

Sociology 3020, Social Psychology
Spring 2011
Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 - 2:15pm
Dixie State College of Utah

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Office Hours: Monday - Friday 11:00am - 12:00pm

The Course:

Sociology is the study of human social interaction and structure. Psychology is the study of individuals and individual behavior. Social Psychology, then, is the study of individual behaviors, their relationships to social interaction and structure, and the influences of interaction and structure on individual behavior. We will see that social psychologists go about understanding behaviors in a systematic fashion via empirical observations - they are scientists. By the end of the course you will have an understanding of the impact of individuals upon their groups, and the constraints of group structure upon individuals.

Course Objectives:

Students completing social psychology should:

- demonstrate an ability to identify the ideas, people, and events that are generally thought to be important by social psychologists;
- demonstrate an understanding of social psychology as a scientific discipline (i.e. the gathering and analyzing of empirical data in a systematic fashion);
- demonstrate an understanding of symbolic interactionism as the major theoretical perspectives of a sociological social psychology;
- demonstrate an understanding of objects, symbols, self, mind, and society as the major concepts used by symbolic interactionists for understanding human behaviors;
- demonstrate and ability to apply the above symbolic interactionist concepts to specific empirical arenas.

Texts:

Charon, Joel M. *Symbolic Interactionism*. Prentice Hall.

O'Brien, Jodi. *The Production of Reality*. Pine Forge Press.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on four Field Essays and three Content Essays. Each essay will be worth roughly 14% of your final grade.

Field Essays:

You will write four Field Essays in which you will apply concepts from our readings and class discussions to observations you make of a specific interactional arena. I will hand out a Field Essay assignment on January 20; your essays are due in class on February 3, March 3, April 7, and May 5.

LATE ESSAYS WILL BE MARKED DOWN ONE FULL GRADE.

Content Essays:

You will write three Content Essays based exclusively on concepts from our readings and class discussions. I will hand out Content Essay assignments on February 3, March 10, and April 21. Essays are due on February 10, March 24, and April 28.

LATE ESSAYS WILL BE MARKED DOWN ONE FULL GRADE.

Attendance:

Attendance is not mandatory, though expected. I lecture on material not from the texts. There will be elements of the essays that are not from the texts. If you miss class you risk missing information important for the essays.

NOTE: I reserve the right to (a) adjust individual grades based on my evaluation of your participation and enthusiasm in the course and (b) make changes to the syllabus during the course if I feel it will benefit the class.

ANOTHER NOTE: You must complete all essays to pass this class.

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE POLICY: Academic dishonesty in any form, including, but not limited to, plagiarism on written assignments, submitting other person's work as one's own, and cheating on exams or quizzes will not be tolerated at Dixie State College of Utah.

Teachers at Dixie State College of Utah have the right to manage their classroom environments to ensure a good learning climate.

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring reasonable academic adjustment, accommodations, or auxiliary aids to be successful in this class will need to contact the DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER Coordinator (Baako Wahabu) for eligibility determination. Proper documentation of impairment is required in order to receive services or accommodations. DRC is located at the ground floor of the Financial Aid Office. Visit or call 652-7516 to schedule appointment to discuss the process. DRC Coordinator determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

Important class and college information will be sent to your dmail email account. This information includes your DSC bill, financial aid/scholarship notices, notification of dropped classes, reminders of important dates and events, and other information critical to your

success in this class and at DSC. All DSC students are automatically assigned a dmail email account. If you do not know your user name and password, go to www.dixie.edu and select "dmail" for complete instructions. You will be held responsible for information sent to your dmail email, so please check it often.

Course Schedule

Week & Topics

Readings

Week #1

January 11 & 13
Review of Sociology

Week #2

January 18 & 20
Perspectives
Perspectives of Social Science Charon, Chs. 1 & 2
Hand out Field Essay Assignment, Thursday, January 20

Week #3

January 25 & 27
The Perspective of Symbolic Interactionism
The Meaning of Symbols Charon, Chs. 3 & 4

Week #4

February 1 & 3
The Importance of the Symbol
Self Charon, Chs. 5 & 6
Field Essay #1 Due, Thursday, February 3
Hand out Content Essay #1 Assignment, Thursday, February 3

Week #5

February 8 & 10
Mind
Taking the Role of the Other Charon, Chs. 7 & 8
Content Essay #1 Due, Thursday, February 10

Week #6

February 15 & 17
Human Action
Social Interaction Charon, Chs. 9 & 10

Week #7

February 22 & 24
Society
Erving Goffman Charon, Chs. 11 & 12

Week #8

March 1 & 3
Studies and Applications of
Symbolic Interactionism Charon, Ch. 13
Field Essay #2 Due, Thursday, March 3

Week #9

March 8 & 10

Realities and Truths

O'Brien, "What is
Real," 1, 3, &
"Symbolic
Interactionism"

Hand out Content #2 Assignment, Thursday, March 10

Week X

March 15 & 17

No School

Week #10

March 22 & 24

Humans as Symbol Using Creatures

O'Brien, "Shared
Meaning as the Basis of
Humanness," 8, & 10

Content Essay #2 Due, Thursday, March 24

Week #11

March 29 & 31

Social Order

O'Brien, "Meaning is
Negotiated Through
Interaction," 13, 17,
18, & 19

Week #12

April 5 & 7

Social Selves

O'Brien, "From Masks to
Selves," 21, 22, 23, &
27

Field Essay #3 Due, Thursday, April 7

Week #13

April 12 & 14

Social Construction of Reality

O'Brien, "Building and
Breaching Reality," &
30

Week #14

April 19 & 21

Ambiguity, Complexity, and Conflict

O'Brien, "Boundaries
and Contradictions,"
36, & 39

Hand out Content Essay #3 Assignment, Thursday, April 21

Week #15

April 26 & 28

Last Class

Content Essay #3 Due, Thursday, April 28

Week #16

Thursday, May 5

Field Essay #4 Due No Later Than 2:30pm