



Korea University International Summer Campus (KU ISC) 2022

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June 28, 2022 ~ August 4, 2022

ISC 141 – Introduction to Sociology

I . Instructor

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Home Institution	:	Cornell University
Class Time	:	8:40~10:20
Office	:	310 Woodang Hall
Office Hours	:	Noon-2pm

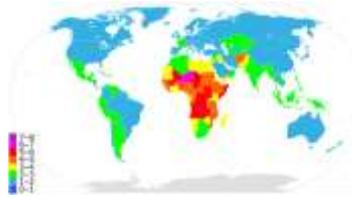
II. Textbook

Required Textbook	:	TextBook <i>Down to Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings</i> [14 th Edition] by James M Henslin
Recommended Additional Readings	:	

III. Course Description and Objectives



This course offers a general and practical introduction to sociology. It is designed for students at KU with no previous course in sociology and wishing to learn something about this field: What is sociology? How does it differ from other social sciences? How can we apply sociological knowledge to our work and lives in a global world? What career opportunities are opened to sociologists, and how can sociological knowledge help your professional and private success? With these goals in mind, the course covers 1) definitions and subdivisions of sociology; the differences between sociology and other social sciences; 2) the main functions and institutions of societies; 3) main theories in sociology: why do people do what they do, and why are societies organized the way they are? 4) key methods of sociological analysis.



Looking around the world, we can see many differences across societies/countries. These differences appear in matters that are **important** (poverty and inequality levels, birth rates, forms of government, laws, gender relations, family life, ..) as well some that **seem less important** (forms of entertainment, body language, dress codes, ..).

Furthermore, societies are not static or homogeneous. They change rapidly and they often comprise a diversity of sub-populations. Why are societies so different? Why are families and people within the same country often so different? Can we understand human behavior in ways that make it possible to change the world for the better?

Sociology helps answer these and many other questions about human behavior and social institutions. Broadly speaking, it is the *systematic study of human societies, institutions, and groups, and how these institutions shape people's lives*.

The broad discipline of sociology can be divided into subfields depending on level of analysis, method of analysis, or institution studied. Depending on level of analysis, one can distinguish micro versus macro-sociology. Microsociology takes individuals as the unit of analysis and seeks to understand the causes and consequences of personal outcomes regarding work, family, recreation, health, social mobility, well-being, education, friendships, or deviant behavior for instance. Macrosociology is more interested in broader institutions and social issues such as poverty levels, economic development, inequality, discrimination, crime, social conflicts, population change, etc...

Across all these subfields, sociologists are interested in the interactions between individuals and larger groups, i.e., how individuals function within large societies. Although other disciplines (e.g., anthropology, history, or economics) are also interested in human behavior and human societies, sociology stands out in its emphasis on individual-group interactions and its critical approach to understanding societies. Sociologists work in a variety of careers in teaching, research, management, community development, or policy for instance.

I. Organization

Because it studies institutions and problems we face on a daily basis (families, schools, religion, politics) sociology may at first seem familiar. Yet we soon realize that these institutions vary across countries or over time. We may also realize that our initial understandings of these institutions are incomplete or wrong (e.g., the police does not treat everyone the same; not everyone yearns to go to college). To gain a fuller understanding of the range, diversity and complexity of social institutions and human behavior, we begin with an overview of the basic functions that societies must fulfill in order to survive. These include (1) replacing the population, (2) meeting the basic needs of this population, (3) directing people to fill important jobs (4) transmitting the culture to new generations, (5) maintaining peace and order, (6) integrating individuals into the larger society, (7) changing and adapting to new circumstances, (8) maintaining equitable access to resources, (9) legitimizing inequality where it exists.



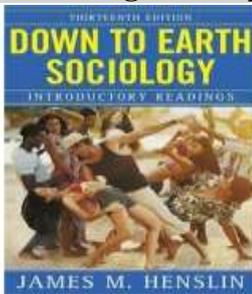
Moving beyond this macro-level study of institutions, we then turn our attention to individual behavior. *Why do some people smoke and others not? Why do some want to have many children and some none at all?* The list of questions is virtually infinite, and it includes behavior that might seem trivial (one's shirt color, hair style, and preference in music, e.g., why, five years ago, did PSY's *Gangnam Style* become so popular on a global scale?) to questions that are more serious

(people's views on the death penalty, marriage, career, parenting, voting, crime, investing and saving money...). Social science theories offer possible explanations for these differences in behavior. Throughout, we will compare theories from sociology versus other disciplines such as anthropology, biology, economics, or demography.



However, theories are only *possible* explanations. Therefore, we also discuss the methods that sociologists use to determine which explanations (theories) are closest to matching reality. In their research, sociologists collect and analyze information about social life to advance our understanding of how societies work. Their methods vary, from observing everyday life, to conducting large-scale surveys, conducting focus group discussions, analyzing secondary data, interviewing key informants, or even conducting experiments. We will examine the strengths and weaknesses of these methods, and how several of these methods have been used to answer questions about humans and societies.

II. Teaching Philosophy



This course is designed to foster a *practical* appreciation of how sociology can help you understand the social world and human behavior. We stay away from unnecessary jargon and figure worship. While I introduce central concepts, ideas, theories, and research approaches, the emphasis is on practical insights and illustrations. With this in mind, I organize some of the lectures around thought-provoking (and sometimes unsettling) readings from *Henslin's* volume (*Down to Earth Sociology*). The readings

then serve as a basis for reviewing key ideas/concepts within each section of the course. For the same reason, I will give notes about definitions of concepts so we can spend most of the class time on discussions, illustrations, and counter-arguments. Students will be encouraged to draw illustrations from their own experiences and from comparison of Korean versus other societies. One key element in applying the concepts, theories and methods learned in the course will be for students to devise a personal project in which they attempt to understand some of the crucial choices they have made in life so far, and possible implications of choices they are likely to make in the near future.

IV. Grading

Midterm Exam		30%
Final Exam	:	30%
Assignments	:	25%
Participation and attendance	:	15%

V. Class Outline

CHAPTER / REMARKS

June 28 (Tue)	Orientation day	
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June 29 (Wed)	What is Sociology?	Invitation to Sociology (PL Berger) TEXTBOOK pp 3-7
June 30 (Thu)	Sociology vs other Social Sciences	What is Sociology? Comparing Sociology and the other Social Sciences (JM Henslin) TEXTBOOK pp 8-19
July 1 (Fri)	Subdivisions in Sociology Relevance of Sociological Knowledge (to our personal& professional lives)	What is Sociology? Comparing Sociology and the other Social Sciences (JM Henslin) TEXTBOOK pp 8-19. [http://www.abacon.com/socsite/careers.html]
SECTION 2: TEN BIG IDEAS IN SOCIOLOGY		
July 4 (Mon)	Sociological Imagination	The Promise (CW Mills) TEXTBOOK pp 20-27
July 5 (Tue)	Social Construction of Reality	On Being Sane in Insane Places (DL Rosenhan) TEXTBOOK pp 322-334
July 6 (Wed)	Hidden functions of Institutions	The Uses of Poverty: The Poor Pay All (HJ Gans) TEXTBOOK pp 376-382
July 7 (Thu)	Conflict vs. Consensus Perspectives	The Saints and the Roughnecks (WJ Chambliss) TEXTBOOK pp299-314
July 11 (Mon)	The Influence of Social Structure	Nickel and Dimed (B Ehrenreich) TEXTBOOK pp 411-424
July 12 (Tue)	Conformity & Deviance	If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably (P Meyer) TEXTBOOK pp 269-276
July 13 (Wed)	The Looking Glass-Self	The Presentation of Self ...(E. Goffman) TEXTBOOK pp 135-146 The Importance of Being Beautiful (S. Katz) TEXTBOOK pp 341-348
July 14 (Thu)	Cultural Relativism/	Body Ritual Among the Nacirema (H. Miner) TEXTBOOK pp. 87-91
July 18 (Mon)	Human vs. Social vs. Cultural Capital	Moving Up from the Working Class (JM Morris and MD Grimes) TEXTBOOK pp 383-394
July 19 (Tue)	Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations	Social Change Among the Amish (J. Savells) TEXTBOOK pp 508-517
July 20 (Wed)	REVIEW	
July 21 (Thu)	MIDTERM	
SECTION 3: MACRO-SOCIOLOGY		
July 25 (Mon)	Recruit and Maintain Members (Demographic Reproduction)	Lecture notes
July 26 (Tue)	Transmit the Culture (Socialization)	Extreme Isolation (K. Davis) TEXTBOOK pp 151-160 & Learning to be Male (JM Henslin) TEXTBOOK pp 161-172 & Learning to be Female (D. Eder) TEXTBOOK pp 173-179
July 27 (Wed)	Maintain Conformity (Social control)	If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably (P Meyer) TEXTBOOK pp 269-276
July 28 (Thu)	Produce & distribute basic goods & services (Economic Production)	The Lives of Homeless Women (E. Liebow) TEXTBOOK pp 242-248
Aug 1 (Mon)	Allocate Jobs and Social Ranks (Social Stratification)	Readings #39-42
Aug 2 (Tue)	Manage Inequality	The US Upper Class (S Higley) TEXTBOOK pp 395-406
Aug 3 (Wed)	Final Exam	

Aug 4 (Thu)	Conclusion and review	
