

SYG 2000: Principles of Sociology
Fall 2023 Syllabus

Section 4653(27986)

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 8:30 AM – 9:20 AM

Location: Turlington Hall, Room 2354

Instructor Information

Sierra Plotner (she/her)
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Office Hours: Mon & Wed 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM
Office Location: Turlington, 3347

Please message me through **Canvas** with any questions or concerns, especially if it relates to questions about an assignment or your grade. I will be more likely to see and respond faster to a message sent through Canvas.

Expect my response time to be 24 hours on the weekdays and by Monday 5 p.m. if you send me a message over the weekend. If you have questions about a test, please review the material and contact me early.

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.

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 with opportunities to see how social scientists use varied methods to collect information about specific social issues. Moreover, students will harness their sociological imaginations to critically assess how information can be used to frame an understanding of 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 into how individuals' interactions with others can affect the larger society.

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.

Student Responsibilities

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend class face-to-face in TUR 2354. Classes meet every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (8:30 AM – 9:20 AM). I will take formal attendance which will be worth 10% of your final grade. To participate in class, whether that is in the form of asking questions or participating in discussions, it is recommended that you attend class. There will be short, written in-class assignments at the end of class akin to a pop quiz. These assignments may require some in-class discussion. Work done in class is meant to help students learn not only from lectures and the textbook but from their peers. These in-class assignments will be worth 15% of students' final grades.

Students who have court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) or accommodations through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) must contact the Instructor as soon as possible to discuss how these circumstances will affect their ability to attend class and complete assignments. The Instructor will work with students to establish the appropriate accommodations. Students must provide supporting evidence or documentation with their request (e.g., court paperwork or DRC Accommodation Letter). More information about DRC accommodations can be found in the "Accessibility Accommodations" section at the end of this syllabus. All other requests for excused absences are granted at the Instructor's discretion.

Students may request an excused absence due to religious holidays, military obligations, professional development activities, or participation in university-sponsored activities, but these requests should be made at least 2 business days before the relevant class period(s). Excused absences should be accompanied by some kind of supporting evidence or documentation. Requests for excused absences are granted at the Instructor's discretion.

If you believe you will be unable to attend class due to some kind of exceptional circumstance, please contact the Instructor before the relevant class period(s) to briefly explain the circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are limited to any emergency which can be clearly documented, including, but not limited to a death in the family, medical emergency/illness requiring medical attention for the student or family member, or related urgent issues beyond the student's control. Students may be asked to send supporting evidence or documentation directly to the Instructor.

Students will be given some amount of freedom to miss class. Specifically, all students are granted 2 unexcused absences for the semester with no questions asked. Unexcused absences are not to be used consecutively. I give students these 2 free absences to acknowledge that we all have unexpected sick days. Not everyone can always afford—nor want to pay for—a healthcare visit for an excuse note. I only ask that you notify me (you do not have to give an excuse—it is your personal and private information), make sure to take care of your health, and visit a physician if needed. **The 2 free absences are not to be used on exam days—documentation will be requested if a student needs to reschedule their exam.**

PREPARATION: Students are expected to review and complete all necessary course materials before class. Knowledge of the content covered in readings or additional materials (e.g. videos, news articles, etc.) is essential for productive class discussion and will provide important background information for lectures. Additionally, assignments may require knowledge of the course materials assigned.

PowerPoints or other materials used in our lectures will be accessible on Canvas at the summation of class.

Required Readings

OpenStax. *Introduction to Sociology 3e*. OpenStax CNX, 2021.

OpenStax is an open-source textbook used in this course to minimize your costs. The online version (<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e>) is free while physical copies of the textbook are not. As such, I recommend you download the textbook or view it in your browser.

Any additional readings that are assigned will be accessible through Canvas.

Assignments

Your grades will be based on your scores in six assessment categories: attendance, discussion/participation, reflections, quizzes, exams, and study guides.

	% of your final grade
Attendance	10
In-Class Assignments (ICAs)	15
Team Research Assignments (TRAs)	25
Quizzes	14
Study Guides	6

Exams	30
Total	100

Attendance will be taken every day and is worth 10% of your final grade.

Since you are expected to review the material before class, I hope to engage the class in weekly discussions that will allow us to treat each other like professional colleagues and foster our sociological imaginations. Participation in class, whether it is through asking questions or engaging in discussion, often helps students conquer key ideas and concepts from class materials.

In-Class Assignments (ICAs)

Work done in class is meant to help students learn not only from lectures and the textbook but from their peers. ICA prompts may include discussion before or after submission. In other words, ICAs are an alternative way of engaging in discussion and participation in class. The ICA may be given at the end of any class period akin to a pop quiz. Students will not be notified beforehand when an ICA will occur but are expected to be present in class to complete them. ICAs are cumulatively worth 15% of students' final grades.

ICAs should be of a single paragraph (150-250 words) and focused on prompts that will be given in class. Students will be given sometime during class (~10 minutes) to write and submit their ICAs. Students may turn in physical copies of ICAs or submit them online to Canvas.

Team Research Assignments (TRAs) are worth 25% of students' final grades. There is a total of 4 TRAs that are individually worth 6.25%.

Throughout the semester, students will practice using their sociological imaginations to understand their surroundings and real-world events from new perspectives. TRAs give students a space to collaborate in a professional environment, reflect, and get hands-on experience with essential research skills required for sociologists. Students should complete the assignment with their team, collaboratively producing a single submission for which all teammates will receive the same grade.

Students will be randomly assigned into teams after add/drop has ended. Team sizes will vary depending on enrollment, however, should consist of 3-5 students. The required length of work will depend on the team size—the minimum page length will be determined by N-1. In other words, if there are 5 students on a team, the submission for that team should be at least 4 pages long but not more than 5.

Quizzes will be completed online on Canvas and are individually worth 1.4%, or 14% in total. Quizzes are open-book, contain 10 questions each, and should take a maximum of 15 minutes. There are 11 quizzes, however, only 10 will count toward students' final grades. Said another way, students may drop 1 of their lowest quiz scores.

Study Guides

Study guides are intended to incentivize students to prepare for the exams and will be accompanied by a review session. Review sessions will occur during the class period scheduled before an exam. Attendance to review sessions are **not** mandatory but recommended. By completing the study guide, students should prepare their questions early and request clarification during the review or via message in advance of the exam. **I recommend students email their exam questions at least 48 hours in advance**, so students have some time to study the correct material and also to address any follow-up questions.

Students should present their completed study guides to the Instructor either in person, such as during class time or during office hours, or submit a copy online to Canvas. Students are encouraged to complete the study guides in whatever way helps them best—either physically or electronically. Study guides will be handed out two weeks ahead of the scheduled exam date. Overall, this means that there will be 3 study guides, each worth 2% of your final grade.

Exams

There will be 3 exams throughout the semester, each worth 10%, and the average score of these exams will constitute 30% of your final grade. Exams cover material from lectures as well as assigned readings and class discussions. Exam dates are listed on the course schedule—see the last page of this syllabus. Exams are to be completed online on Canvas. Students do not have to come to class on exam days and may complete their exams at home. If a student needs exam accommodations, to reschedule, or to complete the exam in person instead of electronically, then the student should contact the Instructor **as soon as possible**. Exams will cover their respective chapters; they are not cumulative.

If you have a disability requiring accommodations, whether that be for attendance, assignments, exams, or anything else... please let me know as soon as possible. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) requires advance notice for scheduled exams from both the Instructor and student. Once exams are created in the Gator-Accommodated Test Request (G-ATR) portal, it is the student's responsibility to schedule them with the DRC as necessary. I will create all exams in the portal at the beginning of the semester, so students will have ample time to schedule them. To receive accommodations, official documentation from the Disability Resource Center (<https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/>) is required.

Late Submissions, Excused Assignments, and Make-Up Assignments/Exams

It is the responsibility of students to make sure all assignments are uploaded properly. It is requested that students verify everything required of them has been submitted online to Canvas and is visible. Any missing content will be considered incomplete, and students' scores will reflect this. If for some reason, students cannot submit their assignment to the correct page, I will accept submissions by Canvas message. Please contact IT if issues persist and please try to use the assignment submission page before messaging submissions.

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

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 during office hours as soon as possible. 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.

Academic Misconduct

Cheating on exams or plagiarizing of any kind is not tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly. On exams or 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:

Please reach out if you need further clarification or do not understand what we went over in class. I am available to discuss anything with you during office hours, even if you'd like to talk about something other than the course materials. It should be noted that, while I am happy to explain anything you do not understand or are having trouble with, I will not redo my entire lecture if you've missed a class. Please come prepared with specific questions.

If you would like to review any of your assessments, you have three days from the day the grades are posted to discuss them. Once this period has passed these grades are nonreviewable. This policy is to ensure that students are swift with their grade-related questions so that the Instructor can move on to more current obligations.

Email policy:

Students can contact me via email (splotner@ufl.edu), but I prefer that you do so through Canvas. I will do my best to reply to emails in a timely fashion. There is one exception: any email sent in the evening on a Friday or other non-business day may be replied to on the following business day. If you contact me through email, please put 'SYG 2000' at the start of the subject line so I can easily identify you.

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.aa.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.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Recording Lectures:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include: student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), or private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Helpful Links:

- 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 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](#).