

Vesalius College
Course description

Course title: Introduction to Sociology

Course code: SOC 101E

Teacher responsible: Alison Woodward

Course description:

The course introduces the theory, fundamental concepts and approaches of sociology, using a cross-cultural approach and focusing on the major institutions of society. It examines the everyday problems students find in their world such as ethnic and gender conflict, issues in globalization and tactics for social change. The themes include the following:

- Societies and Global Society
- Why sociology? - History, problems and theoretical perspectives
- Social institutions: How do we get to be us? Family and schooling
- Not all equal? Ascriptive inequalities of gender, race, nation, age
- Not all equal? - Power and stratification on micro and global scale interactions
- Organisations and social inventions - Why fall for bureaucracy?
- What is globalisation? - Interactions of economy, polity and society
- Relating to the earth - Social institution of the Economy and the Capitalist solution
- The problem of order and power in the social institution of the polity
- Finding the meaning of life - The social institutions of belief and religion
- Last chance sociology - Prediction and peril Social action and alternatives for change

Course objectives:

On completion of this course students should:

- Know what sociology is and some of its major research achievements and their uses in understanding international affairs
- Be able to begin to apply a sociologically critical perspective to information in everyday life and. critically analyse empirical results relevant to global issues and policy practices
- Have mastered a basic sociological vocabulary and be familiar with the disadvantages and advantages of different research methods common to many social sciences
- Begin to know how to use sociological theory and methods to analyse and understand global events
- Have acquired elementary skills in accessing and analysing sociological reference material using electronic data banks and academic libraries
- Have had substantial college level reading, writing and presentation practice

Grade weighting scheme:

2 written papers (25 & 50 points)

2 Exams (25 and 35 points)

Panel work (15), in-class quizzes and exercises (35) and class interaction/attendance (15)

In total, the grade will be based on 200 points. *An extra credit paper can replace the grade on one of the in-class quizzes*

Course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:

Giddens, Anthony. *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press, Latest edition.
Readings for Sociology 101 made available to students