

# **Sociology**

## **Updated 5/2020**

### **Course Description:**

Introduction to Sociology systematically examines social behavior and human groups, particularly the influence of culture, socialization, social structure, stratification, social institutions, differentiated by race, ethnicity, gender, class, region, and sociocultural change upon people's attitudes and behaviors. Projects and activities include various case studies, a criminal profiling research project, field observation, popular culture presentation, and sociological film analysis. This course is designed for the college-bound student and/or students who want to further their understanding of social behavior and processes. ***(Prerequisite: enrolled students must have an average of a B- or better in all previous social studies courses)***

***Students may earn 3.0 hours of college credit through enrollment in SO102 Society and Culture at SEMO.***

### **Big Ideas:**

- The seven steps of the sociological research process and how they are used in the field
- The five major stages of the life course and how they are similar and different from one society to the next
- The sociological explanation for high rates of violence and crime in the United States
- Racial and ethnic inequalities that affect us on an everyday basis

### **Essential Questions:**

- What theories do sociologists use on an everyday basis?
- How do biological, psychological, and social processes combine to affect the aging process?
- How do ethnic groups in the United States coexist and compete?
- What are the various ways in which individuals and the government can address crime?

### **Essential Learner Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to understand the importance of social context and social structure to the study of sociology, as well as their importance in understanding our everyday lives.
  - Sociological Imagination
    - Learn what sociology covers as a field and how everyday topics like love and romance are shaped by social and historical forces
    - Recognize that sociology is more than just acquiring knowledge; it also involves developing a sociological imagination and a global perspective and understanding social change

- Understand how adopting a sociological perspective allows us to develop a richer understanding of ourselves, our significant others, and the world
- Learn the skills and perspectives that sociologists bring to their work
- Sociological Theories
  - Learn about the development of sociology as a field
  - Understand the role theory plays in sociological research
  - Name some of the leading social theorists and the concepts they contributed to sociology
  - Learn the different theoretical approaches modern sociologists bring to the field
  - Understand the difference between theoretical approaches and theories
  - Learn the two major levels of analysis and the ways they are connected

2. Students will be able to explain the process socialization (including gender socialization) and know the most important agents of socialization.

- Socialization of Children
  - Learn about socialization (including gender socialization) and know the most important agents of socialization
  - Be able to compare the different theoretical interpretations of how and why children develop as they do
  - Learn the similarities and differences between social roles and social identities
  - Understand the role of the media in gender socialization
- Challenges of Aging
  - Be able to identify the different age categories of older adults and know which is the fastest-growing segment of this population
  - Evaluate the experience of growing old in the United States
  - Identify the physical, emotional, and financial challenges faced by older adults
  - Identify characteristics of older persons who are most at risk for health problems

3. Students will be able to define deviance and how it is closely related to social power and social class.

- Crime Documentation
  - Recognize the usefulness and limitations of crime statistics
  - Learn the main sources of crime data in the United States
  - Describe crime trends in the United States since the 1970s
  - Familiarize yourself with some of the varieties of crime
- Effects of Crime on Society

- Explain why members of some social groups are more likely to commit crimes
- Learn some important crime-related differences between men and women
- Understand the age-crime curve and the factors that have led to this pattern
- Learn some of the consequences of white-collar crime
- Learn about organized crime, its international networks, and its rapid growth rate

4. Students will be able to identify the cultural bases of race and ethnicity and how racial and ethnic differences create sharp divisions in society.

- Race and Ethnicity
  - Learn about racialization, both as a means of describing human differences and as a means of reproducing patterns of power and inequality
  - Understand racism as embedded, structurally rooted, and systematic
  - Learn the leading psychological theories and sociological interpretations of prejudice and discrimination
- The Ethnic Minority Experience
  - Familiarize yourself with the history and social dimensions of ethnic relations in the United States
  - Compare and contrast the experiences of African Americans, Latinos, and Asians in the United States
  - Learn how the civil rights movement helped minority groups achieve equal rights and opportunities