

Sociology Syllabus

Sociology 302--unique number 43900
Introduction to the Study of Society
Fall 1983

MWF 10:00-11:00 a.m.
ACA 21
Dr. Teresa A. Sullivan

SYLLABUS

TO THE STUDENT: This syllabus is different from many others. It is longer than some, more detailed than most. But most importantly, it is designed to help you successfully pass the course. Please keep this syllabus for reference during the course.

In the following pages there are many suggestions to you, but the most crucial one is this: get help as soon as you think you need it. Don't wait until the week before the final. If you need help, come see me.

INTRODUCTION: Sociology is the study of human social behavior. Compared to some of the physical sciences, it is a relatively young science. Nevertheless, the systematic understanding of our own behavior is valuable to us as individuals, as groups, and as nations.

At the broadest level, sociology represents a perspective of social reality. It is not the only such perspective or the ultimate perspective; philosophy, theology, history, psychology, and the other social sciences all have something to say about human behavior. But just as we get a more comprehensive and accurate picture of an object by looking at it from numerous perspectives, we can also obtain a more comprehensive understanding of ourselves as social beings by using the perspectives of several disciplines. Sociology 302 is a required course for sociology majors and majors from several other fields; it is part of a sociology minor for some students, and it serves as an Area B or general elective for others. But regardless of your major, sociology can contribute to your education by displaying your society to you from another perspective.

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STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE: This is a survey course; it is designed to show you the breadth of interests that characterize modern sociology. No single topic is covered intensively or in detail. If you discover that a particular subject is of special interest to you, I will be happy to offer advice on specialized sociology courses that might interest you.

It is not an easy task to divide sociology (or I suspect, any discipline) into a neat set of exclusive topics that structure the course. Attempts to do so often have the negative consequence of creating artificial distinctions that misrepresent the nature of the field. However, to launch an investigation of a new discipline without the aid of some guiding structure would soon prove maddening. Thus, assuming that a little distortion is preferable to total chaos, the following represents the overall structure of the course. Remember that, although we are identifying certain sub-areas of sociology, ideally these areas should be interrelated into a more comprehensive system.

UNIT I: Concepts and Levels of Analysis (August 29-September 23). In this unit, we will discuss the most abstract "units" that sociologists study--populations and cultures--as well as the more concrete and smaller "units" such as groups. We will also study the process of socialization, by which individuals are prepared for their roles as group members. Although "populations" and "cultures" are abstract terms, I hope to demonstrate that U.S. population issues and U.S. culture have a demonstrable impact on your own life. There will be many new terms to learn in this unit: learning them well will facilitate your understanding of the rest of the course.

UNIT II: Theories (September 26-October 21). In this unit, we will study three important, competing theories that sociologists use to explain social phenomena: functionalist theory, conflict theory, and interactionist theory. We will apply these theories to analyze role behavior, deviance, families, and religion. You should learn these theories sufficiently well that you can apply them to issues discussed in Unit III. This unit will also demonstrate to you the role that theories (especially competing theories) play in any science. Physicists, for example, find that light sometimes behaves as a particle and sometimes behaves as a wave. In the same way, sociologists often find that two or more theoretical perspectives may simultaneously illuminate a phenomenon. **UNIT III: Methods. (October 24-November 23).** In this unit, we will study how sociologists know what they know. We will examine the types of methods sociologists use to study several important social phenomena: stratification, race and ethnic relations, gender roles, age roles, and economic organizations. Along the way, you will also have the opportunity to apply the theoretical perspectives from Unit II to these phenomena.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: I have three overall goals for the course.

First, students should learn sociological concepts sufficiently well to be able to apply them to new situations. Given a newspaper article, a fictional account, or a contrived "social situation", students should be able to identify the appropriate units of analysis and the sociological concepts that could be used to analyze it.

Secondly, students should improve their ability to evaluate the comprehensiveness and adequacy of competing explanations. Specifically, given a social phenomenon, students should be able to apply two or more sociological theories and demonstrate the extent to which each theory is able to account for the phenomenon.

Thirdly, students should gain some insight into the methods used by sociologists in their research. Students should be able to interpret a sociological table or chart, and should develop an ability to criticize the methods used in a social science study.

The specific learning objectives for each chapter of the textbook are presented in the study guide. I encourage you to study them as part of your preparation for class.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Teresa A. Sullivan, Associate professor of sociology and Training Director, Population Research Center. B.A., Michigan State, 1970; A.M., Chicago, 1972; Ph.D., Chicago, 1975. I have taught at UT for four years. I am a demographer with research interest in under-employed persons and their problems, and also in racial and religious minorities. I have authored or co-authored three books: one on under-employments, one about young Catholics in the United States and Canada, and one on American immigration policy. Among my articles are two on teaching introductory sociology.

The Teaching Assistant is Barbara Zsembik, B.A., University of Akron. Her mailbox is in BUR 480, telephone 471-1115. Her office is in BUR 470, and her office hours will be announced in class.

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OFFICE HOURS, MAIL BOXES, TELEPHONES NUMBERS: My office hours are 11-11:50 a.m., MWF, in Burdine 306. No appointment is needed during office hours. I try to be faithful to my office hours; if I am delayed or temporarily in another office, I will leave a note on my door to that effect. You may leave messages in my mailbox in Burdine 436; my telephone number is 471-5514. If you want an appointment with me outside my regular office hours, leave a message or phone me at either number.

Many routine administrative matters, such as signing add-drop slips can be handled before and after class. A tip: My memory for administrative details is not exceptional. If you want me to write a letter of recommendation or return a newspaper clipping you have loaned me, your chances of success are greatly improved if you will give me some sort of written reminder.

The suggestion form included in the syllabus is one way that you can communicate with me (anonymously, if you wish) to bring up suggestions or complaints or just remind me about something.

MATERIALS TO PURCHASE:

1. J. Ross Eshleman and Barbara G. Cashion, *Sociology: An Introduction*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1983. Identified in the assignments as "EC".
2. Joseph D. Yenerall, *Study Guide to Accompany Eshleman and Cashion's "Sociology: An Introduction"*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1983. Identified in the assignments as "Y".
3. Notebook or looseleaf paper for class notes.
4. Typing paper if you plan to write the take-home essay exam or the written assignments.
5. An inexpensive 8 1/2 X 11" looseleaf folder (cardboard or plastic) to hold written assignments.
6. Soft-lead pencils for multiple-choice exams.

MATERIALS ON RESERVE--Copies of student evaluations of this course are on file in the Union Program Office, fourth floor of the Texas Union. Copies of the textbooks, examples of exams previously used in the course, and materials needed for the written assignments are on reserve in the Academic Center Reserve Room.

LECTURES AND ATTENDANCE POLICY--Unlike most high school courses in which the content of the textbook determined the content of the course, and the teacher taught the text, in college courses the textbooks and the lectures and class discussions are equal parts of the course. The teacher does not merely explain the text. The relationship between text and lecture in the college classroom can take many forms. Sometimes the text is a general background for more specific lectures; other times the reverse is true, with the lectures being general background for a more detailed text. Often the lecture illustrates the text, but sometimes the text illustrates the lectures. Often the text is selected as a means of presenting a point of view opposite from that presented in lectures. Sometimes texts deal with totally different material than the lectures, but supplement the lectures in some way.

While the textbook is selected by the teacher, the lecture is the creation of the teacher. When a teacher lectures, the teacher is trying to think aloud in front of you and share the process with you. You will rarely have the chance to question a text author, but you do have the chance to question me about the lecture every class period.

Most class sessions will be devoted to a lecture, although from time to time there will also be class discussions, guest lecture, a film, or a class demonstration. Students are responsible for the content of all class sessions, whether or not it is included in the texts. Approximately 50% of the examination questions are drawn from the lectures and other class activities.

During the last week of class, students will have the opportunity to select a few topics for lectures and discussion.

Sometimes it is necessary to miss a class. If you must miss class, please arrange with a classmate to borrow notes. The course staff will not assume responsibility for providing lecture notes for missed classes.

On Wednesday, September 7, we will complete a seating chart. Please sit in your designated seat after that date. The seating chart helps me to learn your names, and it helps you to meet some of your fellow students. We use the seating chart to spot check attendance. Attendance is not used in computing your grade. (However, research shows--and

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my experience confirms--that absenteeism is correlated with low grades.) I am required to report excessive absences to your academic dean. Your dean has discretion to report these absences to your parents.

Please write here your location on the seating cart and the names and telephone numbers of several students seated near you:

I am located in row # _____ Seat # _____
 Name _____ Telephone _____
 Name _____ Telephone _____

REQUIRED READING: Students are expected to spend about two hours of outside preparation for every hour in class. (See Fall Semester *Course Schedule*, p. 8.). Required and recommended readings and written assignments are the outside preparation for this course. The required reading and assignments have been designed so that the average student can complete each week's work in 4-6 hours.

Required readings should be completed before class on the day they are assigned. Fifty percent of the examination questions will come from the readings. Students are responsible for all the material in the required readings, whether or not the material has been discussed in class.

I encourage you to use the Yenerall study guide to review the textbook and to prepare for examinations.

EXAMINATIONS: There are five examinations in this course: a final and four mid-terms. Everyone is required to take the final on December 13 at 9 a.m. It will be a three-hour, closed-book, objective-type examination that will cover all of the lectures and the required reading. The final will count 40% of your grade.

There will be three in-class mid-terms. They are one-hour, closed- book, objective-type questions, and they will be given on September 23, October 21, and November 23 at 10:00 a.m. The fourth mid-term is an open book, take-home, one-week exam that must be completed without discussion with others. The take-home will be distributed on October 31 and a typed copy of your answer is due at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, November 7. The three highest mid-terms will each count 20% of your course grade; if you take four terms, you may drop the lowest grade. In addition, you may substitute four written assignments for one midterm grade (that is, for 20% of your grade). All exams and written assignments are graded anonymously. Some examples of exams given in this course are on reserve in the Academic Center Reserve Room.

For all in-class exams, the approximate distribution of questions is as follows:

- 30% low-difficulty questions from lectures
- 30% high-difficulty questions from lectures
- 20% low-difficulty questions from lectures
- 20% high-difficulty questions from readings

The answers will be posted after each exam on the fourth floor on Burdine Hall on the bulletin board west of the elevators. The final exam might contain questions that appeared on the mid-terms. Answers to the final exam will not be posted, and you will not be permitted to keep copies of it.

When you come to the exam, you need to bring with you your student ID, one or two soft lead pencils, and an eraser.

There will also be occasional pop quizzes, but these are for your in- formation only. The answers will be given in class. The study guide by Yenerall contains practice questions that may also be helpful to you.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: You are not required to complete any written assignments; however, if you complete them, they will probably improve your understanding of the course material and they may improve your grade. A variety of written assignments are available; you may choose up to four. Written assignments normally require two to three pages of double-spaced typing to cover the material adequately. You may turn in an assignment at any time for an

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advisory grade. All assignments must be turned in by December 5 to receive an official grade, but they may also be turned in earlier.

If you complete all four assignments, with a better score than your third highest mid-term, you may substitute the higher score for 20% of your final grade. If you prefer to take only two mid-terms, you may count the written assignments for 20% of your grade. Finally, if you write only one, two, or three assignments, you may count them as extra credit to raise your lowest test grade.

Materials for the written assignments are on reserve in the Academic Center.

1. Willie Morris, the noted writer, was formerly editor of *Harper's* and before that, of the *Daily Texan*. On pp. 149-62 of his book, *North Toward Home* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1967), he recounts being a freshman at UT in 1953. It is now thirty years later. Write an essay in which you discuss your socialization as a freshman, and compare it systematically to Willie's. How many of the groups that were important to him are important to you? What additional influences are important in your socialization?
2. On page 95 of the EC text there is a famous passage from Horace Miner's essay, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema." Another example of a similar essay is Jean Spetherd's "The Lost Culture of Deli" (Omni, October 1979). What is common to both of these essays is the depiction of future social scientists trying to make sense of some aspect of American culture. Write a similar essay in which, you, as a social scientist of the future, try to make sense of some artifact of U.S. culture. Alternatively, you may be a social scientist from an alien planet trying to make sense of the United States (in the manner of Traveling Matt from *Fraggle Rock*).
3. On reserve in the Academic Center there are several tables that analyze social phenomena we have studied in class. Select one of these tables. Describe the conclusions you would draw from the table, and explain how this table might support or refute a theoretical position discussed in class or in your text.
4. Complete a family tree of your family, showing your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. Indicate the birthplace, occupation, education, religion, and number of children that each person had. To what extent does your family tree illustrate social trends that have been significant in the United States (e.g., urbanization, social mobility, the trend to smaller families and more exogamy, etc.)? To what extent does your family represent a divergence from these trends? If you do not know the information required for some ancestors, comment on why you do not know the information. (Sometimes, why we do not know something is as interesting to a sociologist as what we do know.)
- 5-11. You may do any of the "workshops" that appear in the Yenerall text.

Each written assignment will be worth a maximum of 25 points; the four assignments together are worth a maximum of 100 points.

EXTRA CREDIT: If you complete one to three written assignments, you may raise the score for your third-highest mid-term in the following way:

- (one assignment) 75% of midterm grade + points on written assignment
- (two assignments) 50% of midterm grade + points on written assignments
- (three assignments) 25% of midterm grade + points on written assignments

On October 19, there will be a "sociological scavenger hunt", which you may complete for up to three points to be added to your final point total for the course. In this exercise, which will be conducted during the time normally devoted to class, you will draw at random a sociological concept. You have until 11:00 a.m. to locate an example of the concept on campus or up to one block off campus. You must find the example and write it down with sufficient detail that we can be certain it is an accurate illustration. You may trade your concept with another student. All answers must be turned in by 11:15 a.m. The exercise will be done only on this day (rain or shine), and there will be no make-up.

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GRADING POLICIES: Because I allow you to drop the lowest of four mid-terms and/or to substitute written assignments for a mid-term, I do not allow make-up mid-term exams. If you must miss a mid-term, please make arrangements to take the remaining mid-terms and/or to complete for written assignments.

Criteria for Grading Essay Exams and Written Assignments

For an A

1. The question is answered, you have analyzed, described, discussed, etc., whatever was required by the question. The argument is essentially correct.
2. The paper is complete, specific, all aspects of the question answered.
3. The paper is well organized, the argument is supported with detail, examples, illustrations, etc.
4. The examples have some originality or depth and are elaborated to some degree.

For a B or C paper

1. The question is answered, and is essentially correct.
2. The paper is less than complete, some aspects of the question are not answered, the answer is general.
3. The organization is poor, needs more detail.
4. The examples lack detail and originality.

For a D paper

1. The question is partially answered and partially correct.
2. The paper is incomplete and general.
3. There is little or no supporting material.

Your written work should reflect a reasonable standard of writing; that is sentences, paragraphs, decent spelling- Poor spelling, disjointed sentences and poor paragraphs blur meaning. When the meaning is unclear, you lose credit. A good way to check your sentences is to read your answer silently exactly as you wrote it. Then say the sentence to yourself as you want it to sound. Correct your written sentence to read that way. The answer should be complete, that is, it should stand alone. A good test of completeness is could someone who had never taken a sociology course read your answer and understand what you are talking about?

Carefully select material to be included in your answer. Too much is as wrong as too little. Ask yourself: does this piece of information address the question, clarify what I have said? A common mistake is to include too many main points and to add too little supporting detail.

Answer the question. If the question says "analyze", then analyze, don't describe or discuss.

Letter Grades. I do not use a "bell-shaped" or "normal" curve in grading this course. I use a criterion grading system. To pass the course, you must have a minimum of 680 points (of a possible 1,003). To earn an "A", you must have a minimum of 910 points. Theoretically, everyone in the class could earn an "A". You will not be penalized if everyone else in the class does well. This is the tentative distribution of points and grades for the course:

over 920	A	840 - 900	B	760 - 820	C	690 - 740	D
910 - 920	A-	830 - 840	B-	750 - 760	C-	680 - 690	D-
900 - 910	B	820 - 830	C+	740 - 750	D+	below 680	D

If the class does much worse than this distribution, I will make the criteria less demanding, but I will not make the criteria more difficult if the class does well. In Fall, 1982 the final distribution of letter grades using this curve was: 24% A, 35% B, 25% C, 7% D, 9% F.

If you drop the course after September 23, a possible academic penalty may be based on these criteria. Failing notices will be sent on October 14 and will also be based on these criteria.

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Final course grades will be computed as follows:

Final exam = 100 possible points X 4 = 400 weighted points

Highest

Midterm = 100 " " X 2 = 200 " "

Second

Highest

Midterm = 100 " " X 2 = 200 " "

Third

Highest

Midterm = 100 " " X 2 = 200 " "

Total = 1000

Plus scavenger hunt

extra credit points = up to 3 = 1003 weighted points

If you complete all four written extra-credit assignments (25 points apiece) with a score higher than your third highest mid-term, you may substitute the extra-credit grade for the exam grade.

If you complete one, two, or three written extra-credit assignments, you may increase your third-highest exam grade as previously explained.

Example: Two students had the following scores in Sociology 302.

	Student A	Student B
Final Exam	80	80
Midterm #1	75	75
Midterm #2 (essay)	78	81
Midterm #3 (take-home)	83	missed
Midterm #4	70	70
Extra-credit asst. #1	24	20
Extra-credit asst. #2	20	0
Extra-credit asst. #3	22	0
Extra-credit asst. #4	0	0
Scavenger hunt points	2	0
Final Weighted Points	831.5 = B-	777 = C

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REQUIRED READING ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE CALENDAR:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Required Readings</u>	<u>Comments and Recommended Readings</u>
M, 8/29	All of this syllabus	Unit I: Concepts and Levels of Analysis Buy textbooks and other materials.
W, 8/31	EC, Chap. 1, pp. 2-22	Y, pp. 3-10
F, 9/2	EC, Chap. 18, pp. 479-499	Guest lecturer in class today.
M, 9/5	None.	Labor Day, a holiday
W, 9/7	EC, pp. 547-551	Y, pp. 221-229. Information forms due in class today; seating chart completed in class today.
F, 9/9	EC, Chap. 4, pp. 81-103	
M, 9/12	Y, pp. 41-44	Y, pp. 45-53; 56-57. Note that the "workshop" on pp. 54-56 can be one of your written assignments.
W, 9/14	EC, Chap. 11, pp. 279-302	
F, 9/16	Y, pp. 141-144	Y, pp. 144-150
M, 9/19	EC, Chap. 5, pp. 105-126	Y, pp. 59-69; 74. Note workshop 2 on pp. 70-74.
W, 9/21	None.	Review for exam.
F, 9/23	None.	In-class, multiple-choice exam today. Remember ID! Last day to drop without possible academic penalty. Last day to change registration to pass-fail.
M, 9/26	EC, Chap. 2, pp. 25-45	Unit II: Theories
W, 9/28	Y, pp. 11-14	Y, pp. 15-21
F, 9/30	Y, pp. 75-76	Y, pp. 77-82
M, 10/3	EC, Chap. 6, pp. 129-146	
W, 10/5	Y, pp. 83-86	Y, pp. 86-92; 95. Note Workshop #3, pp. 93-95.
F, 10/7	EC, Chap. 7, pp. 149-177	
M, 10/10	EC, pp. 178-183	
W, 10/12	EC, Chap. 12, pp. 305-333	Y, pp. 155-163
F, 10/14	Y, pp. 151-155; 165-168	Intrsemester report due to academic deans.
M, 10/17	EC, Chap. 13, pp. 337-365	Y, pp. 169-175
W, 10/19	None.	Sociological scavenger hunt in class.

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REQUIRED READING--Con't.

F, 10/21	None.	In-class closed-book essay exam today. Remember to bring blue book and ID! Exam covers material from 9/26 to 10/19.
Unit III: Methods		
M, 10/24	EC, Chap. 3, pp. 47-71	
W, 10/26	EC, pp. 72-77	
F, 10/28	Y, pp. 23-28	Y, pp. 29-37
M, 10/31	EC, Chap. 8, pp. 187-209	Take-home essay exam begins today. Covers all material from 8/29 to 10/28.
W, 11/2	Y, pp. 99-101	Y, pp. 101-107; 110. Note workshop #4 on pp. 108-109.
F, 11/4	EC, Chap. 9, pp. 211-239	Y, pp. 115-122; 125. Note workshop #5 on pp. 123-125.
M, 11/7	Y, pp. 111-115	Take-home essay exam due at 10 a.m.
W, 11/9	EC, Chap. 10, pp. 241-265	
F, 11/11	EC, pp. 267-275	
M, 11/14	Y, pp. 127-130	Y, pp. 131-135; 138. Note workshop #6 on pp. 136-138.
W, 11/16	EC, Chap. 16, pp. 417-439	
F, 11/18	EC, pp. 440-448	
M, 11/21	Y, pp. 195-197	Y, pp. 199-203
W, 11/23	None.	In-class closed-book, multiple-choice exam today. Remember I.D.! Covers material from 10/24 to 11/23.
F, 11/25	None.	Thanksgiving Holiday.
M, 11/28		
W, 11/30	Class choice	The class will select one or two of the remaining chapters (14, 15, 17, 19, or 20) for study.
F, 12/2		
M, 12/5	None.	Review for final. Last day to submit written assignments.
W, 12/7	None.	Review for final.
F, 12/9	None.	Review for final.
Tues., 12/13	None. 9 a.m.-12 noon	Final exam. In-class, closed-book, multiple-choice exam over all material since 8/31. No answers posted! Remember I.D.!

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IMPROVING YOUR TEST SCORES IN SOCIOLOGY 302: After every mid-term exam, I post the answers to the question along with the page number or lecture date from which the question was drawn, and the level of difficulty of the question. You can improve your test score by analyzing your errors using this worksheet and the posted answers. The test answers are posted outside the elevators on the fourth floor of Burdine and will be posted for about two weeks. If you did not take the exam, you may obtain a copy in Burdine 436 or Burdine 306.

Part A of the worksheet shows whether you miss easy or hard questions and whether you have more difficulty with questions from lectures or those from the readings. Part B shows if there are particular chapters or lectures you did not understand.

After you complete this worksheet, either the T.A. or I will be happy to discuss your exam performance with you.

A. Analysis of multiple-choice questions. Analyze the questions you missed in terms of source (lecture or readings) and level of difficulty (easy or hard). Tally the number wrong in the appropriate box below.

		Level of Difficulty		
		Easy	Hard	Total
Source	Lecture			_____
	Reading			_____
	Total	_____	_____	

B. List below the page numbers of the texts and the lecture dates for which you missed questions. The pages of dates with the largest number of missed items are the ones you need to review before the final exam.

Text Pages

Lecture Dates

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STUDENT SUGGESTION/QUESTION FORM

This form may be completed at any time during the course, or you may use your own paper. Suggestions or questions may be left at my lectern before class or in my mailbox at any time.

I have the following suggestion/question:

Please answer me (check one):

_____ in class. (I will do this if time allows.)

_____ at the following phone number: _____
(name required for phone calls)

_____ no answer is required.

Name (optional unless you want a phone answer): _____

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Please return to
 Instructor by
 September 7

Student Information Form

1. Name: (print) _____ Signature: _____

2. Name you prefer that I use in class _____

 The remaining information is optional. However, this information helps me in planning the course and it is useful if I ever need to contact you.

3. LOCAL ADDRESS _____ 5. # of semester hours completed _____

4. LOCAL PHONE _____ 6. MAJOR _____

7. How does Sociology 302 fit into your degree plan?
 (Check as many as apply)

- SOC 302 is required for my major
 sociology minor
 lower division elective
 helps meet a Social Science requirement for my major
 other (what? _____)
 I don't know.

8. Why are you taking this section of Sociology 302 (i.e., section 43900)?
 (Check as many as apply)

- convenient time
 convenient location
 this section was recommended to me --- answer 8a
 this instructor was recommended to me -- answer 8a

8a. recommended by academic advisor
 professor
 friends
 other (who? _____)

9. Are you on scholastic probation? yes no maybe

10. Is there any condition or problem that might affect your performance in this course? Examples: health problem, planned travel, heavy work schedule, test anxieties, difficulties with the English language, etc. If so, please comment on the back.