

SYG 2000 – Principles of Sociology
Fall 2024 Syllabus

Course and Instructor Information

Items	Information
Course	
Class section	17335
Class weekly schedule	MWF, Period 8 (3:00 PM - 3:50 PM)
Classroom	Little Hall, Room 0127 (LIT 0127)
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	Wednesdays 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Office location	Turlington Hall, Room 3347

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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.

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 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 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).

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.

Student Responsibilities

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.

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.

The class 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.

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>

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.

Assignments and Grading: Your grade will be based on your scores in five assessment categories: Exams, Reflections, Quizzes, In-Class Assignments, and Group Projects.

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 calendar below. The average exam scores represent 30% of students' final grades.

Reflections: Written answers to prompts related to the course. These answers will be submitted via the e-learning course platform after the class session. Students have to do 3 reflections. The average reflection 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.

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.

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.

Group Project: Sociological research exercise developed by random groups of 3-4 students. There is one project in this course associated with class topics. In this project, the participation of each group member will be evaluated by their peers. The score of the group project represents 10% of students' grades.

Assessment Breakdown

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

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

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.

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.

Grading Policies

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.

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.

Grading Scale

Letter	Meaning	Description	Sign	Score
A	Exemplary Work	Thorough understanding of the material that exceeds the average.	A	94.0-100
			A-	90.0-93.9
B	Good Work	Clear understanding of the material with minor gaps.	B+	87.0-89.9
			B	83.0-86.9
			B-	80.0-82.9
C	Average Work	Understanding of the material with substantial gaps.	C+	77.0-79.9
			C	73.0-76.9
			C-	70.0-72.9
D	Marginal Work	Superficial understanding of the material.	D+	67.0-69.9
			D	63.0-66.9
			D-	60.0-62.9
E	Unacceptable Work	Lack of demonstration of substantial understanding of the material.	E	≤ 59.9

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

UF policies for assigning grade points are available following this link:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

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

Accommodations: If you have a disability that requires 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.

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.

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.

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.

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), 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 [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 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.

Rubric for assignments

The written assignments (ICAs, Reflections, and Group Projects) will be graded following these criteria:

Criterion	Description	Score
Application of course content	Use information provided in course materials (concepts, examples, or statistics). Make a clear reference to this content and quote if necessary.	40
Use of empirical evidence	Provide empirical evidence to justify key ideas in your writing. For instance, provide clear examples of your ideas. These examples can be related to news or statistics about the theme.	30
Use of logical sequence of ideas	Develop each paragraph of your work following a clear logical sequence of ideas. Use of logical connectors between your ideas.	20
Observance of grammar rules	Review the grammar writing products before submission. Avoid grammar mistakes.	10
Total		100

Course Calendar

Note: This calendar is subject to updates. Any changes will be announced as soon as possible.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment due date
1	Fri, August 23	Introduction	Syllabus	
2	Mon, August 26	Topic 1: Definition and relevance of Sociology	Ch. 1.1., 1.2.*	
	Wed, August 28		Ch. 1.3., 1.4.	
	Fri, August 30		Ch. 3.1., 3.2.	
3	Mon, September 2	Labor Day (no class)		
	Wed, September 4	Topic 1: continued	Ch. 3.3., 3.4.	Quiz 1
	Fri, September 6	Topic 2: Foundational concepts	Ch. 5.1., 5.2.	
4	Mon, September 9		Ch. 5.3., 5.4.	
	Wed, September 11		Ch. 6.1., 6.2.	Reflection 1
	Fri, September 13		Ch. 7.1.	
5	Mon, September 16	Topic 3: Sociological theory and method		Quiz 2
	Wed, September 18			
	Fri, September 20			Exam 1
6	Mon, September 23			

	Wed, September 25	Topic 3: continued	Ch. 2.1., 2.2.	
	Fri, September 27		Ch. 2.3.	
7	Mon, September 30		Ch. 4.1., 4.2.	
	Wed, October 2		Ch. 4.3.	
	Fri, October 4			
8	Mon, October 7			Quiz 3
	Wed, October 9	Topic 4: Social classifications (race, gender, and class)	Ch. 9.1., 9.2.	
	Fri, October 11		Ch. 9.3., 9.4.	
9	Mon, October 14		Ch. 11.1., 11.2.	
	Wed, October 16		Ch. 11.3., 11.4.	Reflection 2
	Fri, October 18	Homecoming (no class)		
10	Mon, October 21	Topic 4: continued	Ch. 11.5., 12.1.	
	Wed, October 23		Ch. 12.2., 12.3.	
	Fri, October 25			Research exercise
11	Mon, October 28	Topic 4: continued		
	Wed, October 30	Topic 5: Health		
	Fri, November 1			Exam 2
12	Mon, November 4	Topic 5: continued	Ch. 19.1., 19.2.	
	Wed, November 6		Ch. 19.3., 19.4.	
	Fri, November 8		Ch. 19.5.	Quiz 4
13	Mon, November 11	Veterans Day (no class)		
	Wed, November 13	Topic 6: Education and Work	Ch. 16.1., 16.2.	
	Fri, November 15		Ch. 16.3., 18.1.	
14	Mon, November 18		Ch. 18.2., 18.3.	
	Wed, November 20			
	Fri, November 22	Topic 7: Government and Politics		Reflection 3
15	Mon, November 25	Thanksgiving (no class)		
	Wed, November 27			
	Fri, November 29			
16	Mon, December 2	Topic 7: continued		
	Wed, December 4			Quiz 5
--	Fri, December 13			Exam 3

***Chapters from the required book.**

Miscellaneous

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.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: How can I refer to you?

A: Please call me Mr. Rondan.

Q: Can you round up my final grade?

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