SOCI 1: Introduction to Sociology
SJSU, Spring 2014, Code # 45347, Sec. 4
Core General Education (GE) Requirement Course
in Area D1 (Social Sciences - Human Behavior)

Professor: Dan Brook, Ph.D. (brook@brook.com)
Course Hours/Location: Tues/Thurs 1:30 - 2:45 PM in DMH 227
My Office Hours: Tues/Thurs, 8:30 - 9 & 10:15 - 11:15 AM in DMH 237A (408-924-2914) on class days
Sociology Dept Office: DMH 241 (tel: 408-924-5320 / fax: 408-924-5322; sjsu.edu/sociology)

Soc1Syllabus.wordpress.com

Course Overview:
Welcome to Sociology! Sociology is the social scientific study of the many macro social forces of society, the many micro individual behaviors of people, and the many interactions between and amongst them. No course, including this one, can be totally comprehensive, however we will learn, discuss, and apply basic concepts, perspectives, theories, methodologies, and insights of sociological analysis. We will also examine and analyze social experiments, case studies, historical examples, current events, and future possibilities. Sociologist Todd Gitlin argues that we begin to learn exactly at that point where we enter “that difficult, rugged, sometimes impassable territory where arguments are made, points weighed, counters considered, contradictions faced, and where honest disputants have to consider the possibility of learning something that might change their minds”. Our classroom will be that territory.

Required Text:
Basirico, Brook, Cashion, & Eshelson, Understanding Society (5th ed., 2013)
ISBN: 978-1-61882-441-7
(this edition is very different, so be sure that you have this exact edition & ISBN)

Required E-Mail Subscription (Listserv):
Parallel to our actual class sessions, we will also have a “virtual classroom” consisting of online messages via our free class e-mailing listserv. Students may be responsible for information posted on this required listserv.

It is required that you subscribe to the free listserv for our class by the third week of class. You can do so by e-mailing IntroSoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and then replying to the confirmation message (if you haven’t already done so, you need to sign up for a free Yahoo account, though you do not need to have a Yahoo e-mail address) (if you do not see the confirmation message, be sure that you spelled the address correctly and check your spam/junk/bulk folder).
Messages sent to IntroSoc@yahoogroups.com will be received by everyone who subscribes and will be archived on the web at groups.yahoo.com/group/IntroSoc. Students are strongly encouraged to post to it as a form of class participation. If you have any trouble subscribing or with the listserv otherwise, please contact someone at one of the computer centers.

Recommended Relevant Readings:

a) American Sociological Association (www.asanet.org)
b) Gary Marx, “Of Methods and Manners for Aspiring Sociologists: 37 Moral Imperatives” (www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/gary/aspiring_sociologists.html)
c) C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (www.lclark.edu/~goldman/socimagination.html)

Course Organization:

This course is designed to be a survey of the field, therefore more of a mosaic than a narrative. There are an infinite number of ways this (or any other) course could be designed, all of which would be subjective and incomplete. We will do our best, however, to learn a great deal about our world from sociological perspectives and to make doing so interesting, fun, and useful. At the end of the course, we may still not have “conclusions” or all of the “answers”, but we will certainly have a better understanding, and perhaps better questions, regarding sociology.

Class meetings may include lectures, small-group and large-group discussions, thought experiments, cultural conundrums, presentations, flyers, case studies, current events, visuals, and videos—a variety of activities, for a variety of students and learning styles, designed to encourage social understanding, critical thinking, active participation, life-long learning, and personal enjoyment.

GE Course and Learning Objectives for Core GE Area D1:

According to the SJSU Catalog, Soci 1 fulfills the Core GE in Area D1 (Social Sciences - Human Behavior) requirement: “Human Behavior courses will enable students to be able to recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals.” We will do all that and more. Core GE courses require students to write a minimum of 1500 words for course assignments during the semester and we will easily meet that requirement.

After completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. identify and analyze the social dimensions of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation. GE activities designed to assist students in meeting this objective: lectures, small & large group discussions, readings, class exercises, exams, short papers, handouts, films, and course listserv

2. place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts. GE activities designed to assist students in meeting this objective: lectures,
small & large group discussions, readings, class exercises, exams, short papers, handouts, films, and course listserv

3. identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them. GE activities designed to assist students in meeting this objective: lectures, small & large group discussions, readings, class exercises, exams, short papers, handouts, films, and course listserv

4. evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. GE activities designed to assist students in meeting this objective: lectures, small & large group discussions, readings, class exercises, exams, short papers, handouts, films, and course listserv

5. recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals. GE activities designed to assist students in meeting this objective: lectures, small & large group discussions, readings, class exercises, exams, short papers, handouts, films, and course listserv

Soc 1 Course & Learning Objectives:

- To become acquainted with the field of sociology;
- To become proficient with major concepts, theories, and insights of sociology;
- To understand ordinary things in new and exciting ways;
- To understand new and exciting things in ordinary ways;
- To question the “common assumptions” and “conventional wisdom” of yourself and others;
- To recognize and analyze the interactions between and amongst individuals and social forces;
- To assess the dynamics of class, race/ethnicity, sex/gender, sexuality, and other identities;
- To better understand our social world and your role in it;
- To improve your skills in observation, critical thinking, analysis, and communication;
- To develop, enhance, and apply your sociological imagination!

Prerequisites:
Willingness to think critically and willingness to participate in class discussions!

Requirements:
You are responsible for being familiar with this syllabus.

There will be two essay exams, a midterm and a final, with study guidelines and a pool of study questions given at least a week in advance. Students should prepare for all of the questions and will have to write essays in response to two of those questions. Each exam will be worth approximately 1/3 of the course grade.

There will also be two short writing assignments (1000 words minimum each). Be sure to include a word count on all of your papers. For each paper, students should incorporate
sociological concepts from this course. Each short paper will be worth approximately 1/6 of the course grade.

First topic: Values Socialization
Second topic: Violating a Social Norm (not a law!)
(more on these below, in our book, and in class)

**Satisfactory completion of each and every requirement is necessary for a passing grade.**
Class participation, including subscription to the course listserv, is also required. **Late assignments will be penalized unless prior approval is given. Any assignment missed, for any reason, is the responsibility of the student and must be completed.** All submitted written work (other than exams) must be typed, preferably on both sides of the paper. All assignments will receive comments in addition to grades.

According to the SJSU Catalog, Soci 1 fulfills the Core GE in Area D1 (Social Sciences - Human Behavior) requirement: “Human Behavior courses will enable students to be able to recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals.” We will do all that and more. Core GE courses require students to write a minimum of 1500 words for course assignments during the semester, which we will exceed.

Therefore, the job requirements for this course are doing the assigned readings, taking the two exams, completing two short papers, regularly attending and participating in class, actively using an e-mail account, subscribing to the class listserv, writing reflection essays, and possibly other assignments to be specified at another time.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic honesty (*i.e.*, doing your own work and presenting your own ideas while crediting others for theirs) is important and will be enforced; academic dishonesty (*e.g.*, plagiarism, other forms of cheating, etc.) is unacceptable. Please read and review Earl Babbie, “How to Avoid Plagiarism” at www.csub.edu/ssricrem/Howto/plagiarism.htm.

According to **SJSU’s Academic Integrity Policy**, “cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work [or helping another to do so] through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means”. Plagiarism is “the act of representing the work of another as one’s own without appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained”.

“Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. ... The policy on academic integrity can be found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct.”

**First Short Paper (Values Socialization Project):**

We are not born with values, beliefs, and viewpoints. Socialization is the way culture is transmitted and the way we learn the expectations of our society. Politics, broadly conceived, is essentially about power and values: who gets what, when, where, how, and why. Values are our beliefs about what is proper and improper, right and wrong, fair and unfair. People acquire their political values and social sensibilities through socialization. This is the way we become aware of...
beliefs and values, developing a worldview, forming frames and opinions about social and political issues, our social and political system, and power relations, indeed about everyday issues of fairness and justice, what’s right and wrong, what is and should be.

While closely related to values, politics and political socialization are not simply and periodically about issues related to politicians, political parties, governments, and elections, but rather about our sensibilities regarding how society works and should work. Values and politics are embedded into every group that we are a part of and every setting that we enter.

Discuss and analyze your own personal process of values socialization, both as a child and also as an adult, from your earliest memories to the present. Don’t simply tell what you think or believe, but rather why you believe it and where those beliefs may have originated.

Consider each of the following agents of socialization (though you don’t necessarily need to cite each), and give specific examples from your own life regarding how your past experiences may have affected your current beliefs and values:
* family (parents, grandparents, siblings, children, relatives)
* peers (work, school, social, etc.)
* other significant people (teachers, neighbors, politicians, coaches, clergy, etc.)
* region (where you were born, grew up, visited, and/or live now)
* school / education / training
* job / work / career
* class, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexuality, ability, nationality, and other identities
* religion / spirituality / philosophy / ideology
* community (neighborhood, group memberships, etc.)
* media (TV, radio, music, internet, movies, books, magazines, etc.)
* significant events, processes, or experiences, either in your own life or in society

You must discuss and analyze how some of these factors have influenced you (e.g., what is their impact on your social attitudes and political beliefs?). In terms of values, where do you come from? Leave abstractions aside, being concrete, specific, and explicit about how you’ve incorporated the beliefs and values you were taught into your life.

This should be a 3-4 page paper (can be longer, if necessary, but it can’t be shorter than 1000 words). Please double space, preferably on both sides of the paper, staple, and include a good title and a word count.

We will also discuss our socialization processes and values socialization projects in class.

Second Short Paper (Violating a Social Norm):

For the second paper, to be further discussed in class, you need to choose a social norm to violate (without breaking a law, doing something unsafe, or missing or disrupting any classes), doing so in a public enough way that you can effectively assess other people’s reactions. You should break your chosen norm more than one time and in more than one place to achieve comparative and therefore better results. Consider and discuss the time, place, and manner in
which you violate your chosen norm and who the audiences were. Don’t reveal to them that this is an assignment, unless necessary.

Based on your experiences, you then need to write up a titled 3-4 page paper (can be longer, if necessary, but it can’t be shorter than 1000 words) (please include a word count) on what you specifically did, how it violated a norm, how you felt about it, what the reactions by others were, etc. Be sure to tie what you write to the relevant sociological concepts from our book and course, possibly including norms, deviance, social control, socialization, looking-glass self, social groups, sociological imagination, culture or sub-culture, etc. You should incorporate sociological analysis into your paper.

Please double space, preferably print on both sides of the paper, staple, and include a good title and word count as well as some documentation (e.g., photo or URL of video of yourself or, if that isn’t possible, photo documentation of where it took place).

Have fun with your social experiment!

Please prominently place and sign the following certification statement:
“I certify that this paper complies with academic integrity standards, does not contain plagiarized content, and exceeds the minimum length requirement.”

Classroom Protocol (Attendance / Class Participation / Classroom Behavior):

Sociology should be a “contact” activity, for participant-observers, not one simply for spectators or audience members. There will be an emphasis on discussion in which the dialogues and exchanges between instructor and students, and among the students themselves, are essential for the full functioning of the “mini-society” of the classroom. Spirited, but friendly, debate, as well as active listening, is absolutely essential for critical analysis, intellectual development, mutual respect, human creativity, political pluralism, and civic participation in a democratic society. There will be an emphasis in this class on discussion and interactivity.

The purpose of discussion in our course is to provide a forum in which students can safely and supportively ask questions, present and debate their ideas, receive and interpret new information and perspectives, and develop and clarify their thinking and communication skills. Students are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in discussions as actively as possible. Therefore, both attendance and participation are vitally important. Students are also strongly encouraged to share relevant items/stories/miscellanea as another form of class participation.

If you miss any classes, be sure to get notes and information about missed information and assignments, if any, from another student, as you are responsible for whatever happens in class, whether you are present or absent for any reason.

I expect students to be on time to class, to not leave early, to silence their electronics (e.g., computers, phones, iPads, iPods, etc.) while in the classroom, to only use them in class for course purposes, and to be otherwise respectful of the learning environment and fellow students. Coming to class late, leaving early, texting, checking one’s phone too often, using a phone, tablet, or computer for non-class activities, listening to earbuds/headphones, side conversations, and other distracting or disruptive activities are negative forms of class participation.
Participation is worth about 10% of the course grade.

**Grading Criteria:**
Assignments are graded holistically based on the following qualitative rubric:

“A” level work consists of cogent, well-articulated, and well-developed written and oral presentation, demonstrating insight, originality, and complexity in both form (e.g., language, expression, organization) and substance (e.g., logical argumentation, factual accuracy, and appropriate examples); critical thinking skills are amply demonstrated; sociological imagination is highly active; tasks are completed on time and according to the guidelines, often going “above and beyond”. “A” level work is considered excellent.

“B” level work may be thoughtful and developed, but may not be original, particularly insightful, or precise. While ideas might be clear, focused, and organized, they are less likely to be comprehensive or dialectical. Critical thinking skills are satisfactory; sociological imagination is active. “B” level work is considered good.

“C” level work is reasonably competent, yet may be unclear, inconsistent, and minimally adequate in form and/or content. Critical thinking skills are minimal; sociological imagination is weak. “C” level work is considered mediocre and barely adequate.

“D” level work is not competent, appropriate, relevant, complete, and/or adequate in form and/or content, thereby not fully meeting the minimum requirements. Critical thinking skills are largely absent; likewise with sociological imagination.

“F” level work is generally not enough work, often missing assignments or parts thereof, doing work below the minimum requirements, not demonstrating critical thinking skills or sociological imagination, engaging in plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, or is otherwise unacceptable for credit. “F” level work is failing.

**Backup:**
All written work for the course, as well as any other files that are important to you, should be saved and backed up in more than one way (e.g., on a disk or CD, on a flash drive or other external hard drive, on a web-based e-mail account or otherwise online, and/or printed out as a hard copy). If you do this and something unexpected happens before an assignment is due, you will still have a copy of your work as well as whatever else may have been lost or corrupted. I use a combination of these and also use carbonite.com.

**Accommodation, Inclusion, Civil Rights, & Cooperation:**
Respect for diversity, both of people and perspectives, is expected and encouraged in this class. All students are welcome, should feel safe, and should have equal access and opportunity for optimal learning in this course, department, university, and society, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, home language, sex, gender, sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, religion, creed, ideology, ability or disability, appearance, socio-economic class, marital
or parental status, housing status, veteran status, political or other affiliation, or any other similar or equivalent quality, identity, or status.

Any student who has any sort of disability, special need, condition, situation, or circumstance, whether permanent or temporary, which requires “reasonable accommodations” or assistance of any kind should contact the campus Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Resource Center) (Admin Bldg 110, tel: 408-924-6000, TTY: 408-924-5990, fax: 408-924-5999, aec-info@sjsu.edu, http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) and/or speak with me directly. Everyone deserves the support and resources they need to succeed.

Students are encouraged to use the methods of “legitimate cheating”, which include, but are not limited to: studying, working, playing, and plotting together; consulting with the writing center and reference librarians; getting a tutor; searching the web (especially the many social science, sociology, and writing sites); as well as brainstorming and discussing issues and ideas with students, friends, family, teachers, coaches, workers, managers, leaders, organizers, activists, and others, both on and off campus. And, of course, I’m available in my office and via e-mail, as well as before, during, and after class. When writing to me by e-mail, please put something identifying in the subject line.

**Campus and Other Resources:**

The **Academic Success Center** (Clark Hall First Floor, 408-924-3322, www.sjsu.edu/asc) has all sorts of services, including peer mentoring, writing, tutoring, computers, and more.

The **Learning Assistance and Resource Center** (LARC) (SSC 600, 408-924-2587, www.sjsu.edu/larc) offers academic support in the form of tutoring as well as reading, writing, study, and selected software skills to ensure academic success.

The **Writing Center** (Clark Hall 126, 408-924-2308, www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) offers tutoring, workshops, and other services for all students, all disciplines, and all levels of writing.

There is a **Sociology Reference Librarian** in King Library. **Library tutorials** can be found at tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial.

The **Student Computer Service** (SCS) (King Library L67, 408-808-2470, LibrarySCS@sjsu.edu) is available for computer help; there’s also the **AS Computer Services Center** (Student Union, 408-924-6976, ascscc@as.sjsu.edu). **Computer labs** for student use are available in the Academic Success Center (1st floor of Clark Hall) and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Computers are also available in King Library. Additional computer labs are available in some departments.

**Media Services** (IRC 112) has a wide variety of audio-visual and computer equipment available for checkout.
Student Health Center (Health Bldg 106, 408-924-6122, www.sjsu.edu/studenthealth) offers medical care with a pharmacy, family planning, physical therapy, x-rays, and more. Peer Health Education runs a Condom Co-op (Health Bldg 209, 408-924-6203).

If you get the flu or any other illness that may be contagious, please do not attend class. For comprehensive info about the flu, check out www.flu.gov (also available in Spanish) for “know[ing] what to do about the flu”: get vaccinated; cover coughs and sneezes; wash hands frequently; avoid people who are ill; and stay home if sick.

Counseling Services (Admin 201, 408-924-5910, counseling.services@sjsu.edu, www.sjsu.edu/counseling) provides individual or group psychological support to help resolve difficult problems that may interfere with academic issues. The Peer Mentor Center (Clark Hall, ASC, 1st floor, 408-924-2198, www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor) is also useful and has services that are free and available on a drop-in basis with no appointment required.

Women’s Resource Center (Mod. B, 408-924-6500, www.sjsu.edu/wrc) is “a multi-cultural group dedicated to the promotion of women’s issues and social change”.

MOSAIC Cross Cultural Center (408-924-6255, sa.sjsu.edu/mosaic) supports, advocates, and celebrates diversity, equity, and social justice.

The LGBT Resource Center (jsulgbtrc@gmail.com, www.sjsu.edu/lgbtrc) is there for all sorts of LGBTQIA issues. There are also several related campus organizations.

Center for Community Service and Leadership (Clark Hall 203 & 126A, 408-924-3540), SJSU’s service learning center, can assist you with all your service learning needs. Also visit the related Cesar Chavez Community Action Center (AS House 105, 408-924-4144, cccac@asjsu.edu, as.sjsu.edu/cccac) for service learning ideas and opportunities.

The Environmental Resource Center (WSQ 115, 408-924-5467, erc@e-mail.sjsu.edu, erc.thinkhost.net) is green central for SJSU.

The SJSU Career Center (Admin 154, 408-924-6031) helps students find internships and jobs. For practice in finding jobs, they move the Career Center periodically.

10 Things You Can Do to Improve Your Grades: www.sjsu.edu/muse/students/resources/bettergrades

A listing of student resources is available at www.sjsu.edu/students/student_resources/index.jsp

National Resources:
The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available anytime, 24/7/365, toll-free at 1-800-SUICIDE (there are also warmlines, textlines, etc.); also check my article at www.tikkun.org/tikkundaily/2013/10/22/suicide. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is available anytime, 24/7/365, toll-free at 1-800-799-7233. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (1-800-662-HELP) offers referrals 24/7/365.

Web Sources:
Excellent web sites for news and views include news.google.com for mostly mainstream news links and www.commondreams.org and www.alternet.org for mostly progressive ones, along with many links; www.zmag.org is also quite useful and interesting. There are many other sources on (and off) the world wide web that would be interesting, useful, and relevant, as well.

Miscellaneous:
*** If you have ANY concerns, questions, problems, or issues regarding ANY aspect of the course (or anything else) that isn’t addressed during class or isn’t clear enough to you, please make sure to speak to me either in or out of class. ***

Course Schedule & Class Assignments:
Readings should generally be done by the date for which they are first assigned, so as to ensure optimal learning and maximal discussions.

Week 1: Tues/Thurs, Aug. 26-28
Course Introduction & Syllabus
Earl Babbie, “How to Avoid Plagiarism” www.csob.edu/ssricrem/Howto/plagiarism.htm
Basirico, Brook, Cashion, & Eshelson (BBCE), Understanding Society (5th ed., 2013), Preface

Week 2: T/Th, Sept 2-4
Sociological Imagination: BBCE, Understanding Society, ch. 1 (“The Nature and Uses of Sociology”)  
Recommended: BBCE, Understanding Sociology, ch. 2 (“Social Structure, Social Groups, and Social Organizations”)  
Plagiarism Reflection Paper due either day this week  
(minimum 350 words, with word count, based on the Babbie article above)

Week 3: T/Th, Sept 9-11
Culture: BBCE, Understanding Society, ch. 3 (“Culture and Society”)
Week 4: T/Th, Sept 16-18
Socialization: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 4 (“Socialization and Social Interaction”)

Week 5: T/Th Sept 23-25*
Education: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 5 (“Education and Schools”)

Week 6: T/Th, Sept 30-Oct 2
Deviance & Social Control: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 6 (“Deviance and Social Control”)
1st short paper on Values Socialization due either day this week

Week 7: T/Th, Oct 7-9
Return of 1st Short Papers with Discussion

Week 8: T/Th, Oct 14-16
*** In-Class Midterm Essay Exam on *both* Tuesday (Part 1) and Thursday (Part 2) ***

Week 9: T/Th, Oct 21-23
Homelessness & Poverty
[www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets) (read the 3 fact sheets)
Return of Midterm Essay Exams with Discussion
Film: *Streets of Paradise*

Week 10: T/Th, Oct 28-30
Inequality & Poverty: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 8 (“Social Differentiation and Stratification”)
*Streets of Paradise* Film Reflection Paper due either day this week
(minimum 350 words with word count

Week 11: T/Th, Nov 4-6
Economy & Poverty: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 9 (“Economic Classes, Groups, and Systems”)
2nd short paper on Norms due either day this week
Week 12: Th, Nov 13 (school closed for Veterans’ Day on 11/11)
Sex/Gender: BBCE, *Understanding Society*, ch. 11 (“Sex and Gender Differentiation”)
Return of 2nd Short Papers with Discussion

Week 13: T/Th, Nov 18-20
Film

Week 14: T, Nov 25 (no class on 11/27 for Thanksgiving Break)
Film Reflection Paper due this week (minimum 350 words with word count)

Week 15: T/Th Dec. 2-4
Course Conclusion

Week 16: Tues, Dec 9
Course Conclusion Continued
Final Exam Review

*** Final Essay Exam on Wednesday, December 17 at 12:15 ***

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