asking questions;
- responding to questions and classmates' ideas;
- connecting course concepts to assigned readings or examples;
- contributing to group and whole-class activities;
- listening carefully and responding thoughtfully to others;
- applying sociological concepts and theories to examples discussed in class; and
- reflecting on or revising one's understanding in response to evidence and discussion.

You do not need to speak in every class meeting to participate meaningfully. **The goal is thoughtful and sustained engagement with the course rather than simply maximizing the**

number of times you speak.

Attendance

Because substantial portions of the course involve discussion, activities, practice, and feedback, regular attendance is required. Attendance will be recorded for course-management purposes, but attendance is not graded and attendance alone does not constitute participation. I reserve the right to modify this policy if attendance becomes a problem.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for reviewing the assigned material and obtaining information about activities or announcements you missed. If you have questions after doing so, please contact me.

Students who anticipate an extended absence or who encounter circumstances that significantly affect their ability to participate should communicate with me as early as possible so that we can identify appropriate options consistent with university policies.

Classroom engagement

Please help create a classroom environment in which everyone can learn. Students are expected to:

- give their attention to the class during class time;
- avoid activities unrelated to the course;
- silence or appropriately manage personal devices;
- listen respectfully when others are speaking;
- disagree with ideas without disparaging the people expressing them; and
- contribute to discussion in ways that support the learning of others.

Devices may be used when they support course activities, note-taking, accessibility, translation, or other legitimate learning needs.

YOUR ROLE IN THE COURSE

A successful course is a shared intellectual enterprise. I will provide the course structure, materials, instruction, feedback, and opportunities for practice; your role is to engage actively with the material, ask questions, contribute to discussions, and make use of those opportunities.

You are not expected to arrive with all the answers. Curiosity, thoughtful questions, and a willingness to reconsider an initial understanding are important parts of sociological learning.

There are many ways to participate meaningfully. Some students contribute frequently to whole-class discussions; others contribute through small-group activities, written responses, questions, or careful engagement with course materials. The goal is active intellectual engagement, not simply speaking as often as possible.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSESSMENT, AND GRADING

Assessment and Learning

Learning is assessed throughout the course, both formally and informally. Class discussions, activities, questions, and other forms of participation provide opportunities for me to assess students' developing understanding, identify areas that may require clarification or additional practice, and provide feedback during the learning process. Not all learning activities are graded.

Graded assessments provide more formal opportunities for students to demonstrate their developing mastery of the course objectives.

Assessment in this course is designed to help you develop and demonstrate sociological knowledge and skills over the course of the semester. Graded work draws on material from assigned readings, lectures, discussions, activities, and other course materials.

Assessments are aligned with the course objectives and are designed to provide opportunities to practice and demonstrate the kinds of sociological reasoning emphasized throughout the course, including explaining and applying theories, evaluating evidence, comparing competing explanations, and constructing sociological arguments.

Assessments will focus particularly on major concepts, theories, empirical findings, and analytical questions emphasized across the course. Unless an assignment specifically calls for outside research, you will not be expected to conduct additional research beyond the assigned course materials.

Because course material builds cumulatively over the semester, some assessments may ask you to connect concepts or ideas introduced at different points in the course.

Discussion Boards

Participation in discussion boards will be a critical way of interacting and engaging with the material. All students will need to take an active role in this form of participation. There are required and graded discussion board activities corresponding to each week's course materials and lectures.

Each week, with the exception of weeks in which an examination is scheduled, you are required to create and post a discussion post A and a response post B.

Discussion post A (ten points): For these posts, you will respond to original discussion questions or prompts that I post.

Response post B (ten points): Respond to a classmate's discussion post. Your response should engage substantively with your classmate's ideas and connect them to the assigned readings, lecture material, and relevant course concepts.

Posts and responses receive either 10 points for meeting the criteria below or 5 points when they demonstrate partial completion but do not meet the criteria. Missing posts receive zero points.

Your discussion posts can confirm, clarify, extend, critically evaluate, or question the readings. Be sure that your responses and posts are informed by the readings and lecture notes and that you support your arguments with examples. Your responses and posts should go beyond giving opinion, and simply saying you agree or disagree or like something is not enough. Your posts and responses should demonstrate critical thinking and be between 100 to 200 words.

Your discussion posts and responses to other students' posts are both **DUE no later than midnight (11:59 p.m.)** for that week's readings and lectures following the schedule below. Consult the syllabus for the relevant readings and lecture materials that week. See schedule below for dates. Late posts are subject to the late policy.

Discussion posts and response posts can be accessed and submitted via two different routes:

- 1.) Click the "discussions" tab in the left menu upon logging into the course website on Canvas and then scroll down to click on the appropriate week. Example: Week one is labeled "Discussion Posts and Responses Week 1." Compose and post your response there.

- 2.) You can also click "modules," navigate to the module for the week desired, and compose and post your response accordingly.

Note that these assignments are generally very short. If you find yourself spending more than ten or fifteen minutes on any single post, you are likely investing too much time.

Case Study Roundtable Presentations, Discussions, and Write-Ups (Case Studies)

Roundtable presentations are a common feature at scholarly conferences. Featuring one or two facilitators who guide a collection of fellow scholars presenting their work, roundtables give scholars the opportunity to present their work, develop their public speaking and communication skills, and gain valuable insight from their colleagues.

For this assignment, each student will present an assigned case study in a miniature roundtable presentation and submit a brief write-up for the case study presented. These write-ups are included in the 50-point Case Study Roundtable assignment. I will be available during the case study presentations and will visit all of the sessions to ensure they are moving smoothly and to check attendance. Further details will be posted. See the "assignments" tab in Canvas.

Short Sociological Analysis

This assignment asks students to apply sociological concepts and theories to a concrete experience and sociologically analyze how broader social structures and institutional forces shape individual experiences connected to central topics of the course. The assignment is not a personal narrative. Rather, it functions as a miniature case study: the experience and the student's firsthand observations of it serve as empirical material through which students develop and support a sociological explanation using concepts and theoretical perspectives from the course.

Purpose of the assignment: This assignment provides an opportunity to practice applying sociological knowledge to a concrete case while developing several of the skills emphasized

throughout the course. You will practice using sociological terms and concepts, applying theoretical ideas to social phenomena, developing and supporting analytical arguments, critically examining connections and assumptions, and communicating sociological ideas clearly and concisely. The assignment also provides practice connecting individual experiences with broader social forces and issues and considering how experiences that may initially appear personal or individual can be understood in relation to the larger social world.

Students will select a specific event and use two sociological concepts or theories from the course to develop a focused analysis of how and why larger social forces shaped the experience. The assignment emphasizes the sociological imagination, critical thinking, theoretical analysis and integration, and the ability to make explicit connections between individual experiences and broader social structures.

Students may select an experience connected to any substantive area addressed in the course, provided that the experience can be meaningfully analyzed using sociological theories and larger social or institutional forces. Students should select an experience they are comfortable analyzing in an academic context. Personal information shared in an assignment will be treated respectfully and will not be shared beyond the purposes of course evaluation except as required by university policy. Students may use pseudonyms or otherwise omit identifying information about other individuals. Students are not required to disclose traumatic, highly sensitive, or otherwise private experiences.

Why use a personal experience? A concrete experience from everyday life provides a familiar starting point for applying the more abstract concepts and theories we study. Connecting course material to experiences you have encountered directly can make sociological ideas more understandable, meaningful, and memorable while helping you recognize sociological patterns and processes in everyday life. The experience is therefore a starting point for sociological analysis, rather than the focus or endpoint of the assignment.

The assignment is intentionally concise. Students will focus on developing a sustained analysis rather than attempting to address numerous concepts or issues. A detailed rubric will provide transparent criteria for evaluating the quality of the analysis, use of sociological concepts, supporting examples, and clarity of reasoning. The rubric is provided with the assignment so that students can understand the expectations for successful work before completing it.

Pedagogical note: This assignment is adapted from the instructor's peer-reviewed teaching resource published through the American Sociological Association's TRAILS project (Stokes 2022). The assignment is designed to give students structured practice applying sociological theory to concrete social experiences and developing evidence-based sociological analysis.

Exams

EXAM ONE: The first exam will be a multiple choice/matching/fill-in the blank type exam. Methods for studying for this type of exam vary by individual needs, but generally include review of major terms and theories and authors. Some also find flashcards or working with a colleague or forming a study group to be useful. Note that my multiple choice exams do not

cover dates, statistics, or figures but instead focus more on terms, theories, and authors, including how terms, theories, etc., may be applied to different situations. Details about the exam will be posted on the exam when the exam opens. This exam is designed to take only about 40 to 50 minutes to complete, but students will be given two hours as well as two attempts to complete the exam. If a student takes the exam twice, the best of the two scores will be the final score. Active class attendance, participation, reading, and studying are vital to performing well on this exam. This exam covers all material covered up until the time the exam opens. We will discuss the exam when the time gets close. This exam will be available on Canvas under the “Quizzes” tab on the left menu of the screen.

EXAM TWO: The second exam consists of a short written response examining and applying course content to a real-world event, pattern, circumstance, etc. This exam is designed to take two or three hours to complete. Be aware, however, that your particular needs and circumstances may vary, so do not wait until the last minute to complete your work. Details about the exam will be posted on the exam when it is opened. Methods for preparing for this type of exam vary by individual needs and may not be the same as those used for other types of exams. This exam will require understanding of selected terms and theories and authors and course content. Active class attendance, participation, reading, and studying terms, theories, and authors discussed are vital to performing well on this exam. This exam covers all material covered up until the time the exam opens. We will discuss the exam when the time gets close.

There is no final exam for the course.

Grading

Grades are based on demonstrated performance on the graded course requirements described below. Each assessment is assigned a specific number of points, and the final course grade is determined by the total number of points earned. Students are encouraged to make use of class activities, feedback, office hours, and other course resources to support their learning and performance.

Each graded item is worth a set number of points that count towards your final grade.

Item	Points Possible
Discussion Board Posts	80 points, ten points each
Short Sociological Analysis	50 points
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Case Studies (presentation, write up, etc.)	50 points
<i>Total</i>	380 points

Based on the above point system, your grade will be determined by the total points you earn as follows:

<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
367-380	A	278-292	C
342-366	A-	266-277	C-
331-341	B+	255-265	D+
315-330	B	240-254	D
304-314	B-	228-239	D-
293-303	C+	0-227	F

Grades are calculated using total points earned rather than the percentage displayed in Canvas or other university systems. Canvas percentages may be used to estimate your current standing, but the final course grade is determined by the total points earned according to the grading scale above.

LATE WORK AND MAKE-UP POLICY

Deadlines are an important part of the course because timely completion of assignments allows students to receive feedback and remain engaged with the sequence of course material.

Students should contact me as soon as possible if circumstances arise that may affect their ability to complete graded work by the stated deadline. Any extension, make-up, alternative assignment, or other modification of a course requirement must be discussed with me and approved by me in advance whenever circumstances permit. Students should not assume that an alternative arrangement has been approved unless I have explicitly confirmed it.

When an alternative arrangement is approved, I will communicate the revised deadline and any applicable conditions clearly. Any changes to deadlines, assignments, or other course requirements should be discussed with me and approved in advance.

If an unexpected emergency prevents advance communication, students should contact me as soon as reasonably possible afterward. Extensions and alternative arrangements will be considered in accordance with university policies and the circumstances of the situation.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS AND READINGS

Your learning is my principal concern, so I may modify the schedule or content if it will facilitate your learning. We may also discover that we want to spend more time on certain topics and less time on others. I'll consider changing our schedule if it will help most students in the class. Changes will be announced. Please be sure to carefully monitor the schedule of assignments, exams, etc. posted here. Readings for weeks 14 and 15 are posted on Canvas. All other readings can be found in our Ferguson textbook.

Readings should be completed BEFORE the week they will be discussed in class lecture.

Week 1 (Aug. 29 – Sept. 2)

Course introduction, review of syllabus

Read Ferguson p. 7-44 and all of the syllabus. Ferguson 7-44 (Weber, Desmond, Crawley) posted under “Files” on Canvas

- No discussion posts this week

Week 2 (Sept. 5 – Sept. 9)

Read Ferguson p. 44 – 100 (Wendell, Lerner, Zuberi, Fitzgerald, Katz)

- Discussion post 1 due 9/11 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 3 (Sept. 12 – Sept. 16)

Read Ferguson p. 100 – 149 (Wright, Acker, Glenn, Dill. Skip reading by Rahman)

- Discussion post 2 due 9/18 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 4 (Sept. 19 – Sept. 23)

Read Ferguson p. 149 – 197 (Annamma, Markus, Howard, Garrouette)

- Exam 1 due 9/25 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight). Exam opens 9/18 at 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts this week

Week 5 (Sept. 26 – Sept. 30)

Read Ferguson p. 197 – 249 (Franke, Flores-Gonzalez, Van Ausdale, Bettie, Hollibaugh, Sherwood)

- Discussion post 3 due 10/2 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 6 (Oct. 3 – Oct. 7)

Read Ferguson 249 – 304 (Garrison, Khanna, Marvasti. Skip readings by Roschelle and Samuels)

Read “The History and Conceptual Elements Of Critical Race Theory” by Kevin Brown and Darrell D. Jackson in place of the reading by Roschelle

- Discussion post 4 due 10/9 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 7 (Oct. 10 – Oct. 14)

Read Ferguson p. 304 – 359 (Pfeffer, Collins, Pyke, Meyer, Mickelson)

- Discussion post 5 due 10/16 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 8 (Oct. 17 – Oct. 21)

Read Ferguson p. 359 – 415 (Skip reading by Sacks) (Moll, Acker, Bertrand, Hondagneu-Sotelo)

- Short Sociological Analysis due by Oct. 23, by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts this week.

Week 9 (Oct. 25 – Oct. 28)

Read Ferguson p. 415 – 454 (Blitstein, Wailoo, Kendall, Dietrich)

Class Oct 25th will be online: <https://pitt.zoom.us/j/98162929240>

- Discussion post 6 due 10/30 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 10 (Oct. 31 – Nov. 4)

Read Ferguson p. 454 – 491 (Skip reading by Lachmann) (Hess, Brown, Alexander)

- Discussion post 7 due 11/6 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 11 (Nov. 7 – Nov. 11)

Read Ferguson p. 491-515, 524-570 (Ferber, Young, Chou, Norgaard, Stuart, Quinn)

- Discussion post 8 due 11/13 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

Week 12 (Nov. 14 – Nov. 18)

- Film: "Crash."
- Exam 2 due 11/20 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight). Exam opens 11/14 at 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts

Week 13 (Nov. 21 – Nov. 25)

NO CLASS THIS WEEK

Week 14 (Nov. 28 – Dec. 2)

Read case studies 1, 2, and 4 (Davis, Schultz, and Ross. Readings posted online under "Files")

- Case study roundtables on readings above. See assignment schedule.
- Write-ups for case studies presented this week due 12/2 by 11:59 pm (midnight)

Week 15 (Dec. 5 – Dec. 9)

Read case studies 5, 6, and 7 (Quan, Lorde, and Sears. Readings posted online under "Files")

- Case study roundtables on readings above. See assignment schedule.
- Write-ups for case studies presented this week due 12/9 by 11:59 pm (midnight)

Note: Final grades are due at midnight, December 20th, and will be posted by this date and time.

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Classroom Environment

Students are expected to contribute to a course environment characterized by professionalism, respect, and intellectual engagement. Sociological questions may involve disagreement, competing interpretations, and difficult or unfamiliar topics. Students are encouraged to examine ideas critically, ask questions, and disagree with one another's interpretations without disparaging the people expressing them.

Class Recordings

Course lectures, discussions, activities, and other instructional materials may not be recorded, reproduced, distributed, or publicly shared without my prior permission, except as required or permitted by university policy or approved accommodations.

Readings, Lecture Notes, and Preparation

Students are expected to complete assigned readings. Course readings provide foundational material for lectures,

discussions, activities, and assessments.

Lecture notes are provided as a supplement to the course lectures and activities rather than as a complete transcript of the instructional material. Lectures and activities may include examples, explanations, applications, and discussions that extend beyond the posted notes or assigned readings.

Students should approach readings actively and critically, looking for key concepts and arguments, connections among ideas, supporting evidence, assumptions, contradictions, and possible applications.

Office Hours and Open-Door Policy

I welcome students to office hours for questions about course material, assignments, academic planning, research opportunities, or other matters related to their academic development. Students who cannot attend scheduled office hours may contact me to arrange an alternative meeting time.

Students are welcome to drop in during office hours. If you know you need an extended meeting, please contact me in advance so that I can reserve sufficient time.

Workload

Students should plan for substantial weekly engagement with readings, lectures, activities, discussions, assessments, and other course work. As a general guideline for college-level coursework, many universities recommend approximately 2–3 hours of work outside class for each hour of scheduled class time.

Students should plan sufficient time each week to complete assigned readings, engage with course materials, participate in activities and discussions, and complete graded work. Some weeks will require more time than others, particularly when preparing for examinations or completing more substantial assignments.

Academic Integrity

To ensure fair evaluation of student work, all work submitted for this course should represent the student's own intellectual work. Unless I explicitly authorize otherwise, students may not receive or provide substantive assistance with graded work. This includes substantive review, critique, editing, rewriting, or contributions to the work's ideas or content by other people, programs, applications, or services.

Students for whom English is a second language may receive limited assistance with grammar and readability from a peer. Such assistance may not alter, develop, or contribute to the substantive content or ideas presented in the student's work.

Suspected violations of the University's Academic Offenses policy will be addressed through the University's established procedural process. View the complete policy at <https://www.provost.pitt.edu/academic-integrity-guidelines>.

Generative AI Policy

This policy is intended to support the learning objectives of the course, not to discourage students from learning about or eventually using generative AI. The course is designed to help students develop independent sociological knowledge and skills, including the ability to analyze theories, evaluate evidence, construct arguments, and communicate sociological ideas clearly. Students need opportunities to develop and demonstrate these skills themselves in order to gain meaningful mastery of them.

Developing independent competence is also important for responsible use of generative AI. Generative AI systems can make mistakes and can produce inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information. Students therefore need sufficient knowledge and skills to evaluate, verify, and, when necessary, correct AI-generated information rather than relying on it uncritically. The goal of this policy is consequently to ensure that students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to use such tools thoughtfully and responsibly if and when they choose to do so.

Intellectual integrity is essential to an academic community and to my ability to evaluate your work fairly. All work completed and/or submitted for this course must be your own and must be completed in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity. Unless I expressly authorize its use for a particular course activity, students may not use ChatGPT or other generative AI applications in completing or preparing course work, including graded assignments, quizzes, examinations, or other submitted work.

All required graded work may be subject to textual-similarity and related review using services such as, but not limited to, Turnitin, Grammarly's plagiarism checker, ZeroGPT, and GPTZero for the detection of plagiarism and other potential violations. Submitted work may be included as source material in the reference databases associated with these services for the purpose of detecting plagiarism or other academic-integrity violations. Use of these services is subject to the usage and privacy policies posted by the respective services.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Students who require disability-related accommodations should contact the University's Disability Resources & Services (DRS) and communicate with me as early as possible so that approved accommodations can be implemented appropriately. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit <https://www.wellbeing.pitt.edu/disability-access/disability-resources-services>.

Religious Observances

Students who anticipate a conflict between religious observances and course meetings or deadlines should contact me as early as possible so that reasonable arrangements can be made consistent with University policies.

Communication and Email

Course announcements and materials will be posted through Canvas, and course-related communication should be sent by University email. Students are responsible for reviewing course communications and announcements regularly.

Questions that require substantial explanation or discussion are often best addressed during office hours or by arranging a meeting.

Late Enrollment

Students who enroll after the course begins are responsible for reviewing the syllabus, assigned readings, course materials, and posted deadlines and should contact me promptly after enrollment. Any necessary arrangements concerning missed work, make-up work, or extensions must be discussed with and approved by me.

Late-enrollment arrangements will be handled in accordance with University policies and the circumstances of the student's enrollment.

Extra Credit and Curves

Extra-credit assignments are not offered in this course. Course grades are determined according to the published grading structure.

If circumstances indicate that an adjustment to the grading structure is warranted, I will communicate any such adjustment to the class.

Questions About Grades

Students should review graded work when it is returned and contact me promptly if they believe there has been an error in grading or recording. Questions about a grade should normally be raised within seven calendar days of the grade being posted so that concerns can be addressed while the relevant assignment and grading criteria are readily

available.

Work Submission Policy

Students are responsible for confirming that electronic submissions have been successfully uploaded to the designated course platform and should retain copies of submitted work and submission confirmations until final grades have been posted.

Technical problems should be reported promptly to both the University's technology support services and me, with appropriate documentation when available.