Sociology Courses for Fall 2010

Soci 103 Sociology of Family  
Instructor: Rhoda Carr  
Section 01 MWF 12:12-50  
Section 02 MWF 2-2:50  
This course intends to take you beyond your own personal experience with family into a broader understanding of the multiple forms and changes that the American family has experienced over time. We explore both the effects that major social institutions, such as the economy, have on the family, as well as the effect that families have on reshaping these social institutions. With the help of readings and discussions, we will become more aware of the link between the broader social reality and our individual family choices and experiences. Topics include dating, mate selection, cohabitation, marriage, changing gender roles, parenthood, family violence, divorce, single parenting, child poverty, and many others with an emphasis on the changes in these areas over the past 50 years.

Soci 104 Gender & Society  
Instructor: Julia D’Antonio-Del Rio  
TuTh 11:00-12:15  
This course examines the social construction of gender, specifically focusing on the relationship between women and men, and women and society. Topics of discussion will include theories of gender, feminism, and gender and social institutions such as education, health and beauty, religion, media, government, crime, and globalization.

Soci 105 Intro to Education & Society  
Instructor: Stephanie Arnott  
MWF 1-1:50  
This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to sociological research on and theories about education in modern societies. In this course, we will consider the functions of education for the individual and society, and we will spend a considerable amount of time discussing the links between education and inequality. Topics that will be discussed in detail include: the ability of schools to make “The American Dream” possible, the ways that schools influence the functions of education for the individual and society, and theories of gender, feminism, and gender and social institutions such as education, health and beauty, religion, media, government, crime, and globalization.

Soci 106-01: Deviant Behavior  
Instructor: Xiaojin Chen  
MWF 10-10:50  
What is deviance? Who is deviant? When, how, and why certain behavior is defined as deviant? This course provides a critical examination of theories and empirical studies of social deviance, focusing upon the formulation and application of deviant labels, social, environment, and cultural causes, and deviant behavioral patterns. Two perspectives, positivism approach and interactionist/social constructionist approach are introduced as theoretical tools to explain individual and collective deviant behavior.

Soci 108-02: Deviant Behavior  
Instructor: John Hall  
TuTh 9:30-10:45  
Despite the tendencies of many to assume that certain acts are inherently “deviant” and that those engaging in such behaviors are characteristically different from others, sociologists are attuned to the fact that the realities of deviance are not so simple or straightforward. What acts are considered “deviant” vary from culture to culture, subculture to subculture and, even within the same cultural backdrop, often vary in accord with such factors as the time, place, or setting in which an act is engaged, hinting that deviance is not a “static” but a “relative” condition. Add to this the awareness that “deviance” is as likely to be assessed on the basis of displayed (or assumed) ideological orientations and physical attributes as on behavioral cues and the picture gets murkier. Such realities complicate attempts to understand and cope with such behavior. This course is designed to encourage analytical and critical thought on the topic of deviance. Through readings and other course activities, students will be introduced to a range of views and research regarding the sources of deviance. Various problems and controversies involved in studying the topic and designing practical counter-strategies will also be emphasized. Hope to see you there as we discover that the study of deviant behavior can be both intriguing and FUN!!

Soci 109-01 Social Problems  
Instructor: Katie Acosta  
TuTh 11:00-12:15  
This course is designed to enhance your critical thinking and promote social learning. It will provide an overview of the social inequalities that exist within institutions in the United States. In discussing these inequalities and exploring various social problems we will be specifically addressing how one’s social position in society affects their life experiences. We will address social problems ranging from poverty and homelessness, education, disparities in health care, the media, employment and drug use. Each week we will explore the causes of a different social problem and how these social problems effect on society.

Soci 109-02 Social Problems  
Instructor: David Ortiz  
M 5:45-7 W 5:45-7:45  
This course focuses uses the sociological imagination to understand and propose solutions to many of the most pressing social problems facing our societies. In addition to course readings, lectures, and classroom discussions, students will watch a film each week to inform and stimulate discussion on some critical social problems of our time, including poverty, inequality, racism, gender discrimination, homophobia, crime, terrorism, and war. Students are expected to be analytical and
critical in examining the problems of modern societies, their causes and their solutions.

Soci 109-03 Social Problems
Instructor: James Conrad
TuTh 8-9:15
This course examines current social problems in our society in an objective, non-biased way. It looks at things such as crime, poverty, drug use and others from an objective, non-judgmental, that is, scientific point of view. Students will be asked to examine in detail such questions as-- "Why are some people poor and others not?", "What does it mean to be gay in a largely heterosexual society?" or "What are the causes of, the extent of, and what can be done about problems of environmental pollution?"-- from a sociological perspective. We will begin by asking, "What makes something a problem?" We will look at the information available so that we can analyze the reality of the problem so that we can answer the question, "How did it happen?" and "What effect, is the problem having on society?" All-in-all, the objective of the course is for the student to be able to separate what people believe is true from what is actually true.

Soci 121-01 Sociology of Religion
Instructor: Shayne Lee
TuTh 9:30-10:45
This course introduces students to the sociological study of religious phenomena, including religious institutions, networks, beliefs, practices, and behaviors. We explore how structural functionalist, conflict, symbolic interactionist, cultural, economic, phenomenological, and social constructionist analytic frameworks influence the study religion and the divergent assumptions and methodologies coterminous with such approaches. While we delve into the classical theories, we focus more attention on heuristic models that attempt to explain religious vitality in the contemporary American religious landscape.

Soci 130 Criminology
Instructor: Stephen Ostertag
Section 01 MWF 8-8:50
Section 02 MWF 9-9:50
This course may be understood as addressing four broad areas of crime: (1) causes; (2) solutions and prevention; (3) constructions: and (4) control. Over the course of the semester we will closely analyze each area. We will examine classical and contemporary theories on the causes of crime; research on preventing crime; social, political, and economic influences involved in the construction of certain behaviors as criminal and people as "criminal," and recent trends in incarceration and the consequences of the U.S.'s experiment in crime control. A commitment to 40-hours of service learning is required for this course. Students will work closely with the Orleans Public Defenders' office and write field notes using course material to understand their experiences. A final visual project will be displayed at the Center for Public Service's annual showcase.

Soci 130-03 Criminology
Instructor: Julia D'Antonio-Del Rio
TuTh 12:30-1:45
This course is designed to provide students with an advanced introduction to the field of criminology. Specifically, we will be introduced to crime, criminology, deviance, and some aspects of criminal law; discuss research methods in criminology; review both micro-level and macro-level theories of crime and victimization; and examine various forms of criminal activity, including violent crime, property crime, white collar crime, political crime, organized crime, public order crime, and the future of crime. Upon completion of this course, students should have a strong understanding of the fundamentals of crime and criminology.

Soci 201-02: Foundations of Sociology
Instructor: Stephanie Arnett
MW 4-5:15
This course will consider sociological concepts as a general introduction to the study of group relationships, group aspects of behavior, and social institutions; specifically, we will contemplate how the structure of society and individuals are shaped by social difference. The course will begin with an examination of theoretical perspectives in sociology; we will then delve into a number of diverse topics to gain an appreciation of how sociological theory and methods can help us understand and interpret such diverse topics as crime, education, the difficulties faced by single mothers and low wage workers, gender roles, social welfare systems, and the McDonaldization of modern societies. Since this course is directed toward the development of your “sociological imagination,” active class participation will be required and necessary. This is a required course for sociology majors, and will help prepare you for advanced courses in sociology. PREREQUISITE: one 100-level course.

Soci 201-03 Foundations of Sociology
Instructor: John Hall
TuTh 12:30-1:45
Why should you be interested in Sociology? There are many reasons, not the least of which are that the field offers many opportunities to incorporate life interests into disciplined studies that are both INTRIGUING and FUN! Because sociologists explore critical connections between people and the social groups with whom they interact, virtually ANY form of behavior or topic of concern constitutes a viable category for sociological analyses. For those in the field, sociology is not only a discipline, it in fact constitutes a "culture" unto itself, replete with its own “language” and varied conceptual models with which to interpret and explain both “normal” and “problematic” human behaviors. As we will see, sociology permits people to develop their critical and analytical capacities (their “sociological imaginations,” as C. Wright Mills mused) and puts a new spin on the way students interpret environmental events. As an added bonus, Foundations professors are encouraged to tailor class discussions/activities to their specific fields of interest. Since the instructor's area of specialization is social “deviance,” we'll have plenty to talk about over the course of the semester!!
Soci 210-01 Policing Katrina as Social Contract: Was it Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, or Beauvoir?
Instructor: Martha Huggins
TuTh 11:00-12:15
Policing during Katrina has emerged in media disclosures as a Hobbesian nightmare—New Orleans’ police reacting violently in a war of all against all. Yet oral histories conducted during the first six months after Katrina disclose policing’s Rousseauian side—innocent of vile motives, police operated humanely in the absence of bureaucratic mandates—and its Lockean elements—police coming together to solve organizational problems. Where were police women—Beauvoir’s “Second Sex”—in disaster’s emergent social contracts? Were they independent contractual actors? Outside the social contract system? Inside it through a gender-prescribed attachment to male police—as “womb…ovary…female,” did disaster place women’s ‘nature’ over ‘profession’? This course explores traditional social contract theory and the writings of Simone de Beauvoir as these relate to immediate post-Katrina policing. Was one or another social contract more dominant than the others? Did all exist in concert—War? Innocence? Self-governing collaboration? Gendered mediation of social contracts? These questions will be explored through social contract, sociological, and policing theories and research. Students will place theory in the context of research, with the objective of increasing understanding of policing in general and of first-response disaster policing in particular.

Soci 210-02 Sociology of the Mind
Instructor: Stephen Ostertag
MWF 1:00-1:50
Ever wonder what makes prayer so powerful for some? Or how constructs like sexuality, gender, or race are created in the mind’s eye? Or who’s a “real” Saints fan, or New Orleanian? Or why we might make assumptions about people even before we meet them? Cognitive sociologists are beginning to find answers to questions like these. This course will examine some of the work on cognition that sociologists have produced in recent years. We’ll see how people define group boundaries and identities, why we mark certain distinctions about the human character and not others, how we classify people and things in our heads, and how we mentally use our surrounding cultural environment to maintain our sense of reality and order all as we gain a glimpse into the rapidly growing field of cognitive sociology.

Soci 210-03 Gender, Health & Society
Instructor: Harmony Newman
TuTh 12:30-1:45

Soci 303-01 Intro Research Design
Instructor: Xiaojin Chen
MWF 12-12:50
This is an introductory course in social science research methodology. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to basic concepts and research strategies employed by social scientists. Topics in the course include basics of social scientific thinking, the foundation of social science research, and the fundamentals for both quantitative and qualitative methods. PREREQUISITE: Soci 201.

Soci 304-01 Intro Research Analysis
Instructor: April Brayfield
MWF 10-10:50
This course is designed to help sociology majors understand what questions to ask about claims and evidence, how to produce empirical evidence in support of sociological claims, and how to interpret the evidence in sociologically relevant ways. The major objective is to provide basic training in quantitative and qualitative analysis, with an emphasis on descriptive and inferential statistics with social science applications. To achieve this objective, students will use statistical techniques and SPSS computer software to organize data, test empirical hypotheses, and evaluate evidence in a data analysis project. Lectures and applied sessions cover the following topics: measurement, tabular and graphic displays of data, measures of central tendency and dispersion, normal distribution, sampling distributions, confidence intervals, hypothesis testing, bivariate distributions, OLS regression, and content analysis of qualitative information. PREREQUISITE: Soci 303.

Soci 322-01 Social Theory
Instructor: Kevin Gotham
TuTh 9:30-10:45
This course provides an introductory survey of social theory. The first ten weeks of the course will focus on the pioneering work of Karl Marx (1818-1883), Max Weber (1864-1920), and Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), and contemporary applications of their theories. In other weeks of the course, we will examine critical theories, feminist theories, globalization theories, and theories of postmodernity. The major objectives of this course are to illustrate the links between theory and research, compare and contrast different theories, foster a critical understanding of society, and use empirical evidence and logical assumptions in order to answer questions of sociological interest. We will examine different meanings and definitions of theory, investigate how scholars evaluate and assess theories, and explain how historical context and social processes shape the development of new theories. PREREQUISITE: Soci 201.

Soci 606 Issues in Sociology of Gender
Instructor: Mimi Schippers
Tuesdays 2-4:30
The main focus of this class is to explore the ways in which gender and sexuality, as social systems of inequality, are produced, sustained, and challenged through everyday interactions and cultural practices. As an advanced course in the sociology of gender and sexuality and a capstone experience for sociology majors, the course will be taught as a seminar in theory, research, and ethnographic methods in the field of sociology and gender studies. This means that, in addition to becoming familiar with theory and research on gender, sexuality, and inequality as interactive processes, students will explore gender in everyday life through independent, field research. Class time will be spent discussing the readings and students’ research projects. PREREQUISITES: Soci 303, 304, 322.
Soci 626 Gender, Work & Family in Cross-Cultural Perspective  
Instructor: April Brayfield  
Wednesdays 2-4:30  
This seminar focuses on the sociological intersections of gender, work, and family in the European Union and the United States. Major themes are (1) how national context influences the work-family nexus for women and men, (2) how women and men negotiate, share, and create culture as it relates to work-family issues, and (3) how the experiences and ideologies of parents and children vary within and across societies. The course will cover a wide range of sociological vantage points – from microscopic to macroscopic issues – but a comparative analysis of work-family policies will be emphasized. This course also fulfills the Comparative Cultures & International Perspectives requirement. PREREQUISITES: Soci 303, 304, 322.

Soci 633 Sociology of Education  
Instructor: Carl Bankston  
Mondays 2-4:30  
This course covers major social issues relating to education, with an emphasis on the American educational system. It considers the historical development of formal institutions of education, general questions about the goals and means of educational systems, and specific topics such as determinants of educational attainment and achievement, group inequalities in education, political policies regarding schooling, ability grouping, and standardized testing. Through classroom discussions and reading responses, students will examine educational issues carefully and critically. With a mandatory service learning component, students also will tutor in local schools and connect their tutoring experiences to their readings and classroom discussions. PREREQUISITES: Soci 303, 304, 322.

Soci 635 Marginality & “Other”  
Instructor: Martha Huggins  
Thursdays 2-4:30  
This course examines the role of ideologies justifying persecution and of persecution itself in the construction and change of national states. Four interrelated and interactive processes are analyzed: cultural constructions of pollution, danger, and taboo; marginalization of stigmatized ‘Others’; the roles of these processes in construction and change in national states; and the responses of ‘Others’ to the previously described processes. Students will learn through readings, film/documentary, class discussions, analytical essays, and essay examinations. PREREQUISITES: Soci 303, 304, 322 or approval of the instructor.

Soci 694 Political Sociology of Latin America  
Instructor: David Ortiz  
Wednesdays 2-4:30  
Political sociology studies the social basis of politics and political systems. Analyzing the political sociology of Latin America, therefore, entails understanding the causes and consequences of power distributions both within and between Latin American nations, and the processes by which those power distributions may change. This course is designed to meet two goals. First, students should gain a general understanding of what political sociology is and the theories that scholars use to understand political sociology. Second, students should learn about the most central contemporary political issues facing Latin America today, and their sociological relationship with both past and present global occurrences.

Soci 699 Race in the Americas  
Instructor: Katie Acosta  
Tuesdays 2-4:30  
This course explores the development of racial categories throughout Latin America and the implications of these social constructs for group identities, community building, and social activism. We will begin with a theoretical overview of the scholarship on race and ethnicity in Latin America and on the process of racialization. We will explore the limitations of using a Western lens to understand “race” and racism in Latin America and the Caribbean. Students will learn to expand how they conceptualize these terms in order to better understand Latin America’s distinct racial landscape. Students will engage the empirical scholarship on indigenous populations and Latin Americans of African descent. In doing so, students will explore the fluidity of racial identities across time and space and the increasing importance of this fluidity in our transnational world. Students will learn about the complexities of mestizaje, the erasure of blackness, and rising inter-ethnic conflict.