COURSE INFORMATION

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This graduate seminar explores advanced sociological principles through the use of selected classic and contemporary readings. Students will be expected to read, synthesize, and integrate a wide variety of sociological materials and to analyze and discuss them from divergent theoretical perspectives.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES: This graduate course has the following major objectives:

1. Develop and enhance students' ability to view the world around them from a sociological perspective.

2. Develop analytical and critical thinking skills--especially the ability to read, synthesize, and integrate a wide variety of materials and to analyze and discuss them from a multitude of theoretical perspectives.

3.Expose students to some of the important "classic" and contemporary literature/authors in sociology.

4. Enhance students' abilities to express their ideas in written and oral communication.

5. Help prepare students for other graduate courses and graduate comprehensive exams.

REQUIRED BOOKS: Invitation to Sociology by Peter Berger; Generation Me by Jean Twenge; Hogs, Blogs, Leathers and Lattes: The Sociology of Modern American Motorcycling by William E. Thompson; and Thirty Readings in Introductory Sociology edited by Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis. The books are available in the university bookstore and from a variety of other sources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

CLASS FORMAT: This is a graduate seminar. The purpose is not for the professor to dispense information and the students to try to absorb it. Rather, we all will be reading the same materials in
preparation for class and will meet to analyze, discuss, and critique these readings together—all contributing to the learning process.

The environment will be totally open. Your participation in class discussion is not encouraged, it is demanded! All ideas, comments, opinions, etc., will be heard. Likewise, all of them will be questioned, analyzed, and critically scrutinized. Do not be timid and do not "wear your feelings on your shirtsleeves." On the other hand, be cognizant of other's feelings and do nothing to interfere with another person's learning opportunities. We will be attacking other people's ideas, not attacking other people.

**STATEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

As stated in the student handbook: “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See Student Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information.)

We will be discussing many contemporary controversial topics. A mature attitude and open mind is essential.

**THIS CLASSROOM IS A “SAFE SPACE”**

All persons who enter this classroom will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, race, sex, social class, religion, politics, sexual orientation, and/or lifestyle. There will be “Zero Tolerance” in this classroom for any form of ageism, racism, sexism, sexual harassment, or any other form of prejudice, discrimination, or bigotry.

**ATTENDANCE:** It should go without saying that attendance at all class sessions is extremely important. The class meets only once a week and there is no possible way to gain the information lost by missing class discussions. It is inevitable that one or two of you will have to miss a session for some very good reason. If this is the case, please check with others in the class to see what you missed. If you anticipate missing more than two class sessions, you probably should drop the course.

**EXAMINATIONS:** There will be two examinations in this course: A short answer/essay exam at midterm; and a short answer/essay final exam. Each will be worth 100 points.

**CRITICAL BOOK REVIEWS:** There will be three out-of-class papers worth 50 points each. They should be 2 to 3 pages in length (typed, double-spaced). See guidelines at the end of syllabus for writing reviews and see the course schedule for due dates of each review. Papers turned in late (any time after the beginning of class when due) will be worth a maximum of 25 pts. Papers cannot be turned in any later than one week after the due date (NO EXCEPTIONS!).

**GRADES:** Final course grades will be based on the 2 major exams (100 pts. ea.), 3 book reviews (50 pts. ea.), and seminar participation (50 pts.). The following final grading scale will be used:

- A = 90-100% (360-400 total pts.)
- B = 80 - 89% (320-359 total pts.)
- C = 70 - 79% (280-319 total pts.)
- D = 60 - 69% (240-279 total pts.)
- F = < 60 % (< 240 total pts.)

**POLICIES ON ENROLLMENT, "Xs", AND WITHDRAWAL:** All policies regarding last day for enrollment, dropping without a grade, withdrawal from class, and the use of "X" will be rigidly adhered to in this course. Students should check the student handbook, current semester schedule, and the appropriate bulletin boards for specific deadlines. Seeing that all university procedures are properly followed is the student's responsibility.
CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM: Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Anyone who participates in either activity will fail the course and the professor will initiate steps for the university to take further disciplinary action.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

There are no technology requirements for this course. Students should have access to a computer, however, to check their MyLeo accounts for e-mails from the professor.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course is taught face-to-face and is not web-enhanced. The publisher of the textbook provides an online site to accompany the textbook. The web address is on the back cover of the textbook.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
The most effective way to communicate with the professor will be to come to class. The professor will be in his office during posted office hours and by appointment. The best way to make an appointment is to communicate directly with the professor immediately prior to or after class. Appointments can also be made via e-mail.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION: I will communicate with the class through MyLeo e-mail. I will send out reminders about assignments, changes in syllabus, etc., to the entire class through e-mail using your official "My Leo" university e-mail address. Consequently, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to check your e-mail regularly for messages from me.

Students with Disabilities:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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W, 23 Jan.  The Sociological Imagination  Section 1, Rdgs 1,2,3
W, 30 Jan.  *Invitation to Sociology*  Peter Berger

### Critical Review Due

W, 6 Feb.  Methods and Theory  Section 2, Rdgs 4,5,6
W, 13 Feb.  Culture and Socialization  Section 3, Rdgs 7,8,9
W, 20 Feb.  Social Institutions  Section 4, Rdgs 10,11,12
W, 27 Feb.  Race and Intersectionality  Section 5, Rdgs 13,14,15

W, 6 Mar.  Mid-Term Exam

W, 13 Mar.  Spring Break/No classes


### Critical Review Due

W, 27 Mar.  Class and Intersectionality  Section 6, Rdgs 16,17,18
W, 3 Apr.  Gender and Intersectionality  Section 7, Rdgs 19,20,21
W, 10 Apr.  Forces of Social Change  Section 8, Rdgs 22,23,24
W, 17 Apr.  *Generation Me*  Jean Twenge
W, 24 Apr.  Critical Review Due

### Critical Book Reviews

(3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font)

1. Complete citation for the book including: Title, author, city of publication, publisher, date.

2. What is the author's major thesis?

3. How convincing is the author in supporting the major thesis? What does he/she use to support thesis?

5. What major theoretical perspective(s) is(are) represented?

6. Are there apparent biases? If so, what are they?

7. What are the major strengths of the book?

7. What are the major weaknesses of the book?

9. Does this book make a major contribution to the field of sociology? If so, what is that contribution? If not, why not?

10. What is your personal reaction to the book? Would you recommend it to others? Why? Why not?

### SOC 535

**RECOMMENDED READING LIST**

(*Students also should consult with the Graduate Advisor for a reading list for comprehensive exams*)

Berger, Peter

*Invitation to Sociology*

*The Social Construction of Reality* (with Luckmann)

*The Sacred Canopy*

*Pyramids of Sacrifice*
Blumer, Herbert
Symbolic Interactionism

Cockerham, William C.
Society of Risk-Takers: Living Life on the Edge

Collins, Randall
Four Traditions in Sociology

Comte, Auguste
The Positive Philosophy

Cooley, Charles H.
Human Nature and the Social Order
Social Organization
Social Process

Durkheim, Emile
The Division of Labor in Society
Elementary Forms of the Religious Life
The Rules of the Sociological Method
Suicide

Friedan, Betty
The Feminine Mystique
The Fountain of Age

Faludi, Susan
Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women

Gans, Herbert
Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste

Garfinkle, Harold
Studies in Ethnomethodology

Goffman, Erving
The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life
Asylums
Stigma
Interaction Ritual

Hall, Edward T.
The Silent Language

Hochschild, Arlie
The Second Shift: Inside the Two-Job Marriage (with Anne Machung)
The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work.

Homans, George
The Human Group

Jacobs, Jane
The Death and Life of Great American Cities

Johnson, Allan G.
The Forest and the Trees: Sociology as Life, Practice, & Promise

Lemert, Charles
Social Things: An Introduction to the Sociological Life
Thinking the Unthinkable: The Riddle of Classical Social Theories

Liebow, Elliot (anthropologist)
Tally's Corner

Marx, Karl
Capital
The German Ideology
The Communist Manifesto (with Engels)

McLeod, Jay
Ain’t No Makin It

Mead, George H.
Mind, Self and Society

Merton, Robert
Social Theory and Social Structure

Mills, C. Wright
The Power Elite
The Sociological Imagination
White Collar

Parsons, Talcott
The Social System

Putnum, Robert
Bowling Alone: The collapse and Revival of American Community

Ritzer, George
Enchanting a Disenchanted World
Expressing America
Sociology: A Multi-Paradigm Science
The McDonaldization of Society
The Globalization of Nothing

Smith, Dorothy
The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology
The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge

Sorokin, Pitirim
Fads and Foibles in Modern Sociology
Contemporary Sociological Theories
Spencer, Herbert
  Social Statics
  Principles of Sociology

Sumner, William Graham
  Folkways

Tannen, Deborah
  You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation

Terkel, Studs
  Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do

Thomas, William I.
  The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (with Znaniecki)
  The Unadjusted Girl

Toennies, Ferdinand
  Community and Society

Veblen, Thorsten
  Theory of the Leisure Class

Ward, Lester Frank
  Applied Sociology
  Dynamic Sociology
  Outlines of Sociology
  Pure Sociology

Weber, Max
  The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
  The Sociology of Religion

Whyte, William F.
  Street Corner Society