

# **Introduction to Sociology: Social Problems and Social Movements**

## **SSS100.1958 (50727) Spring I 2019**

Center 3, C-431C; Tuesdays 3:25pm – 5:35pm and Thursdays 3:25pm – 4:25pm

Instructor: Lynne Turner ([lturner@gradcenter.cuny.edu](mailto:lturner@gradcenter.cuny.edu))

Office Hours: By appointment before or after class

### **Course Description:**

Welcome to Sociology, the study of society! We will utilize a sociological perspective to understand hierarchies of class, race, gender, and sexuality and explore contemporary social problems including inequality, precarious work, migration, relations of power and social control. Sociologist C. Wright Mills posited that sociological imagination rests on the understanding that “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.” We will consider the relationship between “personal troubles” and “public issues” as we delve into the social, political, economic and historical contexts that shape outcomes. Together we will apply sociological imagination to augment our understanding of historical and contemporary issues and events. Ongoing examination of how people have utilized power from below to build social movements and bring about social change will be integrated into our studies throughout the semester.

### **Course Readings:**

- Many of the assigned texts are found in the following textbook: *Social Theory: The Multicultural, Global, and Classic Readings*. 6th Edition by Charles Lemert; ISBN: 978-0813350028. You are highly encouraged to acquire the book. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> editions are also okay. The 6<sup>th</sup> edition is available at the LaGuardia library.
- Required course readings are available in the “Readings” section on the course website at <http://cunyhumanitiesalliance.org/introsoc/> or through links in the course syllabus.

**Course Website:** Our course website is <http://cunyhumanitiesalliance.org/introsoc/>. All information about the course including the syllabus, readings, assignments and other materials will be housed on this website. Weekly Reading Responses will be posted on the site. Respond to your email invitation and register for the site immediately following the first class and no later than March 7!

### **Course Requirements**

Attendance and class participation are essential to your learning experience and the success of the class. Read the assigned texts prior to class and come prepared to summarize and discuss what you have read, and to participate actively in group discussions and in-class writing and activities. Bring assigned readings with you to class along with notes, comments and questions. Participation means contributing constructively based on your reading of the texts and your personal knowledge of the topic being discussed. You don't have to always know the answers. A question can be as valuable as a statement and help clarify the material for others as well.

*Show Up, Speak Up, Ask Questions and Share Your Ideas!*

**The following assignments are required:**

1. After the first class, **send me an e-mail message** from your preferred email address. The subject line should read "Sociology 100.1958 and the body of the message should contain your name and e-mail address. I'll add all addresses from which I receive e-mail to my address book. *If you do not respond you will not get on the class e-mail list.* Since I will send periodic updates by email it is important to get on the list. Use this email address to register for the course website.
2. **Weekly reading responses (WRR)** consisting of one of the following: 1) A quote you select from the reading that you believe best captures its message. 2) A current news article you find that is related to the content of the assigned reading. 3) A multimedia source such as a video, website or other source related to the content of the assigned reading. **Your responses are to be posted as replies to my prompt on our course website by 9:00pm of the Monday prior to our Tuesday afternoon class.** You may miss up to three responses before it negatively impacts your grade. *Weekly responses will be graded for completion and are worth 10% of your grade.*
3. **Short reflection essay #1** of 300 words due on March 21 based on course readings and your experience. *Short essay #1 will be graded for completion and is worth 10% of your grade.*
4. **Short essay #2** of 450 words due on April 19 based upon an oral interview you conduct of a relative or somebody you know with experience related to a one of the course topics. *Short essay #2 will be assigned a grade for quality and is worth 25% of your grade.*
5. **Final Project:** Your final project will examine how a social movement organization addresses one of the social problems covered in class. Project research will be based upon course readings, class activities, discussion and prior assignments in addition to at least one independent reading and one multi-media source that you identify. Expectations for the project will be covered in class. *The final project is worth 45% of your grade in total.* Final Project Components include:
  - **Topic statement** (5%) – A one paragraph topic statement that identifies your chosen movement organization and describes how you will conduct your project research is due by class time on May 2. The statement will be graded for completion. If it is not handed in or handed in late it will negatively affect your project grade.
  - **Class Presentation** (15%) – You will present to class about your social movement on either May 23, May 28 or May 30. We will dedicate class time to discuss the presentations and pass around a sign-up sheet at least two weeks in advance. Each presentation will be five minutes long with time for questions. Feel free to be creative! You can use power point or video clips, engage students in an activity, or anything else you think will make for an engaging presentation.
  - **Final project essay** (25%) – A three page, double spaced essay summarizing what you learned and providing your critical perspective on your movement is due on June 4. Your essay must include at least two substantive citations from course readings, one substantive citation from your independent reading, links to your multimedia sources and a bibliography of sources.

**6. Opportunities for Extra Credit:**

- **Visit the Writing Center** - For every visit to the Writing Center (B-200) where you work on something for this class, I will *give you two points towards your final grade*. The maximum number of visits is 3.
- **Supplement your final project with field research:** You will receive *five points extra credit on your final project grade* if you build in a hands-on field research such as attending a meeting, rally or other event pertinent to your social movement. To receive the extra credit you must document your presence and report back on your experience.
- **Museum Visits-** Students with a valid CUNY ID can get free admittance to The Museum of Modern Art (Manhattan) and The National Museum of the American Indian. Visit these or other NYC museums. Pick one of the topics that we have covered in class and take pictures of five pieces of art that reflect this topic. Make sure you are visible in one of the photos. Print out these pictures. Print out a sheet with the title, artist, and year for each piece of art. Print out a cover sheet with your name, class, and section. Turn these in along with your museum ticket. *Each visit is worth one point towards your final grade.* You can do 2 of these visits.

**Course grades will be based on:**

- 1) **Attendance and Participation** = **10%**
- 2) **Reading Responses** = **10%**
- 3) **Short essays** = **35% total**
  - Short reflection essay #1 of 300 words due March 21 is 10%
  - Short essay #2 of 450 words based upon oral history interview due April 19 is 25%
- 4) **Final project** = **45% total**
  - Topic proposal due on May 2 is 5%
  - Class presentation on either May 28 or May 30 is 15%
  - Final project essay due on June 4 is 25%

**Grading System:**

A: 93-100%	A-: 90-92%	B+: 86-89%	B: 83-85%	B-: 80-82%	C+: 76-79%	C: 73-75%
C-: 70-72%	D+: 66-69%	D: 63-65%	D-: 60-62%	F: -59%	WU: Unofficial withdraw (≈F)	W: Withdraw

## CLASS CALENDAR

*The following course calendar is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted online.*

Date	Topics	Readings/Lecture	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>			
Tues, 3/5 and Thurs, 3/7	Course Overview What is Sociology?	C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination	Send preferred email/register for course website (due 3/7)
<b>Week 2</b>			
Tues, 3/12 and Thurs, 3/14	Class Structure and Inequality	Karl Marx, The Manifesto of Class Struggle Bob Herbert: Losing Our Way on Moyers & Company, 10-7-2014, <a href="https://billmoyers.com/content/bob-herbert-losing-way/">https://billmoyers.com/content/bob-herbert-losing-way/</a> The Heist: Who Stole the American Dream - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgEjTBGeafs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgEjTBGeafs</a>	WRR
<b>Week 3</b>			
Tues, 3/19 and Thurs, 3/21	Class and Work	Karl Marx, Estranged Labor Harold Meyerson, The Future of Work: Stemming the Rise of Bad Jobs in American Prospect, in Pacific Standard, August 4, 2015 - <a href="https://psmag.com/economics/the-future-of-work-stemming-the-rise-of-bad-jobs">https://psmag.com/economics/the-future-of-work-stemming-the-rise-of-bad-jobs</a>	WRR Short essay #1 (due 3/21)
<b>Week 4</b>			
Tues, 3/26 and Thurs, 3/28	Race	W.E.B Dubois, Black Reconstruction and the Racial Wage Gunnar Myrdal, The Negro Problem is a Moral Issue <i>Or</i> Oliver Cox, Race Relations, The Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring, 1943), pp. 144-153	WRR



		<p>Forum, August 2018 - <a href="https://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2018/08/28/beyond-metoo-wokrplace-sexual-harrasment/">https://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2018/08/28/beyond-metoo-wokrplace-sexual-harrasment/</a></p> <p>Roxane Gay: Confessions of a Bad Feminist, Ted Talks, May 2015 - <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/roxane_gay_confessions_of_a_bad_feminist#t-674910">https://www.ted.com/talks/roxane_gay_confessions_of_a_bad_feminist#t-674910</a></p>	
<i>April 19-28</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>		
<b>Week 8</b>			
Tues, 4/30 and Thurs, 5/2	Social Control and Power	<p>Sarah Childress, Michelle Alexander: A System of Racial and Social Control, April 29, 2014 – <a href="https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/mic-helle-alexander-a-system-of-racial-and-social-control/">https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/mic-helle-alexander-a-system-of-racial-and-social-control/</a></p> <p>Frances Fox Piven, Can Power from Below Change the World, ASA Presidential Address 2007</p>	WRR Final project topic statement (due 5/2)
<b>Week 9</b>			
Tues, 5/7 and Thurs, 5/9	Social Movements – Black Freedom Movement	<p>Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail</p> <p>Aldon Morris, Tactical Innovations of the Civil Rights Movement in Social Movements Reader, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 219-223</p> <p>Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, “Black Panther Party: What We Want” - <a href="http://www.pbs.org/hueypnewton/actions/actions_platform.html">http://www.pbs.org/hueypnewton/actions/actions_platform.html</a></p> <p>Movement for Black Lives platform/demands - <a href="https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/">https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/</a></p>	WRR
<b>Week 10</b>			
Tues, 5/14 and Thurs, 5/16	Social Movements – Labor Movements	<p>Economic Policy Institute, “How Today’s Unions Help Working People: Giving people the power to improve their jobs and unrig the economy,” Aug. 24, 2017 (Sections 1,2, 7, 8, 9, 10) - <a href="https://www.epi.org/publication/how-">https://www.epi.org/publication/how-</a></p>	WRR

		<a href="https://prospect.org/article/return-strike?fbclid=IwAR1rHSAd90zm9mKoP1x4NhrrGJ5LiHIfPNC9IKS1rAPX6135HnLziVT28Tc">todays-unions-help-working-people-giving-workers-the-power-to-improve-their-jobs-and-unrig-the-economy/</a> Steven Greenhouse, The Return of the Strike in American Prospect - <a href="https://prospect.org/article/return-strike?fbclid=IwAR1rHSAd90zm9mKoP1x4NhrrGJ5LiHIfPNC9IKS1rAPX6135HnLziVT28Tc">https://prospect.org/article/return-strike?fbclid=IwAR1rHSAd90zm9mKoP1x4NhrrGJ5LiHIfPNC9IKS1rAPX6135HnLziVT28Tc</a> <i>OR</i> Stephanie Luce, \$15 per hour or Bust: An Appraisal of the Living Wages Movement, New Labor Forum, 24(2), 2015, 72-79	
<b>Week 11</b>			
Tues, 5/21 and Thurs, 5/23		Class Activity, Class presentations begin 5/23	
<b>Week 12</b>			
Tues, 5/28 and Thurs, 5/30		Class Presentations	
<b>Week 13</b>			
Tues. 6/4,	Reading day		Final project essay (due 6/4)
	Grades posted 6/12		

**Policies:**

**Academic Integrity:** Do Not Plagiarize! I will know that you have done it. This course is taught in compliance with LaGuardia’s Academic Integrity Policy found at [https://library.laguardia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/academicintegritypolicy\\_LibraryVersion.pdf](https://library.laguardia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/academicintegritypolicy_LibraryVersion.pdf). Plagiarism is turning in work that is not your own, whether in part or full. Students that submit plagiarized work or commit other acts of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade and may face more serious penalties.

**Attendance:** You begin the semester with an “A” for attendance. Each unexcused absence results in a deduction of 0.5 points and each lateness or leaving early results in a deduction of 0.25 points from your

final grade. If you have a legitimate reason for your absence, lateness or need to leave early, it must be provided to me in advance or immediately after the occurrence. Per campus policy, the maximum number of unexcused absences is limited to 15% of class hours.

**Late Assignments:** Unexcused late assignments will be lowered by 1/3 of a grade for each day that the assignment is due (therefore an “A” paper becomes an A- after one day, B+ after two days, etc.) Extensions will only be granted for valid reasons and with prior approval. It is your responsibility to request an extension before the deadline date. Assignments more than a week late will not be accepted.

**Electronic Devices:** Computers, tablets, phones or other electronic devices may be used only for class purposes. *No phone calls, no texting, no e-mail, no web surfing, no games!*

### **Resources:**

**LaGuardia Writing Center:** The LaGuardia Writing Center in sunny B200 offers free professional tutoring on **any aspect of any phase of any kind of writing**. Tutoring is by appointment that you can make through My LaGuardia. More information about the writing center can be found at <http://www.laguardia.edu/Writing-Center/Home>

**Accessibility Services:** In coordination with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified students with disabilities. Please meet with the instructor the first week of class to make arrangements. Jhony Nelson, Director of the Office for Students with Disabilities can be contacted at [jhony@lagcc.cuny.edu](mailto:jhony@lagcc.cuny.edu), or in person at Room M-102.

**Immigrant Rights:** LaGuardia provides information and services to students or a student's family member that have concerns about their immigration status or safety. More information about legal and financial resources, as well as regarding safety and harassment can be found at <http://www.laguardia.edu/immigrationhelp/>.

**Wellness Center:** The Wellness Center offers free and confidential counseling in a safe environment where individual and cultural differences are valued and respected. Wellness Center services include: short-term individual counseling, crisis intervention, workshops, outreach and referrals to college community resources. <http://www.laguardia.edu/WellnessCenter/>

**Single Stop:** Single Stop connects students with federal and state financial resources, and local community services to overcome financial barriers, stay in school and graduate. Single Stop provides financial assistance with daily living expenses, e.g. pay for doctor's visits, medications, food, rent, utilities, child care, transportation and more. Services are free for LaGuardia students and their immediate family members. <http://www.laguardia.edu/singlestop/>