

SYG 2000 – Principles of Sociology

Fall 2023 Syllabus

1. Course General Information

Items	Information
Course	
Class section	1F80
Class weekly schedule	MWF, Period 7 (1:55 PM – 2:45 PM)
Classroom	Leigh Hall, Room 104 (LEI0104)
Instructor	
Name	M.A. Luis Rondan-Vasquez (he/him/his)
Preferred way of contact	Message via e-learning platform (Canvas)
E-mail	lrondanvasquez@ufl.edu
Office hours	Thursdays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Office location	Turlington Hall, Room 3349

2. Welcome Message

Welcome to **Principles of Sociology (PS)**! I am Luis Rondan-Vasquez, the instructor of this course. PS is a brief introduction to the key concepts, theories, and methods of sociology as a social science. I organized PS following this [syllabus](#). It summarizes key course aspects that students should know. Due to that, please read this document carefully and ask me any questions.

3. Educational Objectives

3.1. 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.

3.2. Course Objectives for SYG 2000 Principles of Sociology

- 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.
- Introduce students to the basic concepts, theories, and methods that sociologists use. Course materials and activities provide students opportunities to see how social scientists use varied methods to collect information about specific social issues. Moreover, students will critically assess how that information can be used to frame an understanding about why social patterns exist and what might be the possible consequences of those patterns.
- Help students develop the ability to understand how various social processes and structures affect one another.

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- Encourage students to develop a better understanding of how their own lives and significant relationships are shaped by larger social forces.
- Provide students with insights about how individuals' interactions with others can affect the larger society.

3.3. 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.

4. Syllabus Content

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5. Course Format

This is a course delivered in person. The lectures will not be recorded unless it was explicitly mentioned. Most assessments will be submitted online (via the e-learning course platform).

6. Course Activities

6.1. Preparation

Students are expected to review the required preparation materials (readings or videos) before class. This review is key for good class performance in terms of lecture understanding and active and valuable in-class discussions.

Required readings: the required readings are chapters from this open-source textbook (available for free online):

OpenStax. *Introduction to Sociology 3e*. OpenStax CNX, 2021.
<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e>

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Getting access to this textbook is important because all course quizzes will be based on its contents. I may also include readings from other sources, such as paper journals or news. These readings will be uploaded to the e-learning course platform.

6.2. Attendance

Students are expected to attend all the class sessions. Although I will not formally take and grade attendance, it is required to participate in the graded in-class assignments (they are explained below). You can only turn in in-class assignments if you are in class.

6.3. Class Sessions

The PS sessions are based mainly on lectures. They explain key sociological theories (including terms and concepts) and methods, and examples of their application to understanding social phenomena in the U.S. and abroad. The lectures usually have visual aids (PPT slides and videos) that will be posted on the e-learning course platform after the class session. In addition, the class session will have in-class assignments that will be graded. They are explained below (see "Assessment.")

6.4. Assessment

Students have five types of assessment:

- a) **Exams:** Online evaluations that comprise multiple-choice questions based on lectures, collective discussions, and assigned readings (not textbook readings, which are quiz material). These evaluations are taken three times in the course (3 exams). Each exam will assess specific topics of the course. It means that the exams are not cumulative. The exam dates are listed in the course schedule below. The average exam scores represent 30% of students' final grades.
- b) **Reflections:** Written answers to prompts related to the course. These answers will be submitted via the e-learning course platform after the class session. The average reflections score represents 30% of the student's final grades. Please double-check the proper and timely reflection submission. If your reflection is unavailable or incomplete on the e-learning platform, you receive a zero score or a deduction, respectively.
- c) **Quizzes:** Online short evaluations based on questions about the textbook. These evaluations comprise multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and T/F questions. Students have to take 5 quizzes. Commonly, a quiz on a particular topic is available the first day this topic is addressed in class, and the quiz will close the day after the topic is finished. Students have two attempts to do the quizzes, and only the highest score will be considered for grading. Also, the single lowest score will be dropped from the grading calculation. In this way, the average quiz score is calculated with the 4 highest quiz scores. Quizzes are auto-graded on Canvas, and the average quiz score represents 15% of the student's final grade. Please keep in mind to complete quizzes before the due date because incomplete quizzes by the due date will be graded as a zero.
- d) **In-Class Assignments (ICAs):** Assignments given during class that are unannounced and happen at any time during the session. These assignments consist of prompts based on the lecture that students answer individually or in small groups. Students have to do between 9 and 10 ICAs in the course. The single lowest ICA score of the semester will be dropped. It means that you can miss one ICA without penalty. The average ICA score is worth 15% of the student's final grades.

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e) **Group Projects:** Sociological research exercises developed by random groups of 3-4 students. There are two projects in this course associated with class topics. Groups will be different for each project. Also, the participation of each group member will be evaluated by their peers in each project. The average score of group projects represents 10% of students' grades.

6.5. Office Hours

Weekly time slot where the instructor guides students in understanding and developing course activities. The office hours are offered face-to-face at the time and place mentioned above. Nevertheless, students can request Zoom meetings during office hours. Although having meetings during office hours is optional, I strongly recommend them to help you improve your efficiency in course activities. During office hours, students will be attended to on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please come up with specific topics or questions to use meeting time more effectively.

7. Grading

7.1. Grading Breakdown

Assessment	Student Competence Assessed	Percentage of Final Grade
Reflections	Develop connections between topics from lectures and materials about social events (Critical Thinking).	30
Exams	Competence in terminology, concepts, methodologies, and theories used in sociology (Content).	30
In-Class Assignments	Effective communication of sociological knowledge, ideas, and reasoning with their peers (Communication).	15
Quizzes	Interpret and apply information from class readings.	15
Group Projects	Work as a team to translate course concepts into a singular product.	10
Total Grade		100

7.2. Grading Scale

Letter	Meaning	Description	Sign	Score
A	Exemplary Work	Thorough understanding of the material that exceeds the average.	A	93.0-100
			A-	90.0-92.9
B	Good Work	Clear understanding of the material with minor gaps.	B+	87.0-89.9
			B	84.0-86.9
			B-	80.0-83.9
C	Average Work	Understanding of the material with substantial gaps.	C+	77.0-79.9
			C	74.0-76.9
			C-	70.0-73.9
D	Marginal Work	Superficial understanding of the material.	D+	67.0-69.9
			D	64.0-66.9
			D-	61.0-63.9

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E	Unacceptable Work	Lack of demonstration of substantial understanding of the material.	E	≤ 60.9
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7.3. Grading Policies

a) Due Dates: Students should submit assignments by the due date to be able to get full credit (avoiding late-submission deductions). Keep in mind that assignment due dates are different than the assignment availability date. Some assignments are available an extra day (24 hours from the due date) to allow late submissions.

b) Late Assignments: Students who miss the due date for an assignment (reflections, quizzes, in-class assignments, and group projects) or exam due to a valid reason (e.g., university duties, religious holidays, medical procedures, etc.) can request a late submission without deductions. To make this request, the students should present proof documentation of the reason that justifies the late submission. To request this documentation, students contact the University Care Team (umatter@ufl.edu or by phone at 352-294-2273). They will collect documentation and let me know the number of excused days if they apply. Students who will miss an exam for valid reasons should notify me as soon as possible. If you know beforehand that you will miss an exam, you must notify me beforehand. You can request a make-up exam earlier or later than the original date.

Students who do not present the above documentation can still submit the late assignment (reflections, quizzes, in-class assignments, and group projects) with a score deduction of 15% from the total points possible. For instance, a student received a score of 90/100 from a late reflection submission. This score will be reduced to 15% of the total score possible (15/100 points). Therefore, the final grade is 75/100. The late-assignment submission with a deduction is available only for a 24-hour window after the assignment's due date.

Regarding exams, students who miss an exam without prior notification and documentation that proves valid reasons should contact me within one hour of the original exam time to discuss their situation and assess the option of a make-up exam. All students who take a make-up exam have an all-written test (no true/false or multiple-choice questions).

c) Review Grades Request: Students have three days to request a grade review. I establish this time window to encourage students to review their grades and request any changes quickly. In this way, I can begin faster the grading of the next assignment. To request the grade review, students should send an e-mail asking about this procedure and provide reasons to justify their request. Then, I will review the assignment and ask the student to come during office hours to discuss their grade with me.

d) Final Grades: Students' final grades will be calculated by the e-learning system based on their grades in all the course assessments. I will double-check this calculation and assign final grades. The final grades given to students will not be rounded up. If you are concerned about your final grade calculation, please track your assessment grades and double-check e-learning calculations. Also, if you are concerned about your expected final grade based on your course assessment grades, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule a meeting and discuss it.

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8. Class Policies

8.1. Communication

Students are welcome to ask me specific questions before or after class sessions. Outside them, the main way to contact me is via message in the e-learning platform (Canvas) because it is the best way for me to filter and reply faster students' messages.

Keep in mind that I review my e-mail inbox only during business hours of business days (Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM). Also, I usually reply to e-mails during the morning (8:00 AM - 8:30 AM) and noon (12:00 - 12:30 PM). I can quickly answer specific questions in the periods mentioned. I usually reply in a 24-hours-time window. If it passes and you do not receive an answer to an urgent e-mail, please follow up on your inquiry or ask me during classes.

Please send me e-mails only to ask specific questions. If you have an inquiry that requires a dialog (e.g., asking for additional feedback on an assignment), please send me an e-mail to schedule a time slot during office hours (face-to-face or by Zoom). If you are unsure if your inquiry would be solved via an e-mail reply or a meeting during office hours, below is a table with inquiry examples by type of reply:

<i>E-mail reply</i>	<i>Meeting during office hours</i>
"Yes" or "No" questions.	Grade-related question (first request via e-mail a time slot during office hours).
Questions that require a one-sentence answer.	Questions that require more than one sentence answer.
Technical issues (e.g., readings not available in e-learning).	Questions about concepts, theories, and methods viewed in class.
Schedule a time slot during office hours.	Specific questions about how to do an assignment.
Notify that you are unable to do course activities due to a health condition.	Questions about strategies for class performance improvement.
	Questions not related to the class.

8.2. Class Participation

Students are expected to maintain active class participation. It means attending class, paying attention, asking questions about topics you need clarification on, answering instructor questions, and participating in discussions. Students should maintain a respectful attitude toward their classmates' opinions when talking in class. Students should state their points of view and provide arguments to justify them without demeaning others' opinions. To do that, please: a) keep an open attitude to others' opinions, b) look to understand others' viewpoints before criticizing them, c) criticize ideas, not individuals, and d) avoid insulting and inflammatory language.

8.3. Accommodations

Students could request accommodations if they have special conditions (e.g., disabilities) that make it difficult to course participation. To receive accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible and give me the official documentation required to grant accommodations from the [Disability Resource Center](#).

8.4. Academic Honesty

UF students should observe The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest

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standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'"

The [UF Honor Code](#) establishes several actions that violate this Code and its sanctions. For instance, "unauthorized assistance" violates the Honor Code, and students aware of this action should report it (avoiding complicity). Students can report code violations to the instructor or the Dean of Students Office. If you have questions about allowed and prohibited behaviors, please ask me.

8.5. Course Evaluation by Students

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the course instruction quality by completing online course evaluations via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give professional and respectful feedback is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. They can complete evaluations via the e-mail received from GatorEvals or via this [website](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students [here](#).

8.6. Recording Lectures

Students are allowed to record class lectures as videos or audios. Nevertheless, these recordings are allowed only for specific purposes, such as (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. 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 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), private conversations between students in the class, or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during class.

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.

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9. Course Calendar

Note: This calendar is subject to updates at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be announced as soon as possible.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment due date
1	Wed, August 23	Introduction	Syllabus	
	Fri, August 25	Topic 1: Definition and relevance of Sociology	Ch. 1.1., 1.2.*	
2	Mon, August 28			Ch. 1.3., 1.4.
	Wed, August 30		Ch. 3.1., 3.2.	Reflection 1
	Fri, September 1	Labor Day (no class)		
3	Mon, September 4	Topic 1 (continued)	Ch. 3.3., 3.4.	Quiz 1
	Wed, September 6	Topic 2: Foundational concepts	Ch. 5.1., 5.2.	
	Fri, September 8		Ch. 5.3., 5.4.	
4	Mon, September 11		Ch. 6.1., 6.2.	
	Wed, September 13	Ch. 7.1.		
	Fri, September 15		Quiz 2	
5	Mon, September 18	Topic 3: Sociological theory and method		
	Wed, September 20			
	Fri, September 22	No class		Exam 1
6	Mon, September 25	Topic 3: continued		
	Wed, September 27		Ch. 2.1., 2.2.	Reflection 2
	Fri, September 29		Ch. 2.3.	
7	Mon, October 2		Ch. 4.1., 4.2.	
	Wed, October 4		Ch. 4.3.	
	Fri, October 6	Homecoming (no class)		
8	Mon, October 9	Topic 3: continued		Quiz 3
	Wed, October 11	Topic 4: Health	Ch. 19.1., 19.2.	
	Fri, October 13		Ch. 19.3., 19.4.	
9	Mon, October 16		Ch. 19.5.	
	Wed, October 18	Ch. 9.1., 9.2.	Group project 1	
	Fri, October 20	Topic 5: Social group classifications (race, gender, and class)	Ch. 9.3., 9.4.	
10	Mon, October 23		Ch. 11.1., 11.2.	
	Wed, October 25		Ch. 11.3., 11.4.	
	Fri, October 27	Ch. 11.5., 12.1.		
11	Mon, October 30		Ch. 12.2., 12.3.	Reflection 3
	Wed, November 1			
	Fri, November 3	No class		Exam 2
12	Mon, November 6	Topic 5: continued		
	Wed, November 8			Quiz 4
	Fri, November 10	Veterans Day (no class)		

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Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment due date
13	Mon, November 13	Topic 6: Work and education	Ch. 16.1., 16.2.	
	Wed, November 15		Ch. 16.3., 18.1.	
	Fri, November 17		Ch. 18.2., 18.3.	
14	Mon, November 20			
	Wed, November 22	Thanksgiving (no class)		
	Fri, November 24			
15	Mon, November 27	Topic 6: continued		
	Wed, November 29	Topic 7: government and politics	Ch. 17.1., 17.2.	Group project 2
	Fri, December 1		Ch. 17.3., 17.4.	
16	Mon, December 4			
	Wed, December 6			Quiz 5
--	Thurs, December 14	No class		Exam 3

***Chapters from the required book.**

10. Miscellaneous

10.1. Study Suggestions

- Do not spend class time copying PPT slides. Copying this content is unnecessary, given that you can access these slides in PDF after class.
- Spend class time listening to lectures, copying contents not included in class slides, and asking questions. In this way, you can gather and understand all the relevant lecture content (which goes beyond PPT slides). Achieving this understanding is key to passing course assessments.
- Ask all the questions you have. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the course. In this way, you can get a clear understanding of course contents and assessment instructions.
- Please let me know if you have any circumstances that affect your course performance. In this way, I can help you figure out how to avoid the circumstances mentioned affecting your wellness and course performance.
- Explore and use (if needed) the student's resources listed below.

10.2. Students' Resources

- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#): Call (352) 392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services.
- [Student Health Care Center](#): Call (352) 392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need.
- [UF Police Department](#): Call (352) 392-1111 (or 911 for emergencies).
- [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center](#): call (352) 733-0111 for immediate medical care or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road.
- [UF Computing Help Desk](#): Contact this office at (352) 392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu for E-learning technical support.
- [Career Connections Center](#): visit this center for career assistance and counseling services (Reitz Union Suite 1300) or call (352) 392-1601.

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- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): Visit this center for inquiries about general study skills and tutoring at Broward Hall. Call (352) 392-2010 or (352) 392-6420 to make an appointment.
- [Writing Studio](#): Visit the studio for help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers (2215 Turlington Hall). Call 352-846-1138 to make an appointment.
- [Online Students Complaints](#): Service to report problems in UF online services.

10.3. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: How can I refer to you?

A: Please call me Mr. Rondan.

Q: When do we have the next ICA?

A: There is no ICA calendar. I usually decide if the class has ICAs a few minutes before it begins.

Q: Can I schedule a meeting during your office hours to discuss a grade posted four days ago?

A: No. I can discuss grades during a three-day window time after they are posted in e-learning.

Q: Can you round up my final grade?

A: No. As I said earlier, I will not round up final grades.