Contacting Professor about Questions/Concerns.

I leave the last 10 minutes of every class open for people to approach me with their questions or concerns. If for some reason you want to meet in private please email me to set up an appointment. See last page of this syllabus for how to craft a professional email.

General Information

Please download the following free app to your iphone/device: kahoot.it

Textbook

I have generally hesitated to use a text book for this class because of the associated costs to students. However, there are now a few affordable options and I want to make this option available for students who learn best this way. I also am making a hardcopy of the textbook available at the library in the reserves. The pages listed in the syllabus are for edition 13.

- Title: Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach, 13th Edition
- Author: James Henslin
- Publisher: Pearson
- Year Published: 2017
- ISBN: 9780134205809
- Hardcopy rental on Amazon.com $36.00
- 2 copies on reserve at Thompson library - they can be checked out for 1 day.
- [http://guides.osu.edu/c.php?g=703096](http://guides.osu.edu/c.php?g=703096)

Description

This course is primarily an introductory sociology course which will use rural examples and specifically the transformation of societies from rural to urban and the impact those transformation continue to have on how we view ourselves and each other. The goal of this course is to introduce you to the broad and interesting world of sociological study. After this course you should be able to critically evaluate the social norms that make up our world, but are often taken for granted. You will learn that human beings use social constructions, such as gender, race and class, to organize themselves and determine their relationship to others. This has profound consequences for people’s well-being and for our trajectory as a species. As sociologists we want to understand how societies organize, why certain patterns and processes have developed, why social problems form and how they might be addressed. In order to begin to answer these questions we need to first know where social boundaries are drawn and the consequences these boundaries have for social interaction and social structure. However, the depth and breadth of Sociology is enormous and because this is an introductory course we will only be able to skim the surface of these issues, but it is my hope that this course will whet your appetite to explore the field further.

This course will implement Marx’s critique perspective. This means that in order to tell a new story we must un-tell the old story, breaking down established paradigms. This perspective is taken in order to foster critical thinking so that students understand social theories are not ideas to accept without question but rather proposals to be considered, debated and improved upon. After this course I hope that you are able to:

- See the power of social structure and history.
- Look at a person and wonder what opportunities and led that them to where they are now.
- Understand how other people’s perceptions can get in your head, often unknowingly oppressing or empowering you.
- See the importance of space in creating and limiting life chances.
- Be a critical thinker! When you are experiencing life and easy answers pop up I want you to question them and try to come up with your own opinion.
Expectations and Goals

1. Grades:
   If you have any question or concern about a grade you received, I will listen to and consider your point as long as you discuss this with me IN PERSON at the NEXT class following the receipt of the grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tr>
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<td>93-100%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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</table>

2. Attention & Technology:
   Please do not come to class if you are planning on sleeping or not paying attention. If you are a distraction to me or your fellow student, by sleeping, talking, not paying attention, etc. I will ask you to leave. No cell phones, surfing the Internet, checking e-mail or Facebook, game playing, or text messaging allowed in class. Any computers used in class must be for class purposes only. Points will be deducted accordingly.

3. Exercises/Assignments:
   Exercises will be handed out in class. Late assignments will have 10% taken off for each day it's late.

4. Communicating with Students:
   You will be emailed at your osu.edu email. Please make sure to check that email because you will be responsible for the information passed along that way.

5. Accommodation of students with disabilities:
   Any student with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should let the instructor know as early in the semester as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations. The office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall; 292-3307; 292-0901 TDD) verifies the need for accommodations and assists in the development of accommodation strategies.

6. Academic Misconduct:
   For activities of this course, the Code of Student Conduct of The Ohio State University applies. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Specifically, plagiarism is the representation of another’s work or ideas as one’s own, including the unacknowledged word-for-word and/or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas. It also includes submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course, without permission of the instructor for which the work is being submitted. Faculty Rule 3335-5-487 will be followed in cases of academic misconduct - “Instructors shall report instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (on academic misconduct).” For more information, please refer to: [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).
### Learning Goals

**Students will be able to appreciate how the historical development of major social institutions have affected individual’s lives throughout history and these trajectories still influence people’s lives today.**

**Students should be alert to that our social structure, and important classifications that determine our everyday experiences, like race and gender, are socially constructed and thus change across space and over time.**

**Students will be able to identify the socioenvironmental factors that create and limit life chances.**

**Students will understand the link between the physical environment and our social world.**

**Students will understand the historical trajectory of rural societies to urban ones.**

**Students better understand survey methodology.**

### Learning Objectives

**how I know you have reached the stated goals**

**Students should be able to state major social institutions and have an understanding of their history. Students should be able to formulate hypotheses about how social institutions might have affected their lives and the lives of others.**

**Give examples of when racial classifications have changed in U.S. history. List how racial and gender classifications can change across space. Understand there is no biological basis for race. See the difference between sex and gender.**

**During the poverty simulation students will be able to steps into an impoverished person’s shoes and see their constraints and opportunities. Students will see when they themselves are faced with complicated constraints they might not act in the ways they would expect.**

**Students will question ready-made answers and develop their own hypotheses and opinions. Students will become aware that every explanation presented to them was developed in a specific context.**

**Students will be able to critically evaluate survey results.**

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This course meets the following GEC requirements in:

1. **Diversity-Social Diversity in the United States**

   **Goals:**
   Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

   **Expected Learning Outcomes:**
   - Students describe and evaluate the roles of such categories as race, gender and sexuality, disability, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
   - Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

2. **Social Sciences-Organizations and Politics**

   **Goals:**
   Students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

   **Expected Learning Outcomes:**
   - Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of organizations and polities.
   - Students understand the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.
   - Students comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and polities and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.
Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>22-Aug</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sociological Imagination &amp; Critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>29-Aug</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>31-Aug</td>
<td>2 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Culture, Social Structure &amp; Institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>5-Sep</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Socialization</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7-Sep</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Development of Western Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>12-Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>14-Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Exam I</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>19-Sep</td>
<td>19 &amp; 20</td>
<td>American Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>21-Sep</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>26-Sep</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Class &amp; Stratification</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>28-Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation for Poverty Simulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>3-Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poverty Simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5-Oct</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>10-Oct</td>
<td>7 &amp; 15</td>
<td>Politics &amp; Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>12-Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No Class-AU BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>17-Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>19-Oct</td>
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<td><strong>Exam II</strong></td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Media &amp; Public Opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>26-Oct</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Develop Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>31-Oct</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Meet on Oval</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2-Nov</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>7-Nov</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>9-Nov</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Social Movements &amp; social Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>14-Nov</td>
<td>18, 20 &amp; 22</td>
<td>Values &amp; Consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>16-Nov</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Globalization Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>21-Nov</td>
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<td>No-Class</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>23-Nov</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>28-Nov</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>30-Nov</td>
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<td><strong>EXAM III</strong></td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>5-Dec</td>
<td></td>
<td>No-Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7-Dec</td>
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<td>Poster Session</td>
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</table>

Exam Info

While exams will build off one another (e.g. using terminology we learned in earlier classes), exams are not cumulative. Exam I is over information from classes 1-7, Exam II is over information from classes 9-17, Exam II is over information from classes 19-29. Please bring a pencil to class. No electronics or notes may be used during the exam.

All exams are:

- Taken in class
- Multiple Choice- we use scantrons which I will provide to you on exam day
- 100 points total
Assignment Schedule

All assignments will be explained to you in class on the date assigned. Information can be downloaded from Canvas as well. On 10/24 you will join a group (2-3 people max) to develop testable hypotheses based on one of the social statuses we learn about in class. You will develop survey questions in class on 10/26 that you will then print out and administer to people you recruit on the Oval on 10/31 during class time. We will analyze these data together on 11/2 so that you can create a graph for your final project, a scientific poster that you will be showing in class on 12/7.

Please download the following free app to your iphone/device: kahoot.it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Assigned</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Take home/In-Class</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Turn in Where?</th>
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<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>Take home-Extra Credit</td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
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<td>In-Class</td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
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<td>Kahoot</td>
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<td>31-Aug</td>
<td>Kahoot</td>
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<td>9/5</td>
<td>Interview of Older Individual</td>
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<td>Take-Home</td>
<td>12-Sep</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
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<td>26-Sep</td>
<td>Kahoot</td>
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<td>Your hypotheses</td>
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<td>26-Oct</td>
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<td>10/31</td>
<td>Dress up/Candy</td>
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<td>In-class being held on Oval</td>
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<td>14-Nov</td>
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<td>Peer Review of Posters</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>In-class</td>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*symbolizes extra credit
How to Email Your Professor from STEM Diversity Network

Every semester, I see the tweets and Facebook posts. My professor friends, they are annoyed. Their students do not know how to write emails, they say. What they really mean is that their students don’t know how to follow the conventions of email etiquette in the academy. I used to be exasperated by student emails too. Until I realized that there was a simple explanation for why they didn’t know how to write them — they’ve never actually been taught how.

Here’s a template you can follow in constructing your email to a professor. Each element is explained further below.

Dear [1] Professor [2] Last Name [3],

This is a line that recognizes our common humanity [4]. I’m in your Class Name, Section Number that meets on This Day [5]. This is the question I have or the help I need [6]. I’ve looked in the syllabus and at my notes from class and online and I asked someone else from the class [7], and I think This Is The Answer [8], but I’m still not sure. This is the action I would like you to take [9]. Signing off with a Thank You is always a good idea [10], Favorite Student

Element #1: Salutation

Right off the bat, here’s where you can establish that you view your relationship with your professor as a professional one. Use “Dear,” or if that feels horrifically formal to you, you can use “Hello” or “Hi.” (“Hi” is pushing it. See note about exceptions below.)

Element #2: Honorific

This is the where a lot of students unwittingly poke right at their professor’s sensitive ego and sense of justice in the world. You didn’t think this little word was a super big deal, but it actually is to them. An honorific is a title used to communicate respect for a person’s position. Whether or not you, as a student, actually respect your professor’s authority or position, it’s a good idea to act like you do. The simplest way to do this is to address them as “Professor.” If they have a PhD, you can technically call them “Dr.” but you’re safer with “Professor.” Not all instructors have PhDs (and many won’t even have the word professor in their official job title), but if they are teaching a college class they are inhabiting the role of Professor and can be addressed as such. The bonus of “Professor” and “Dr.” is that they don’t require you to know anything about your professor’s gender identity or marital status. If you call your prof “Mrs.” or “Miss,” lord help you.

Element #3: Name

You might be surprised at how frequently students get their professor’s name wrong. This is not difficult information to look up, people. It’s on your syllabus, it’s on the department website, it’s probably Google-able too. Use their last name. Spell out the whole thing. Spell it correctly. If there’s a hyphen in it, use both names and the hyphen (this really falls under spelling out the whole thing and spelling it correctly, but I get it, it’s a special case and it causes a lot of confusion for some reason even though it is 2016).

Exceptions to #1–3 (do not attempt until you have leveled up to pro emailer status)

You may use a less formal salutation, and address your professor by something other than Professor Last? Name in your email, if, and only if, you have received an email from them where they use an informal salutation and sign it with something other than Professor Last Name. For example, when I was a college professor, I would often sign off on my emails “Prof. P-S” because I knew my last name was long and confusing for people. I then rather liked it when people sent me emails addressed to “Prof. P-S.” But don’t deviate from what they call themselves. NEVER try to use a first name unless you have been given explicit permission to do so. If the prof cryptically signs their emails with only initials, best to stick to Professor Last Name. Do not under any circumstances begin an email with “Hey” because some people get real huffy about that.

Element #4: Meaningless Nicety

It never hurts to say something like “I hope you’re enjoying the beautiful weather today,” or “I hope you had a relaxing weekend,” to start off. It shows that you see your professor as a person who has some kind of life. Professors like it when you see them as people who have lives outside of their classroom (however remotely this may resemble the truth). It doesn’t really matter what you say here, it’s more the ritual of polite interest that counts. If you can make it come off like you genuinely mean it, bonus points for you.

Element #5: Reminder of how they know you

This one is key, especially if it’s the first time you are contacting your professor. You can’t count on them to remember your name from their rosters or to be able to put your face with your name. If there’s something distinctive about you that would jog their memory and make them look upon you fondly, include that. For instance, “I stayed after class to ask you about the reading that one time,” or “I sit in the front row and have blue hair,” whatever. If you haven’t met them yet, explain your desired relationship to them, such as “I am
interested in enrolling in your class next semester.” If you’re fairly certain they will know you by name, you can leave this out. But some profs are very bad at remembering names, so you might as well throw them a bone here. (If you are lucky, those profs will be self-aware and empathetic enough not to make you memorize any names for exams in their classes.)

Element #6: The real reason for your email

This is the whole reason you’re sending the email, so make it good. The important thing here is to get in and get out, while remaining courteous. Concisely state what it is you need from the professor without offering a bunch of excuses or going into excessive detail or sounding like you are making demands. If you can’t explain why you’re emailing in a sentence or two, consider making an appointment to meet with the professor in person, in which case your line here will be “I was hoping we could meet to talk about X. What would be a good time for that?” If they can’t meet and just want to discuss it over email, they’ll let you know.

Elements #7 and 8: This is where you prove you’re a wonderful person

There is a t-shirt for sale on the internet that says, “It’s in the syllabus.” Think for a second about why there is a market for this product. A vast number of emails sent to professors by students are seeking information that has already been communicated by the professor. Before even sending the email, you should actually check the syllabus and your notes (and the class website if there is one) to see if your question has indeed been answered there. It doesn’t hurt to ask someone else from the class too — this is why you should try to get a least one classmate’s phone number or email address during the first week. If you’ve actually done all these things and you still have a question, then your contacting the professor will actually provide helpful information to them that they might not have been clear about something.

If you can try to answer your own question, and you turn out to be right, that saves them a little bit of time in their response. For instance, if you are writing to set up a meeting, you could say, “It says on the syllabus that your office hours are Tuesdays at 3pm. Could I come this Tuesday at 3.15?” This also shows that you thought about the whole thing for more than two seconds before deciding to take up their email reading time.

Element #9: Super polite restatement of your request

If you’re asking a question you need an answer to, you can say something like “If you could let me know at your earliest convenience, I’d really appreciate it.” If you need them to fill out a form, or contact someone on your behalf, or do something that requires more action than just answering your email, state that very clearly here. This helps them put it on their to-do list and get it done.

Element #10: Sign-off

If you’re not sure how to sign off an email, “Thank you” is nearly always appropriate. You can do “Best,” or “All the best,” or “Sincerely,” or whatever, but some form of thanks here does double duty as both sign off and expression of gratitude.

The hidden Element #11: The follow-up

If your professor hasn’t responded to your email, and social cues tell you they probably meant to by now, you can send a gentle follow-up. You can format the follow-up using all the elements here, but you can add in “Just following up on my previous email,” right before you get to Element #6. You don’t have to rub it in that they forgot to email you back, they will get the point (and if they genuinely forgot, they might feel bad). If they were not emailing you back on purpose, you probably already annoyed them the first time around, and you might as well be as polite as possible with the follow-up. When is it safe to send a follow-up reminder? You have to gauge this based on how quickly they usually respond to things and how dire your need for a response truly is. If it can wait a week, let it wait a week (or until you see them in person).

Why any of this matters

Learning how to craft professional emails is a skill you can take with you into the so-called real world. A courteous and thoughtfully constructed request is much more likely to receive the kind of response you want. And, let’s face it, professors are humans with feelings who just want to be treated as such.

You might think professors who are annoyed by student emails are over-sensitive and lazy (it’s their job to handle this shit, right?). And you might be right. But consider that while you only have a few professors at any one time, they might have hundreds of students. They are possibly getting the same question from ten different people. They might be an adjunct professor who is actually only paid for the hours they spend in the classroom (and they’re not paid very much for that even). They might have experienced a pattern of receiving less respect from people based on their gender or race. Make your email the one they don’t gripe to their friends about. Now you know how.