

Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York
Department of Social Sciences, Human Services and Criminal Justice

Introduction to Sociology

SOC 100-090W Spring 2020

Fridays 9:30 a.m. -12:15 p.m.

Fiterman 804

3 credits

Professor: Dr. Soniya Munshi

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Office Hours: Thursday + Friday 12:30-2:00 p.m., and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the social world, focusing on the interactions that individuals have with social forces, structures, and institutions and how these interactions shape everyday lived experiences. We will use different theoretical and methodological approaches to study issues such as: culture, class, race/ethnicity, gender, migration, labor, family, and housing from a sociological perspective. Questions of power, inequity, and social change are central to this course.

Students who engage with the material and complete the work in this course will:

- 1) Be able to explain the main sociological theories, concepts and methods as presented in class.
- 2) Be able to apply sociological concepts and theories to the social world and to everyday life.
- 3) Employ sociology as a form of critical thinking and analysis.

This is a **Writing Intensive** course that fulfills the WI requirement for graduation. Writing intensive courses pay special attention to developing critical reading, writing, and analytic skills to prepare students for college-level coursework in general. Both informal and formal writing will be designed to maximize your understanding of the subject matter. **Formal writing assignments, at least 10-12 pages total, account for a significant portion of your grade and will include opportunities for revision.**

Course Site

I will use a course website to communicate all course announcements, post assignments, and share materials such as additional readings. This site is public—you do not need an account to view it.

I recommend you subscribe to the website so that you will get a notification every time I post a new message.

You can find the website at: <https://soc100munshi.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>

Some of the pages on this website are password protected.

The **password** for these pages is: nyc2020

Course Materials

No textbooks required. This class is designated **Zero Textbook Cost**, which means we will use open/alternative educational resources that are freely available online and/or available on the course website or through the BMCC Library Databases—the materials are on a password protected page called “Readings/Materials.” **I expect you to bring the readings to class so that you can use them for in-class assignments and discussions. You are responsible to print or download on to your device any readings that I assign.** There are many places at BMCC to print, but you need to plan ahead: <https://ccc.bmcc.cuny.edu/Site/Computers/Students/Printing>

As this is a Writing Intensive course, you will regularly participate in writing activities in class. **You will need a notebook (not bound, as you will sometimes turn in your writing) or paper and a writing utensil in each class session.** I also suggest you keep a folder in which you store readings, homework assignments, and other coursework. If you face obstacles in obtaining these supplies, please see me.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

In-class assignments, homework, and class participation	25 points
Mid-term assignment	15 points
Reflection essays (3)	30 points (total; 10 points)
Sociological Autobiography, includes workshops and presentation	30 points (total)

In-class assignments, homework, and class participation (25 points): Most class sessions will start and/or end with in-class writing assignments that ask you to respond to the reading, discussion, or the topic at hand. You will also be asked to complete homework assignments to prepare you for in-class activities. I may collect these assignments or ask you to discuss your responses during class. Generally, these assignments will not be graded but you will receive credit for completion. **If you miss class, you cannot make up in-class assignments or turn in homework at a later time.** Class participation entails meaningful and active presence in class (which includes being in class and on time), contribution to class discussions, and general respect for the collective environment.

Mid-term Assignment (15 points) Your mid-term assignment will ask you to write a 2-3 page letter to a (fictitious) friend or family member in which you explain how a sociological perspective can be useful to them. You will be asked to discuss different sociological concepts to them by applying what you have learned to everyday experiences. You will receive details for this assignment later in the semester.

Reflection Essays (3 essays @10 points each, total 30 points) Over the course of the semester, you will submit THREE 2-page reflection essays that ask you to engage a reading through a discussion of its main ideas, your reactions, and connections between the readings and the world around us. There will be 4 different reflection essay prompts offered; you can skip one essay. If you complete all four essays, I will drop the lowest grade.

Sociological Memoir (Draft @5 points, Essay @20 points, and Presentation @5 points, total 30 points): Your final project for this class will be a 5-page sociological memoir. Through this essay, you will use your “sociological imagination” to tell the story of something meaningful from your own life history/experience. In other words, your essay will make links between your own personal story and public issues. Over the course of the semester, you will have opportunities to practice reflective and autobiographical writing, and we will also read memoir writing through the lens of sociology. The assignment includes a draft essay that you will turn into me for feedback as well as an in-class presentation at the end of the semester.

Extra Credit: I will let you know about activities to participate in for extra credit. To receive extra credit (up to ½ point on your final grade for each event, for a maximum of 3 points), you will turn in a 1-2 page reflection in which you make connections to our course, within one week of the event.

I will enter grades in the Blackboard Grade Center. Grades will be calculated using the following scale:
93-100 =A 90-92 =A- 87-89 =B+ 83-86=B 80-82=B- 77-79 =C+ 73-76=C 70-72=C- 67-69 =D+ 63-66=D 60-62=D-

Course Outline: All required course materials are available under the Readings/Materials tab on the Course Website. Readings are subject to change. All changes will be announced in class and on the course website.

What is Sociology?: History, Theory, Methods

Jan 31	Introductions + Course Overview
Feb 7	Read: Johnson, “The Forest, the Trees, and the One Thing” (1997), and excerpt from Mills, “The Promise,” <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> (1959)
Feb 14	Read: Lewis, “Theory and Methods” (2014)

Culture + Socialization + the Self

Feb 21 **Read:** Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema" (1956), and Anzaldúa, "How to Tame A Wild Tongue" (1987)

Social Institutions

Feb 28 **Read:** Excerpt from Coontz, *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (2006), and Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (2007)
Due: Essay #1

Gender + Sexuality + Feminisms

Mar 6 **Read:** Excerpt from Mock, *Redefining Realness* (2014), and Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement" (1982)
DUE: Midterm Assignment

Mar 13 **Read:** Excerpt from Silliman et al., *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice* (2004), and Excerpts from research reports/briefs (TBD)

Race + Ethnicity + Racism

Mar 20 **Read:** Chi, "Race and Intersectionality" (2014), and Excerpts from Choi, et al. "Long Island Divided" (2019)
Due: Essay #2

Mar 27 **Watch: FILM TBA**

Class, Economics, Globalization

Apr 3 **Read:** Martinez and Garcia, "What is Neoliberalism?," and Donato and Gabaccia, "The Global Feminization of Migration: Past, Present, and Future," and Aviv, "The Cost of Caring"
Due: Essay #3

Apr 10 NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Social Change and Transformation: Gendered Violence

Apr 17 **Read:** Excerpt from Richie, *Arrested Justice* (2012), and Law, "When Abuse Victims Commit Crimes" (2019), and
Due: Essay #4

Apr 24 **Read:** Cullors, "Abolition and Reparations: Histories of Resistance, Transformative Justice, and Accountability" (2019)
Due: Sociological Memoir Draft Essays

May 1 Class presentations

May 8 Class presentations + Course summary
Sociological Memoir drafts returned

May 15 **Due: Sociological Memoir (Final Draft)**

Additional Notes and Policies

This class is a space of respect and dignity, where the targeting of students based on their identities, beliefs, appearances, immigration statuses or other issues will not be tolerated. As an educator, I fully support the rights of all students to pursue your education and to live free from the fear of prison; detention and deportation; anti-black racism; anti-Muslim racism; anti-Semitism; racist and xenophobic violence; homophobic, transphobic and gendered harassment and violence; ableism; and, other forms of hatred and discrimination. If you have any concerns any issues that are interfering with your autonomy, safety, and mobility, please know you can speak with me. I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality.

I also support the rights of students to pursue their education with sufficient food to eat and a safe and stable place to live. BMCC's Single Stop office (see end of syllabus) can offer support to students who face housing or hunger insecurity. Please contact them for more information, and also know that you are welcome to discuss these concerns with me. Again, I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality.

Classroom environment: We are all responsible to ensure that this classroom is a respectful learning environment in which everyone can participate. Please try to learn your classmates' names, pronounce them correctly, and refer to them by the pronouns they use. Being respectful also means being on time, awake and present during class and not engaging in side talk when others are speaking. We will have a lot of discussion in this class. It is okay for us to disagree with one another as long as we do this with kindness, compassion, and respect for one another.

Electronic devices: **I do not allow the use of devices during class.** This includes ALL cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. I expect you to turn your phones all the way off (on silent, not vibrate) and put them away—unless you are using your device to refer to a reading or for a classroom activity. If you are using your phone, tablet, or laptop in class for any purpose outside of classroom activities, I will **mark you absent** for that class session. If you have a documented disability that requires you to use an electronic device, please speak to me about this. **I do not allow audio or video recording of any portion of our class sessions** without prior permission.

Attendance/Lateness Policy: I understand that circumstances may sometimes prevent you from attending class or being on time. **You are allowed 2 missed classes without penalty and without explanation.** Beyond that, if you miss an additional class, I may drop your grade by a letter (e.g. B to C) or more or, in the case of excessive absence, assign you an F or WU grade. **In our course, 2 instances of lateness will constitute 1 absence.** If you come in late, it is your responsibility to make sure that you are marked present before you leave that day.

Please come to my office hours to talk with me if you have problems or circumstances that may negatively affect your ability to perform your best in your academic work. Do not wait until the end of the semester to inform me of your circumstances.

Communication: I will communicate all course announcements, including changes to the syllabus, through the course website. **You are responsible to keep up with all information posted.** Subscribing to the website is the best way to make sure that you are notified about all new posts. If I need to email you, I will send a message the email address you have given me so it is important that you put in an email address that you actually use/check.

The **best way to communicate with me** is in person, during my office hours or by appointment. I can also be reached by email or by phone. I will respond to emails as soon as possible, but always within 48 hours (not including weekends and holidays).

Please keep in mind **basic guidelines for email etiquette** when corresponding with me (or any professor):

+**Make sure that the answer to your question is not found on the syllabus.**

+Use appropriate capitalization, spell out words completely, and end the email with your complete name.

+The subject line should be in the following format ASN114: the topic of your email.

+Please address me with “Dear Professor Munshi” or “Professor” and not “hey.”

The following information is in accordance with BMCC protocol:

BMCC is committed to the health and well-being of all students. It is common for everyone to seek assistance at some point in their life, and there are free and confidential services on campus that can help.

Single Stop www.bmcc.cuny.edu/singlestop, room S230, 212-220-8195. If you are having problems with food or housing insecurity, finances, health insurance or anything else that might get in the way of your studies at BMCC, come by the Single Stop Office for advice and assistance. Assistance is also available through the Office of Student Affairs, S350, 212-220- 8130.

Counseling Center www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling, room S343, 212-220-8140. Counselors assist students in addressing psychological and adjustment issues (i.e., depression, anxiety, and relationships) and can help with stress, time management and more. Counselors are available for walk-in visits.

Office of Compliance and Diversity www.bmcc.cuny.edu/aac, room S701, 212-220-1236. BMCC is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment free of unlawful discrimination/harassment, including sexual harassment, where all students are treated fairly. For information about BMCC's policies and resources, or to request additional assistance in this area, please visit or call the office, or email olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu, or twade@bmcc.cuny.edu. If you need immediate assistance, please contact BMCC Public safety at 212-220-8080.

Office of Accessibility www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility, room N360 (accessible entrance: 77 Harrison Street), 212-220-8180. This office collaborates with students who have documented disabilities, to coordinate support services, reasonable accommodations, and programs that enable equal access to education and college life. To request an accommodation due to a documented disability, please visit or call the office.

BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC’s Web site, www.bmcc.cuny.edu. For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

Additional BMCC Resources

BMCC Writing Center: The BMCC Writing Center (S500W) serves registered BMCC students and faculty in courses from most disciplines on campus. The Writing Center's mission is twofold: 1) to help students develop confidence as writers by learning to think critically, write actively, revise mindfully and proofread carefully, and 2) to provide support for faculty who are incorporating these writing skills and practices into their curricula. The Writing Center also provides BMCC students with guidance on personal essays, statements for scholarships, college transfer essays, and admission applications. Tutoring is offered on a scheduled, drop-in, or on-line basis. Visit their e-tutors at <http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/etutoring/>

CUNY Citizenship Now! CUNY Citizenship Now! provides free, high quality, and confidential immigration law services to help individuals and families on their path to U.S. citizenship. Our attorneys and paralegals offer one-on-one consultations to assess participants’ eligibility for legal benefits and assist them in applying when qualified.

Pathways Learning Outcomes for Individual and Society	Measurements
By the end of the semester, students should be able to:	This will be measured in the following ways:
Student Learning Outcomes	
Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments
Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments
Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments
Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of the sociology discipline, exploring the relationship between individual and society	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments
Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments
Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices	Class discussion, informal & formal writing assignments

Writing Intensive Student Outcomes	
Students will be able to complete (a) formal writing assignment(s) of at least 10-12 pages in length that have gone through the revision process	Informal & formal writing assignments, including four essays
Students will be able to generate pieces of informal writing in response to a variety of prompts, concerns, situations, or reading assignments	In-class writing assignments