



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER SEMESTER 2013

SO 2120 (A3) – The Sociological Imagination 3 (3-0-0) UT 45 Hrs.

INSTRUCTOR: René R. Gadacz, Ph.D **PHONE:** 780.539.2831
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OFFICE HOURS: Daily; by appointment; drop-ins welcome

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE(S): SO 1000 or equivalent

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/RESOURCE MATERIALS: M. Hird, G. Pavlick (eds), 2012 2nd edition, Questioning Sociology: Canadian Perspectives. Oxford: Don Mills [**available as hard copy only**]; Sherry Turkle, 2011, Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other. Basic Books: New York [**available as an e-book; limited copies in our bookstore**]; J. Blascovich, J. Bailenson, 2011, Infinite Reality: Avatars, Eternal Life, New Worlds, and the Dawn of the Virtual Revolution. Morrow: New York [**available as an e-book only**]

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: What is society? How do we study it? An introduction to sociological theorizing. Focuses on the development of society, and the study of society as a systematic enterprise.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 (3-0-0) UT 45 hours

DELIVERY MODE(S): lectures, class discussion, group work, class presentations, written tests, written projects

OUTCOMES: Knowledge of the variety of paradigms or schools of social theory; familiarity with both classical and contemporary works of social theory; to be able to

apply social theory and the sociological imagination to contemporary social research and sociological investigations into developments of modern society (virtual reality; robotics; social media; networking technology); to be able to link social theory to other academic and non-academic pursuits.

SIDE EFFECTS: Dizziness, rash, itching, trouble breathing. Changes in vision and fainting may occur, including unusual fatigue. Addiction to 'virtual reality' is a possibility. Seek medical attention if other side effects occur.

TRANSFERABILITY: Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Transfers to: UA, UC, AU, UL, AF

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Please refer to the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at – www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE			
GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A ⁺	4.0	95 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	85 – 94	
A ⁻	3.7	80 – 84	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B ⁺	3.3	76 – 79	
B	3.0	73 – 75	GOOD
B ⁻	2.7	70 – 72	
C ⁺	2.3	67 – 69	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	63 – 66	
C ⁻	1.7	60 – 62	
D ⁺	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

EVALUATIONS:

'Head Start' Assignment (25 points)..... *due* January 15

Daily Current Events Presentation (1 x 20 points)..... *begins* January 15

Article Seminar Presentation (1 x 50 points)..... *begins* January 17

Seminar Responder's Questions (1 x 25 points)..... *begins* January 17

Single Chapter Analysis (1 x 30 points)..... *begins* January 22

Book Review (1 x 30 points)..... *open deadline*

Documentary Film (1 x 40)..... *due* March 14

(Total points are 220; your total points will be converted to a percent (%) grade to determine your letter grade. For example, $190/220 = 86/100 = 86\% = A$)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is your responsibility to ensure that all your work is at a level appropriate to your year in college/university studies. Always spell and grammar check your work; always keep a hard copy or disk copy of your work as backup. There is writing help on campus, and if in doubt you are always welcome to ask me, your instructor, for clarification. Poor spelling, grammar and organization always interferes with the clear communication of ideas and you *will* lose marks if your overall communication is ineffective.

Attendance at classes and presentations is strongly encouraged; the same applies to your participation in class discussions. *Be an active participant in your education!*

Late assignments (or any assignment/course components) will result in an automatic loss of 5 points PER DAY, up to and including the day of a late submission, unless immediate or prior arrangements, based on exceptional circumstances, have been made. Documented personal or family emergencies, of course, will be accommodated.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week of (Winter 2013): The topics listed below may be shifted to better fit with the sequence and order of student's textbook article-based seminar presentations and assignments.

January 8, 10 – Course outlines and course requirements; defining social theory and the 'sociological imagination'

January 15, 17 – Cont'd; Identifying different levels of social reality; explanations of (1) subjective troubles, (2) imagining the social, and (3) critical imaginings – the 3 approaches to sociological theorizing

January 22, 24 – Cont'd; classical sociological theory at macro and micro levels

January 29, 31 – Cont'd; classical sociological theories; the theorists

February 5, 7 – Cont'd; contemporary and modern sociological theories at macro and micro levels

February 12, 14 – Cont'd; contemporary 'grand theories'

February 19, 21 – **WINTER BREAK, no classes [February 18-22 inclusive]**

February 26, 28 – Cont'd; contemporary and modern sociological theories; the theorists

March 5, 7 – Cont'd; contemporary theories of everyday life; the theorists

March 12, 14 – Cont'd; contemporary integrative theories, including feminist sociological theory; the theorists

March 19, 21 – Cont'd; post-modern grand social theories; the theorists

March 26, 28 – Cont'd; globalization theory; the theorists

April 2, 4 – Cont'd; the application of classical and contemporary social theory to contemporary life

April 9, 11 – Cont'd; the sociologically examined life

April 16 – Cont'd; sociological theories as products of their times

[Classes end Tuesday, April 16, 2013]

SO 2120 – The Sociological Imagination

Winter 2013

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

The following is an elaboration of the assignments listed on your SO 2120 course outline, where the assigned points are also given. Further details will be discussed as classes get underway and as the course progresses. Any required fine-tuning will occur in real time. The requirements seem like a lot, but really aren't.

Here's all you really have to do!

- A. One short **Avatar** assignment up front, 3 pages max.
- B. One current events presentation for the whole semester; sign-up schedule
- C. One seminar presentation (and 5-8 pages) from **Questioning Sociology**, and one respondent's questions (1 page); sign-up schedule
- D. One short chapter analysis from **Alone Together**, max 5 pages
- E. One book review essay of **Infinite Reality**, max. 5 pages
- F. One film documentary, 10 minutes max.
- G. THERE ARE NO TESTS, QUIZZES, OR EXAMS IN THIS COURSE

1. To begin, you must **select an AVATAR**. Please choose either Durkheim, Weber, or Marx as your own personal Avatar for the projects and assignments in this course.
2. Your **FIRST** assignment is to **describe C.W. Mills' 'sociological imagination' from the point-of-view of your chosen Avatar**. For example, what is Durkheim's sociological imagination? Max. 3 pages. Individual work. Paper copies only.
3. Each student will sign up for ONE **'daily current events' presentation**. Rules: (1) the analysis of the current event must be recent and must be Canadian; (2) the analysis must be from the POV of your chosen Avatar; (3) you must relate the analysis to one or any (if applicable) of the **3 sociological approaches**: I – subjective troubles; II- imagining the social; and, III – critical imaginings. [Details on these approaches are explained in the Introduction to **'Questioning Sociology'**]. Submit the media article with 1 page of notes (point form is ok), plus your ID information.

4. Students, with one partner, will sign up for a **SEMINAR** and as **RESPONDENTS**. Choose articles from the ‘**Questioning Sociology**’ book, from any of the 3 sociological approaches (I, II, or III). Correlating to the three sections of the book.

The **SEMINAR** presenters will critique and interpret the material in the selected article as individuals. This is *not* a group presentation – you will be evaluated individually for your presentation – even though you will have a partner. Note: This is not simply a summary of the article, but a critical explanation of it. You are encouraged to engage your seminar partner in a question-and-answer dialogue while discussing the article. You can use the questions at the end of the article to help organize your material. Each student will hand in their own summary of their discussion. 5-8 pages. Paper copies only.

The **RESPONDENTS** signed up to respond to the SEMINAR presenters must, of course read the selected article, and prepare **2 QUESTIONS** for the seminar presenters for discussion. Seminar presenters will have to respond to these questions. **These 2 questions MUST BE DIFFERENT from the existing questions at the end of each article.** Submit your questions typed on a sheet, along with your i.d. information. Paper copies only.

5. A group of 2 students will select **ONE CHAPTER** from either of the two sections of Turkle’s book ‘**Alone Together**’ and prepare an analysis of that chapter from the perspective of their Avatar. Choose between the section on robots or the section on internet social relations. For example, what would Durkheim’s take be on robot love? Weber’s take on FaceBook and intimacy? You will sign up for a very short oral presentation on your analysis (we want to hear what you think!), and will submit a short paper – *jointly written* – of your more detailed analysis of the issues. Max. 5 pages. Paper copies only.
6. Write a book review of **INFITE REALITY**, discussing some of the issues raised in the book about living in virtual reality and having virtual relationships and experiences, *from the point of view of your Avatar*. Check out Tepperman’s article in **Questioning Sociology (#23)** for some really useful tips and hints! Work individually *or* with a partner, your choice. Max. 5 pages. Paper copies only. *Open deadline!*
7. Last but not least, you are invited to make a short (max. 10 minutes) **DOCUMENTARY FILM** to illustrate, in a dramatic way, *any* issue or point from one (or several, if applicable) of the 3 sociological approaches: **I** – subjective troubles, **II** – imagining the social, and **III** – critical imaginings. Your film can be shot by any device that renders the film in good quality.

We have video cameras in the library that can be signed-out, if you so desire. Consider editing your film and that may determine your device. We can discuss the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ in class. YouTube might be your intended audience if your film has a message! It’s recommended to work with a partner on this. There will be time towards the end of the course to view these in class.

Assignments will include a title page/face sheet, simply stapled upper left corner. No folders, covers, binder, please. Use *any* format or style you wish, e.g. MLA, APA, etc.

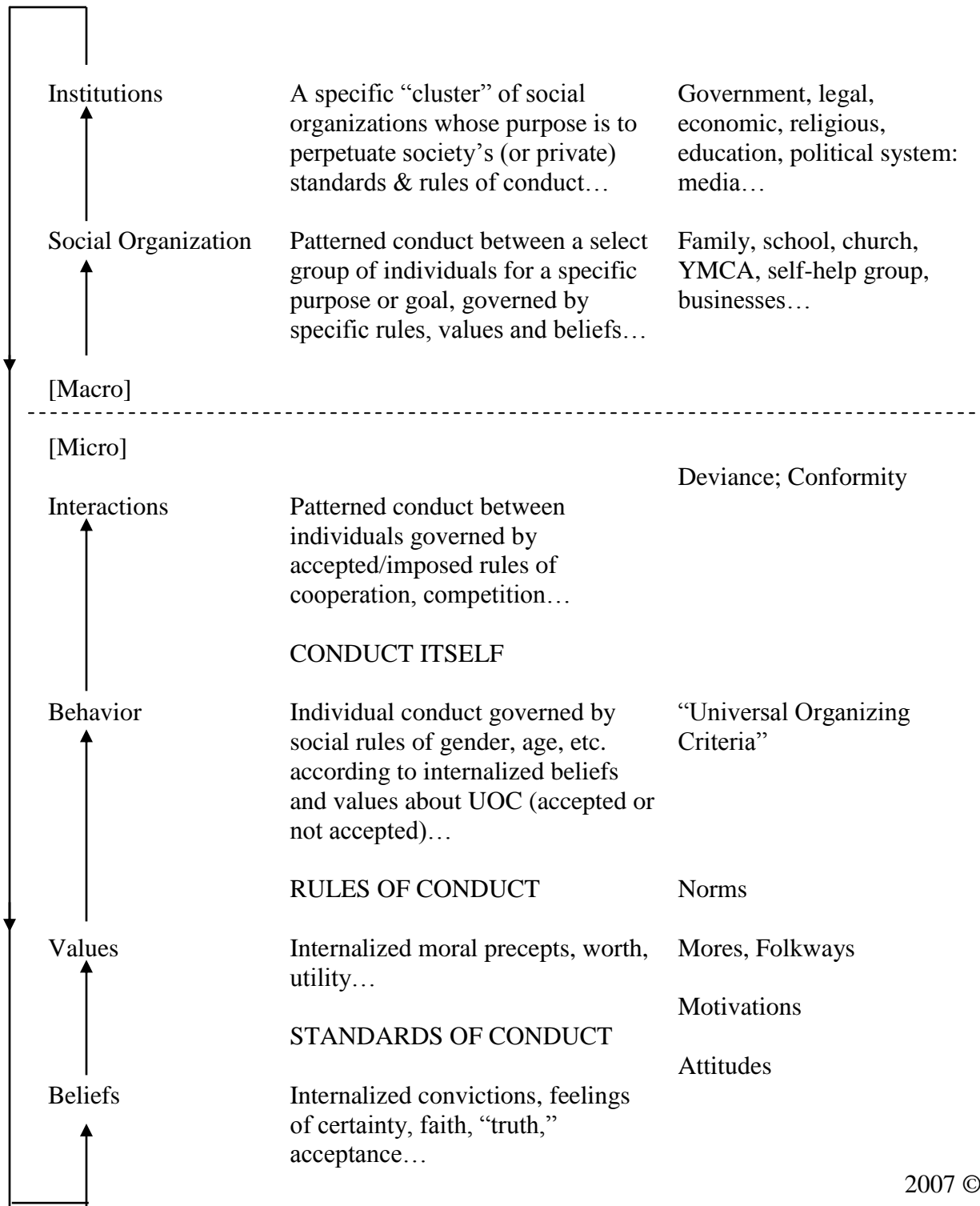
Deadlines as per Winter 2013 course outline.

Six Ways To Make This Course More Valuable:

- 1. Participate, to engage your learning**
- 2. Question, to enhance your learning**
- 3. Read, to expand your learning**
- 4. Reflect, to measure your learning**
- 5. Apply, to transfer your learning**
- 6. Innovate, to adapt your learning**

GENERAL SCHEME OF SOCIETY

“The Social System”



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