

SOC 1576: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

TuTh 11:00am - 12:20pm

Scheduled for in-person but first part of semester will be held remotely
Syllabus subject to change with evolving pandemic

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Department of Sociology
722 Gladfelter Hall

Classroom: 764 Gladfelter
Office Hours: TuTh 12:30-1:30pm
Zoom room: <https://temple.zoom.us/j/5284508968>
Email: lauren.olsen@temple.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

After four decades of solely testing students on basic and biomedical sciences, with the addition of the section on *Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior*, the Association of American Colleges (AAC&C), the purveyors of the MCAT, have signaled that future doctors should know something about sociology. Other health professions want their matriculants to know something about sociology, too. In this introductory course, we will cover the foundational theories and concepts within the discipline; various approaches to understanding human behavior, groups, networks, organizations, and institutions; and, manifestations and explanations of the inequalities that accrue in U.S. society and worldwide, with the idea that you all will be better healthcare professionals for it. We will cover a breadth of sociological material, but we will anchor it with application exercises in your future professional fields.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation: 20%
Reflection: 20%
Midterm #1: 10%
Midterm #2: 20%
Final: 30%

Participation: 20%

We will do a mixture of small group work, reflections, and polling as a way to ensure you understand the concepts (and, dare I say, have a little fun) in the course of each class meeting. Clearly, participation of this variety tracks with attendance, but because I wish to be equitable and understanding of how attendance might not be easy for everyone, the way participation will be evaluated will be through in-class activities and **asynchronous Discussion threads**. There will be one prompt/thread each week, which will sync with the in-class discussions. To receive full credit for that week's participation you must post your answer to the prompt AND respond to a peer's response. Your original posts should be a 3-4 sentences, but of course they can be more; your responses to peers should be 1-2 sentences. **There will be 20 total posts (10 original, 10 responses)**. I am less worried about length and more interested in assessing how you are engaging with the prompt and each other. While you are strongly encouraged to keep up with this each week during the semester, they are due electronically to me (via Canvas or email) by **May 4th at 11:59pm**.

Reflection: 20%

You will be required to write a short (1-2 page, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1 inch-margins) letter to your future health professional self. You will first pick a concept or finding from the

course that you found particularly compelling (e.g. socialization, racial inequality) and define/explain it in 1-2 paragraphs. Then, you will use the remaining space to explain why this concept or finding may be important to your future work as a health professional. You'll be expected to use concrete examples to help support your claim that this concept or finding matters to health care work. While you are encouraged to submit any time during the semester, it is due electronically (via Canvas or email) by **May 4th at 11:59pm.**

Midterm #1: 10%

The first midterm will contain multiple choice and fill-in-the blank style questions and be held online in Canvas. The idea here is that this first midterm will be a lower-stakes way of checking what you have learned and practicing what it is like to test your knowledge about sociology. It is thus open-note and you will have 80 minutes to complete it. It will “go live” online on Canvas on **February 10th at 11:00am.**

Midterm #2: 20%

The midterm will contain a mixture of multiple choice, short answer (explanation of concepts), and long answer (application of concepts) – they will be capturing the material in the weeks preceding it. The midterm exam will be held in-class on **March 24th at 11:00am.**

Final: 30%

Choice of in-person or take-home exam and heavily concentrated with content from the third part of the semester. The substantive focus will be on social inequalities by class, race, and gender, but you will need to draw upon foundational theories or concepts to explicate your answers (e.g., conflict, symbolic interaction, structural functional). The final exam will be held in person or due on **April 21st at 11:00am.**

GRADING SYSTEM

(letter grade / numerical grade / grade points)

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|----|-------------|------|
| A | 92.5-100% | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-92.49% | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87.5-89.99% | 3.33 |
| B | 82.5-87.49% | 3.00 |
| B- | 80-82.49% | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77.5-79.99% | 2.33 |
| C | 72.5-77.49% | 2.00 |
| C- | 70-72.49% | 1.67 |
| D+ | 67.5-69.99% | 1.33 |
| D | 62.5-67.49% | 1.00 |
| D- | 60-62.49% | 0.67 |
| F | 0-59.99% | 0.00 |

COURSE LOGISTICS

All required readings are posted in the “Files” folder in Canvas. Some are in this free textbook: <https://cnx.org/contents/AgQDEnLI@13.6:TrIRM88K@9/Introduction-to-Sociology>. The textbook is meant to give an overview of concepts and ideas, many of which I will either expand upon or supplement in lecture. There will also be articles that are either classics within sociology, health and healthcare focused, or seem fun explication of concepts we will be reviewing in lecture.

When we meet over Zoom, I will record our class meeting and post it with the other files of that week.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Respect

The discipline of sociology and the professions concerned with providing healthcare cover topics that are particularly sensitive. As such, participation in this course requires that you respect your peers and the subjects discussed in the course. Please act with interest, humility, and empathy. Moreover, in the present learning context, we all need to follow the university guidance on masking and vaccinations.

Disability Accommodation

Temple University is committed to the inclusion of students with disabilities and provides accessible instruction, including accessible technology and instructional materials. The process for requesting access and accommodations for this course is: (1) Advise me of the need for access or accommodations; (2) Contact Disability Resources and Services to request accommodations (215-204-1280); (3) DRS will consult with me as needed about essential components of the program; (4) Present me with a DRS accommodation letter. If you have any questions or concerns about the process above, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Course Costs

The required course materials for this course are open educational resources and are available at no cost to students.

Attendance and Your Health

To achieve course learning goals, students must attend and participate in classes, according to your instructors' requirements. However, if you feel unwell or if you are under quarantine or in isolation because you have been exposed to the virus or tested positive for it, you should not come to campus or attend in-person classes or activities. It is the student's responsibility to contact their instructors to create a plan for participation and engagement in the course as soon as they are able to do so, and to make a plan to complete all assignments in a timely fashion, when illness delays their completion.

Technology

Learning in this environment is extra difficult and just plain bizarre. I am cognizant of a variety of reasons why our in-person and virtual foci might be strained—let us all try to do our best to be as “present” as possible considering all of the (very real) constraints. If you have limited resources with regard to educational technology (e.g., computer, wifi) please let me know and I can help you submit a request for the Student Emergency Aid Fund (and also see below). *(Also, please do not record the class without first discussing it with the group—distribution without permission may be a violation of the educational privacy law, known as FERPA, as well as certain copyright laws. Because the course is happening at Temple University, any recordings made of this course are the property of Temple University.)*

Limited resources are available for students who do not have the technology they need for class. Students with educational technology needs, including no computer or camera or insufficient Wifi-access, should submit a Student Technology Assistantance Application located in TUPortal and linked from the Dean of Students Support and Resources webpage. The university will endeavor to meet needs, such as with a long-term loan of a laptop or Wifi device, a refurbished computer, or subsidized internet access. Internet Essentials from Comcast provides the option to purchase a computer for \$150 and high-speed Internet service for \$9.95 a month, plus tax. The Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) is available to purchase Xfinity, Verizon, T-Mobile, and other internet services. Qualified households can receive a temporary monthly credit of up to \$50/month toward their Internet service and leased Internet equipment until the program's funding runs out.

On-campus computer labs have resumed normal operations and are available for student use.

Email

I love working with students, troubleshooting problems, and doing whatever I can to help you succeed. Please email me (lauren.olsen@temple.edu) and allow me a 24-hour period to return your emails. I usually respond before then, but it is important to keep in mind, particularly if you have a time-sensitive question.

Temple and COVID-19

Temple University's motto is Perseverance Conquers, and we will meet the challenges of the COVID pandemic with flexibility and resilience. The university has made plans for multiple eventualities. Working together as a community to deliver a meaningful learning experience is a responsibility we all share: we're in this together so we can be together.

Academic Integrity

If you have any questions about how to paraphrase, cite, or work with integrity, please do not hesitate to ask me. For the policy, please refer to the verbatim policy from the university below:

Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Essential to intellectual growth and the university's core educational mission is the development of independent thought and a respect for the thoughts of others. Academic honesty fosters this independence and respect. Academic dishonesty undermines the university's mission and purpose and devalues the work of all members of the Temple community. Every member of the university community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are responsible for adhering to the principles of academic honesty and integrity.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling or distribution of term papers or other academic materials. Normally, all work done for courses — papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations — is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work. Any assistance must be reported to the instructor. If the work has entailed consulting other resources — journals, books, or other media — these resources must be cited in a manner appropriate to the course. It is the instructor's responsibility to indicate the appropriate manner of citation. Everything used from other sources — suggestions for organization of ideas, ideas themselves, or actual language — must be cited. Failure to cite borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Undocumented use of materials from the World Wide Web is plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the university faculty or staff; (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus, assignment, or class discussion; (5) or otherwise engaging in behavior that gives the student an unfair academic advantage including, but not limited to, fabrication of data or sources, resubmitting work already submitted for another academic requirement without prior authorization, or other similar behavior.

Refer to the [Student Conduct Code \(policy # 03.70.12\)](#) for more specific definitions of cheating and plagiarism. The penalty for academic dishonesty can vary from receiving a reprimand and a failing grade for a particular assignment, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or expulsion from the university. The penalty varies with the nature of the offense, the individual instructor, the department, the school or college, and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Students who believe that they have been unfairly accused may appeal through the school or college's academic grievance procedure. For more information see [Grievances](#).

FURTHER RESOURCES

Cherry Food Pantry

(<https://studentaffairs.temple.edu/cherry-pantry>)

Room 224A, Second Level, Howard Gittis Student Center North

Student Health Services

(<https://www.temple.edu/studenthealth/>)

(215-204-7500)

Tuttleman Counseling Services

(<https://counseling.temple.edu>)

(215-204-7276)

Wellness Resource Center

(<https://wellness.temple.edu>)

(215-204-8436)

Campus Safety

(<https://safety.temple.edu>)

(215-204-1234)

Philadelphia Sexual Assault Response Center

(<https://sexualmisconduct.temple.edu/resources/community-resources/philadelphia-sexual-assault-response-center>)

(215-425-1625)

Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition

(<https://paimmigrant.org/toolbox/education-access-toolkit-for-undocumented-students/>)

(215-832-0636)

IDEAL Space

(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe5J5wn8qaQLuOT2U4E8BhZ7PHkf9t593yEhEkVNJDkxaFFDQ/viewform>) (to reserve space)

2026 N. Broad Street

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part 1: Introduction to the Discipline & Foundational Theories

<<ONLINE>> Week 1 (January 11th & 13th): Introduction to the Discipline

1/11: Syllabus

1/13: Aldon Morris' 2021 American Sociological Association Presidential Address (video: <https://vimeo.com/582544449>)

<<ONLINE>> Week 2 (January 18th & 20th): Foundational Theories

1/18: Textbook, Chapter 1. "An Introduction to Sociology"; Chapter 4, "Society and Social Interaction"

1/20: Conrad, Peter. 1986. "The Myth of Cutthroats Among Premedical Students: On the Role of Stereotypes in Justifying Failure and Success." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 27:150-60.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 3 (January 25th & 27th): Foundational Theories

1/25: Vinson, Alexandra H. 2019. "Short White Coats: Knowledge, Identity, and Status Negotiations of First-Year Medical Students." *Symbolic Interaction* 42(2):395-411.

1/27: Haas, Jack and William Shaffir. 1982. "Taking on the Role of Doctor: A Dramaturgical Analysis of Professionalization." *Symbolic Interaction* 5(2):187-203.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 4 (February 1st & 3rd): Identity and Socialization

2/1: Textbook, Chapter 5: Socialization; Becker, Howard S. 1953. "Becoming a Marihuana User." *American Journal of Sociology* 59:235-242.

2/3: Hafferty, Frederic W. 1988. "Cadaver Stories and the Emotional Socialization of Medical Students." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 29:344-356.

<<IN-PERSON/ONLINE>> Week 5 (February 8th & 10th): Catch-up, Review & Midterm #1

2/8: Catch-Up

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| 2/10: Open Note Midterm #1 (Online, Via Canvas) |
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Part 2: Building from Micro to Meso to Macro

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 6 (February 15th & 17th): Groups & Networks

2/15: Textbook, Chapter 6: “Groups and Organizations”

2/17: Bearman, Peter S., James Moody, and Katherine Stovel. 2004. “Chains of Affection: The Structure of Adolescent Romantic and Sexual Networks.” *American Journal of Sociology* 110(1):44-91.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 7 (February 22nd & 24th): Organizations and Bureaucracy

2/22: Reich, Adam. 2012. "Disciplined Doctors: The Electronic Medical Record and Physicians' Changing Relationship to Medical Knowledge." *Social Science & Medicine* 74(7):1021-28.

2/24: DePalma, Lindsay J. 2021. “The Passion Paradigm: Professional Adherence to and Consequences of the Ideology of ‘Do What You Love’” *Sociological Forum* 36(1):134-158.

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| SPRING BREAK |
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<<IN-PERSON>> Week 8 (March 8th & 10th): Culture and Institutions

3/8: Sointu, Eeva. 2019. “Challenges and a Super Power: How Medical Students Understand and Would Improve Health in Neoliberal Times. *Critical Sociology* 1-15.

3/10: Textbook, Chapter 3: “Culture”; Chapter 14, “Marriage and Family”; Chapter 15, “Government and Politics”

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 9 (March 15th & 17th): Institutions

3/15: Textbook, Chapter 16: “Education”; Chapter 19: “Health and Medicine”

3/17: Gong, Neil. 2019. “Between Tolerant Containment and Concerted Constraint: Managing Madness for the City and the Privileged Family.” *American Sociological Review* 84(4):664-689.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 10 (March 22nd & 24th): Catch-Up, Review & Midterm #2

3/22: Catch-Up & Review

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| 3/24: Midterm #2 |
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Part 3: Social Inequalities and Social Change

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 11 (March 29th & 31st): Inequality (Class)

3/29: Textbook, Chapter 9: “Social Stratification in the United States”; Rank, Mark R. 2011. “Rethinking American Poverty.” *Contexts* 10(2):16-21.

3/31: Jenkins, Tania M. and Shalini Reddy. 2016. “Revisiting the Rationing of Medical Degrees in the United States.” *Contexts* 15(4):36-41.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 12 (April 5th & 7th): Inequality (Race)

4/5: Textbook, Chapter 11: “Race and Ethnicity”; Documentary, Power and Health: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/power-health/episodes/power-health> (some images of violence around min 28; racism & mourning 42)

4/7: Amutah, Christina et al. 2021. “Misrepresenting Race—The Role of Medical Schools in Propagating Physician Bias.” *New England Journal of Medicine* DOI: 10.1056/NEJMms2025768

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 13 (April 12th & 14th): Inequality (Gender)

4/12: Textbook, Chapter 12: “Gender, Sex, and Sexuality”; Martin, Emily. 1991. “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles.” *Signs* 16(3): 485-501.

4/14: Charles, Maria. 2011. “What Gender is Science?” *Contexts* 10(2): 22-28.

<<IN-PERSON>> Week 14 (April 19th & 21st): Social Change & Final Exam

4/19: Timmermans, Stefan and Rebecca Kaufman. 2021. “Technologies and Health Inequities.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 46:583-602.

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| 4/21: Final Exam |
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