

# **SYG 2000: Principles of Sociology**

UF Online Course

Instructor: Grant Jones

## *Contact Methods*

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*Note:* If you plan to reach me by phone, know that I may not respond to unknown numbers. If possible, give me a heads up via email that I may be expecting a call. For technical issues pertaining to this online course, contact the UFL Helpdesk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu> or (352) 392-4357.

Hello, I'm Professor Grant Jones. Welcome to SYG 2000, Principles of Sociology!

## *Office Hours*

As this class is a fully online class, I will have online office hours via Zoom every week on Tuesdays from 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM. The Zoom link for these office hours will be available on our class's Canvas page, but if you are unable to find the link, please email me and I will gladly send the link for these hours to you.

Additionally, I greatly encourage you to email if you have any questions in this course. Though I have office hours only on Tuesdays at the time mentioned above, I will also be open to meeting with any of you by appointment. If you wish to meet via Zoom at any other time, just send me an email and let me know what possible days and times would work well for you. And of course, if you would rather just ask your questions via email rather than meeting on Zoom, you are more than welcome to do so.

## **General Education Subject Area Objectives**

Social and behavioral science courses, like SYG 2000, provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or

processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

### **Legislative Compliance Statement**

In SYG2000, there may be content on historical background and sociological concepts about sociological topics. Multiple sources, types of evidence, and interpretations are included, and differing interpretations of historical events are discussed with an emphasis on diverse theoretical perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. The class emphasizes maintaining accuracy and objectivity and skills to evaluate evidence and claims. Discussions of history are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy, and students can draw their own conclusions.

This course may touch on topics germane to identity, but as subjects of study and not advocacy; in that spirit, we routinely teach on diverse theoretical perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. Discussions of identity are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy.

The course may also discuss systemic theories as they relate to sociological perspectives, but it considers them in the context of other theoretical approaches and includes critique of all theoretical perspectives. The course does not endorse concepts of systemic racism, sexism, oppression, or privilege. It also does not treat inequalities or injustice as inherent, but instead discusses theoretical perspectives that explain whether and how social structures may create and reproduce inequalities. Such processes are viewed as contingent and negotiated and often contested rather than natural or determined. The course cites relevant facts based on research demonstrating how institutions are social contexts that shape inequalities within the United States and globally. Discussions of various interpretations are case- or data-driven rather than driven by an ideology.

Grading of assignments and / or exams focuses on understanding of content rather than adopting a specific opinion.

### **Course Objectives for SYG 2000 Principles of Sociology**

- 1) Introduce students to the basic concepts, theories, and methods that sociologists use. Course materials and activities provide students opportunities to see how social scientist use varied methods to collect information about specific social issues. Moreover, students will critically assess how that information can be used to frame understanding about why social patterns exist and what might be the possible consequences of those patterns.
- 2) Provide students with a brief overview of sociology as a discipline within the social sciences that exposes students to strategies to identify, study, and address social issues and research questions. Course activities will provide students with opportunities to apply critical thinking skills to evaluate debates about contemporary social issues and the evidence needed to address the issues.
- 3) Help students to develop the ability to understand how various social processes and structures affect one another.
- 4) Encourage students to develop a better understanding of how their own lives and significant relationships are shaped by larger social forces.
- 5) Provide students with insights about how individuals' interactions with others can affect the larger society.

### **Student Learning Goals**

- Teach students how to understand the way institutions influence social trends.
- Teach students how to analyze demographic influences on social outcomes.

### **General Education Student Learning Objectives**

The general education Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to acquire while completing a general education course at the University of Florida. The SLOs fall into three categories: *content*, *communication*, and *critical thinking*:

- *Content* is knowledge of the concepts, principles, terminology and methodologies used within the discipline. Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the discipline.
- *Communication* is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms. Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline.
- *Critical thinking* is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### **Course Format**

This course is an asynchronous online class. All lectures will be recorded and uploaded to Canvas. All assessments will be online, as will my office hours.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Preparation: Students are expected to view all lecture videos posted to Canvas and complete all assignments by the posted deadlines. Assignments may require knowledge of the readings/videos assigned for that day.

### **Required Readings**

The textbook for this class is OpenStax Introduction to Sociology 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. The textbook is fully online and free to download or view in your browser. I strongly recommend that you use the online version of the text, since the physical copy is not free and you will not use the entire book throughout the course. Information can be found by following the link below. On the left side of the screen you will have the option to download the PDF version of the text. It's important for you to have access to

OpenStax since all of the material from quizzes will be based on OpenStax readings. These readings are self-guided and you can complete them at any point during the access period.

<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e>

Throughout the course I may also assign outside readings from other sources. These readings may be from peer-reviewed academic journals, from newspapers such as the New York Times or Washington Post, articles about new, relevant trends or research (NPR, Pew Research Center, etc.), or various op-ed pieces. I will provide all of these readings to you on Canvas as either a link or in PDF.

**Grading: Your grade will be based on your scores in five assessment categories: Discussion, Exams, Reflections, Quizzes, and the Group Project.**

### *Discussion*

For each Module of this class, there will be an end-of-module discussion post. These posts will require you to provide an informal and open-ended response to different topics we discuss during that particular module. These responses must be at least three to four paragraphs in length.

### *Reflections*

These assignments are meant to encourage deeper, more-critical thinking about the topics discussed in class. You will be provided with a question to which you must give a full response. A recommended length for these reflections is two to three paragraphs, though your focus should be on answering the question adequately.

Reflections will be assigned relatively frequently and will be due each Saturday by 11:59 PM EST unless otherwise specified. Due dates will be clearly stated on the Canvas page and are subject to change if necessary.

### *Quizzes*

You will be quizzed at the end of each module. The purpose of these quizzes is to test your knowledge on what was discussed in class, as well as to gauge your overall understanding of the key

principles discussed. Quiz dates are listed on Canvas, though these dates may be subject to change if the need arises. Quizzes will be fully multiple choice. Quizzes will be open note!

### *Group Project*

As part of this course, you will be tasked with completing a group project. This group project involves providing and analyzing examples from the media (TV, film, music, etc.) of different sociological concepts. Keep in mind that this project will be discussed in greater detail as we get closer to the end of the semester, and there are more specific details posted on Canvas.

This group project is separated into three stages:

*Stage 1:* Students will be tasked with selecting two concepts discussed in the course up until that point. On Canvas, I will provide a list of which concepts you can choose from, though this list will likely include almost every major concept discussed up until that point in the class. If you would like to propose a unique concept that is not on that list, you may do so, but be sure to do so as soon as possible so that I can determine if that concept will work well for this project or not.

Once you have chosen two concepts, you must email your selections to me. I will then select one of these concepts to assign to each student. To be clear, each student will submit two concepts, then will be assigned one of their own submitted concepts to use in the final project.

For both of the concepts specified, each student must also provide two example videos. Both of these example videos should showcase how their concept shows up in the media. For example, if you chose the concept “cyber family,” you should find two videos that showcase cyber families, such as a clip from a television show that showcases how a family in that show maintains contact or keeps track of each other using social media, or a clip from a movie that shows how an obsession with digital media – such as phones – can distract the family members and weaken their relationship with each other.

It is highly encouraged that students submit Stage 1 as soon as possible so that if there are any concerns with the concepts or examples chosen, they can be addressed and the student will have time to resubmit Stage 1. Please check Canvas for deadlines associated with Stage 1 and the other stages of this project.

(Note: If there is an upcoming concept that is not on the list and has yet to be discussed that a student wishes to use for this project, they must contact me as soon as possible in order to determine if that concept will be viable or not)

*Stage 2:* Each student will write their own individual paper discussing their chosen concepts (only the concepts I assigned to you following Stage 1) and examples. In this paper, each student will first explain or define their concept as clearly as possible. After this, students will discuss how they have seen this concept in the real world – from their own life or in the lives of those around them. This first part of the paper should be at least 3 paragraphs long.

For the second part of the paper, students will discuss their first example. For about 1 paragraph, students will describe what their example is, stating what type of media the example is from, what the show / movie / song / etc. is about, and any other important details about this example. Then, students will provide about 2 paragraphs describing how their concept shows up in this example and why they believe their example showcases their concept well. Following this, students will provide another 2 paragraphs discussing why they think this chosen concept is important to learn about, research, or discuss in a sociological context. This process will then be repeated for the second example.

The only formatting specifications I have for this paper are that the paper must be:

- Double-spaced
- 12-point font
- Well-organized with headings and subheadings

I want to leave any other specifics fairly open ended to allow each student some freedom in how they format their papers, but if you have any other questions on formatting or if you want to confirm that your paper is formatted well, feel free to email me.

*Stage 3:* For Stage 3, you will record a presentation of your project. In this presentation, you will informally present what was discussed in your Stage 2 paper – explaining what your concepts are, how these concepts show up in the media, why these concepts are important to study, etc. Once you have recorded this video, you should upload it to some site that everyone will have access to and post this

video to the discussion board. I will create a unique discussion board for these submissions around when Stage 3 is assigned.

Additionally – since it would be difficult to include these clips in the presentation itself without potentially running into copyright issues – each student is expected to include YouTube links for their examples in their discussion board post with their presentation video.

While not a requirement, I also encourage feedback on these presentation posts. Let the other students know what you liked about their projects, or what you found interesting!

Stage 3 must:

- Be at least 5 minutes long per group member (though students will often go far beyond the 5 minute mark)
- Include a thorough description of key aspects of your Stage 2 paper (such as what the concept is, what your examples were, how the examples show the concept well, why the concept is important to study, etc.)

### *Exams*

I will give out three larger exams over the course of this semester. The final exam will be cumulative, though the other two exams will cover Modules 1 & 2 and Modules 3 & 4 respectively. These exams may include any combination of multiple choice or short answer questions. Exam 1 and Exam 2 will be 25 questions long, while the Final Exam will be 50 questions long, though each exam will total 100 points each. Exams will also be open note!

### **Assessment Breakdown**

Assessment	Description	Percentage of Final Grade
Exams	Exams will evaluate student competence in terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used in sociology	15
Reflections	Reflections will evaluate students' ability to think critically about topics covered in the course material	20



Quizzes	Quizzes will evaluate students' knowledge of key concepts discussed in that Module.	24
Discussion	At the end of each Module, students will be required to provide an open-ended, informal response to certain questions related to that Module's content.	11
Group Project	Students will be assigned groups and tasked with applying examples from the media and the real world to concepts we have discussed in the class.	30
Total Grade		100

### Late Submissions, Excused Assignments & Make-Up Assignments/Exams

In the event that you must miss a posted deadline for a general assignment, please get in contact with me immediately. I am usually open to allowing students to submit assignments past the posted deadlines, but I will require that you provide your reason for why the deadline was missed.

Exams and the Group Project Stages are not likely to be accepted past the deadline. As Exams are major tests and occur at key points in the semester, it would not be as feasible to allow students to complete these past the deadlines unless there is a significant reason – such as an emergency, family tragedy, significant illness, etc. If you must miss an Exam date, you must get in contact with me as soon as possible in order to have an opportunity to make this up. The Group Project Stages are also on strict deadlines as your ability to meet these deadlines also affects other students in your assigned group. If there is a significant reason why you may need an extension on any part of the Group Project, you must contact me as soon as possible for this as well.

### Grading Scale

A	94.0–100	C	73.0–76.9
A-	90.0–93.9	C-	70.0–72.9
B+	87.0–89.9	D+	67.0–69.9
B	83.0–86.9	D	63.0–66.9
B-	80.0–82.9	D-	60.0–62.9
C+	77.0–79.9	E	≤ 59.9

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit. Please be aware of your grade trajectory throughout the semester, and if you are concerned about your grade at any point you should speak to me about it in office hours as soon as possible. **I will not round up final grades.** Also, be aware that Canvas is only a medium for me to display your individual assignment and exam scores. Even though Canvas calculates your overall grade for you, you should always calculate your grade yourself to verify that it is correct.

For information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradestext>.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Cheating on exams or plagiarizing of any kind is not tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly. While exams and quizzes are open note, you cannot collaborate on these tests with other students. On assignments, each student must produce their own original work. All students must adhere to the UF Honor Code and standards of academic integrity found at the following link:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

### **Class Policies**

Office Hours: If you need clarification or do not understand what we went over in class I am available to discuss anything with you in office hours. Office hour times are posted at the beginning of the syllabus and on Canvas.

Email policy: Students can contact me via email through Canvas or through the email I provided at the beginning of the syllabus. I will usually reply within 24 hours. If this is an urgent message, feel free to contact me via text using the phone number I provide at the beginning of the syllabus.

Accommodations: If you have a disability requiring accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. To receive accommodations, official documentation from the Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>) is required.

Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Helpful Links:

- Visit the [U Matter We Care website](#) to get connected to extra support services to enhance your cultural, emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and/or spiritual wellbeing.
- Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call (352) 392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Call (352) 392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#).
- Visit the [UF Police Department website](#) or call (352) 392-1111 (or 911 for emergencies).
- For immediate medical care call (352) 733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#) for more information.
- Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at (352) 392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu) for E-learning technical support.
- For career assistance and counseling services visit the [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, (352) 392-1601.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with using the libraries or finding resources.

- For general study skills and tutoring visit the [Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, (352) 392-2010 or (352) 392-6420 to make an appointment.
- For help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers visit the [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138.
- On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).

## Weekly Schedule

*Note:* All listed times are in EST

*Note 2:* All assignment posting dates and deadlines will be available on Canvas. Please contact me if you cannot find any of these dates

*Note 3:* This schedule is *subject to change*. If any change occurs, it will be discussed in class.

- Week 1\*** – Class Introduction  
\* Week 1 is the half week that officially begins on Thursday, 8/22
- Week 2** – Module 1
- Week 3** – Module 2 (Chapter 3)  
Module 2 (Chapter 5)
- Week 4** – Module 2 (Chapter 6.1)  
Module 2 (Chapter 7.1)
- Week 5** – **Exam 1**
- Week 6** – Module 3 (Chapter 1.3)  
Module 3 (Chapter 2)
- Week 7** – Module 3 (Chapter 4)  
Module 4 (Chapter 9)
- Week 8** – Module 4 (Chapter 11)  
Module 4 (Chapter 12)
- Week 9** – **Exam 2**
- Week 10** – Module 5 (Chapter 6.2 & 6.3)  
Group Project Introduced  
Group Project Groups Assigned  
**Group Project: Stage 1** Assigned
- Week 11** – Module 5 (Chapter 10)  
**Group Project: Stage 1** Due by Saturday, 11/2 @ 11:59 PM EST  
**Group Project: Stage 2** Assigned  
**Group Project: Stage 3** Assigned
- Week 12** – *Group Project Work Week*
- Week 13** – Module 6 (Chapter 8)

**Group Project: Stage 2** Due by Saturday, 11/16 @ 11:59 PM EST

**Week 14** – Module 6 (Chapter 19)

**Group Project: Stage 3** Due by Saturday, 11/23 @ 11:59 PM EST

**Week 15** – *Thanksgiving Break*

**Week 16\*** – **Final Exam**

\* Week 16 is the half week that ends on the final day of class, Wednesday, 12/4