

Principles of Sociology (SYG 2000)

Fall 2023

17866, Section 1F74

MAT 0115 M,W,F | Period 5 (11:45 AM – 12:35 PM)

Instructor Information

Sameera Akella

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Office hours: over Zoom on Wednesdays from 10 – 11am & TUR 3347 Wednesdays from 12:45 – 1:45pm

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge and honorably recognize that this course was developed and will be conducted on the ancestral Native homelands of the Seminole and Timucua people, who walked here before us, and continue to walk here. This course will be conducted in a manner that will respect the integrity of Native peoples and their territory.

I further acknowledge the enslaved peoples, primarily of African descent, whose labor built much of the university.

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. Reading assignments and lectures 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. In-class exercises will provide students with opportunities to work in small teams and apply critical thinking skills to accomplish various tasks (e.g., speculate on the probable social consequences for legislative and technological innovations).
- 3) Help students to develop the ability to understand how various social processes and structures affect one another. This will be accomplished by showing how various social changes related to family, work, education, health, and other matters involve shifts in public perceptions and social initiatives.
- 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 their family members and friends can affect the larger society.

In-Class Recording

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 lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, 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.

UF Policy COVID-19 Updates

<https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/university-updates/>

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.

Textbook

The textbook is required for all students. I have chosen an open-source textbook that is available for free online; if you prefer, you may order a print copy through Amazon for \$29.

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

<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e>

Preparation

It is expected that you will complete all necessary readings for each week/module. Knowledge of the material covered in these readings is essential for productive work and will provide important background information for all assignments. Additionally, assignments may require knowledge of the readings assigned for that week.

Grading

Your grade will be based on your scores in five assessment groups: Exams, Reflections, Quizzes, Group Project, and Discussion Board.

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the course, and the average score of these three exams will be constitute 40% of your final grade. Exams cover material from assigned

readings and any class assignments. Exams will be a combination of true/false and multiple-choice questions. All exams take place on the specific dates listed for the course (from 8:00am to 11:59pm). You will have 50 minutes to complete all exams.

Reflections: There will be a weekly reflection that will be required in order to engage with the material. The prompt will be posted on Mondays by 8am and will be due Friday by 11:59pm (the first one will be posted on Wednesday). This reflection should be from 150-300 words and should thoughtfully and critically answer the discussion questions.

Quizzes: There will be three quizzes throughout the course, and the average score of these quizzes will be constitute 15% of your final grade. Quizzes act as check-ins throughout the course and will be a combination of true/false and multiple-choice questions. The beginning portion of those class days will be used to take the quiz.

Project: This semester you will work in groups to create presentations for the group project. More information will be published about the group project later in the semester. Groups will be presenting their presentations in the last week of class, prior to Exam 3. Sign-ups for time slots will happen closer to the end of the semester. The group project will be submitted to Canvas as a word document and is 15% of your grade.

Discussion/Participation: Although attendance is not taken each class, I will be putting students into small groups and giving them a prompt to discuss or a conceptual question to answer as a group. Each group will discuss the questions in detail, and then we will all come together to discuss as a larger class. Students will write down their names and submit to me, so I can count it. The lowest participation assignment will be dropped. If you are not there for class on time that day, you will not be put into a discussion group, and you will not receive points for that assignment. Unless you have a university-approved absence with documentation, I will not accept makeup participation assignments. This will happen randomly throughout the course, so I am able to measure participation.

Assessment Breakdown

Assessment	Description	Percentage of Final Grade
Exams	Exams will evaluate student competence in terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used in sociology (Content)	40%
Reflections	Reflections will evaluate students' ability to develop connections between topics from lecture and readings regarding current events (Critical Thinking)	20%

Quizzes	Quizzes will evaluate how students are comprehending the material over time	15%
Project	The group project will evaluate students' ability to communicate and apply concepts from lecture to real-world situations (Communication)	15%
Discussion/Participation	Discussion/participation will evaluate student competence in effectively communicating sociological knowledge, ideas and reasoning with their peers	10%

Excused Assignments & Make-Up Assignments/Exams

Students who miss an exam without an excuse may or may not be allowed to take a make-up exam at my discretion. Students who miss an exam must contact me within 12 hours of the original exam time if they are to be allowed the opportunity for a make-up exam; I will not seek out students to make sure they reschedule.

In certain situations, students with legitimate excuses (university-sponsored activities, religious holidays, etc.) may be allowed to take an exam early at my discretion. These situations may also excuse students from certain assignments they miss on those days. Students who will miss an exam for these reasons must notify me at least one week in advance, and appropriate documentation must be provided.

Outside of the scenarios listed above, no early exams will be administered.

Grading Scale

A	92.5-100	C	72.5-76.4
A-	89.5-92.4	C-	69.5-72.4
B+	86.5-89.4	D+	66.5-69.4
B	82.5-86.4	D	62.5-66.4
B-	79.5-82.4	D-	59.5-62.4
C+	76.5-79.4	E	<59.5

Grades will not be curved, and final grades will not be calculated beyond one decimal point. For example, a 79.48 is a C+, not a B.

Please be aware of your grade trajectory throughout the course, 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.

Class Policies

Class Demeanor & Discussion: Students are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. This class is a place where sensitive topics such as racism, sexism, ableism, xenophobia, class inequality, sexuality, and gender identity etc. may be discussed. We will be courteous of others at all times and disrespect will not be tolerated. There is a difference between polite disagreement and disrespect, and we will practice the former.

Office Hours: In this course, we will use the Zoom Conferences tool in e-Learning for office hours. When appropriate, the online session times will be announced for anyone to join as well as recorded so those who are unable to attend live can still benefit from the additional information. For more information on using this feature, see the UFIT Training page on [Zoom in eLearning](#).

Class Cancellation: If the university closes for any reason, such as inclement weather, please follow any instructions given by the university (you don't need to wait for me to tell you). In the case of a cancelled day, all class assignments due for that day will automatically carry over to the next day of class unless I inform you otherwise.

Email policy: Students can contact me via Canvas messaging or email on my university account (sameera.akella@ufl.edu). I will do my best to reply to emails in a timely fashion (within 48 hours for all emails received during normal working hours Monday-Friday from 9:00 am-5:00 pm). There is one exception: any email sent after 5:00 pm on a Friday or any official university break will be replied to on the following business day. When emailing me please put 'SYG 2000' or 'Principles of Sociology' somewhere in the subject line so I can easily identify you.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with me and discuss your access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

To receive accommodations, official documentation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required and you must provide me with a letter from DRC. You must notify me at least two weeks in advance in the case of testing accommodations so that we have enough time to make the proper arrangements.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

Informal Evaluation: The Start/Stop/Continue survey—an anonymous survey to help me understand what is/isn't working in the course—will be available throughout the semester. If you are uncomfortable speaking to me personally about the class, please fill out this survey to help me help you all learn.

University Honesty Policy

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/>

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.

Major Dates & Deadlines

9/11/23	Quiz 1
9/29/23	Exam 1

10/13/23	Quiz 2
10/23/23	Exam 2
11/13/23	Quiz 3
12/1/23	Group Project Due
12/6/23	Exam 3

Tentative Schedule (subject to change at my discretion)

*More information on each module is in each individual module page on Canvas

Day	Date	Topic	Notes
1	Wednesday, August 23	Module 1: What is Sociology?	
2	Friday, August 25		
3	Monday, August 28		
4	Wednesday, August 30	Module 2: Foundational Concepts	
5	Friday, September 1		
--	Monday, September 4		
6	Wednesday, September 6	Module 2 (continued)	9/11: Quiz #1
7	Friday, September 8		
8	Monday, September 11		
9	Wednesday, September 13	Module 3: Sociological Toolkit	
10	Friday, September 15		
11	Monday, September 18		
12	Wednesday, September 20		
13	Friday, September 22		
14	Monday, September 25		
15	Wednesday, September 27		
16	Friday, September 29	Exam 1	Module 1-3
17	Monday, October 2	Module 4: How are Social Groups Classified?	
18	Wednesday, October 4		
--	Friday, October 6	Homecoming	No class
20	Monday, October 9	Module 4 (continued)	Quiz #2: 10/13
21	Wednesday, October 11		
22	Friday, October 13		
23	Monday, October 16		
24	Wednesday, October 18		
25	Friday, October 20		
26	Monday, October 23	Exam 2	Module 4
27	Wednesday, October 25	Module 5: How are Groups Classified? Part II	
28	Friday, October 27		
29	Monday, October 30		
30	Wednesday, November 1		
31	Friday, November 3	Module 6:	

32	Monday, November 6	Social Institutions & Social Change	
33	Wednesday, November 8		
--	Friday, November 10	Holiday	
34	Monday, November 13	Module 6 (continued)	Quiz #3: 11/13/20
35	Wednesday, November 15		
36	Friday, November 17		
37	Monday, November 20	Project Work Day	
--	Wednesday, November 22	Holiday	No class
--	Friday, November 24		
38	Monday, November 27	Module 6 (continued)	
39	Wednesday, November 29		
40	Friday, December 1	Group Project Presentations	Project Due: 12/1/20
41	Monday, December 4		
42	Wednesday, December 6		