

**Sociology 101: Introduction to Sociology<sup>1</sup>**  
San Diego City College Spring 2025  
Mondays/Wednesdays 11:10-12:35pm (CRN:80040)

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Office hours: Wednesday 10-11am, Thursday 10-11am,  
& by appointment in MS-540K

"To live consciously we have to engage in critical reflection about the world we live in and know most intimately." --bell hooks.

**Course Description:** Introduction to Sociology is a course designed to give students a sense of what the discipline of sociology is all about. Rather than being structured as a survey course, this course has been set up to explore the ways in which sociologists have examined the everyday lives of you, me, and others in our society. This course aims to stimulate and inspire your awareness of how we construct society together day in and day out. More specifically, we will look at the role social interaction, social structure, identity, power, social control and social change play in this construction of our everyday realities and understanding of the world.

Learning Objectives:

- ✓ To develop an understanding of sociological perspectives,
- ✓ To help students become aware of the crucial importance of social locations and statuses—particularly gender, race, class, and sexuality, in shaping who we are and what we believe,
- ✓ To encourage critical inquiry of personal experience, over-generalization, and simplistic understandings of human behavior, and
- ✓ To examine critical questions and issues facing our society today.

Required Texts:

- \* Various excerpts from the blog, <https://soc101.home.blog>. (blog)
- \* Loving Corrections by adrienne maree brown<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Student Learning Outcomes:

- ✓ To apply the sociological imagination and be able to differentiate between sociology and other social sciences.
- ✓ To analyze critical inquiry of personal experience, over-generalization, and simplistic understandings of human behavior through the application of various sociological theories.
- ✓ To propose critical questions and issues facing our society today, particularly the US role in a globalized world.
- ✓ To critically assess how the theoretical underpinnings of sociology explicitly challenge the dominant ideologies in US society and the role of sociology to produce social change.

<sup>2</sup> The book is available for purchase ALSO at Libelula, a local bookshop in Barrio Logan located at 950 South 26th St.. It is 10% off for students.

### Course Requirements:

- Participation 20 points (20%)
- Notes & Reflection 40 points (40%)
- Diorama & Me 30 points (30%)
- Final Reflective Essay 10 points (10%)

**Participation/Attendance (20 points):** Participation is the action of taking part in something. Taking part in a classroom is about engagement. Engagement takes many forms, as we will talk about the second day of class. But because the course material can be challenging I'd like to talk about what it means to be in a "safe enough" classroom space.

This classroom should be viewed as a "safe enough" space to explore a wide variety of ideas and perspectives. I encourage you to share your own, intellectually-driven ideas (read: embedded in class material) as you engage in debate and discussion, while avoiding personal attacks. Respect each others' spaces and realize that we may all live in the same society and are gathered in the same classroom, but each of our lenses of understanding may be different. Do not come to class unprepared! You will be expected to demonstrate how the issues you raise relate to the material for the class. This requires that you bring relevant books to class each day and use them to strengthen your argument. Finally, your individual thoughts about the subject matter are important to me. All of this comes from a place of love. Love, as bell hooks defines in your first reading, is a mix of trust, commitment, responsibility, care, respect and knowledge. When we practice from love, to the best of our abilities, "safe enough" shows up for all of us.

For those who have difficulty talking in a classroom setting, I am willing to negotiate some of your participation points based on one-on-one discussions with me throughout the semester.

Attendance for the entire class period is required for active participation in the course. Failure to be present at the beginning of the class will affect negatively your participation points. **If you fail to participate in the course, both through your presence in the classroom and turning in required assignments, you may be dropped from the class.**

For participation: Once a week during class time, you all will receive a participation assessment based on your active participation that day in class. Your completion may consider: turning in a reflection of the day's experiences at the end of class, completing art work designed to demonstrate knowledge of the day's topic, demonstrating your own curiosity through class discussion about the course material for the day...to name a few. These weekly assessments will be part of the basis of your final participation points for the class.

**A note about trigger warnings:** Please be aware that this course may address topics that can cause emotional discomfort. Beyond what is in the syllabus (and the assigned readings), I will not be providing any trigger warnings during the course. I trust that you care for yourself appropriately. You do not need to ask permission if for any reason

you need to leave the room during a particular topic. I am also available to debrief with you after class, during office hours, or by appointment should you wish to discuss any feelings or questions that arise during class or through the readings.

**Weekly notes & reflection (40%):** Many of the readings/videos for this course, though some times short, are quite dense. It would be hard to participate in discussions and understand discussion material without actively reading the assignments for each class. In order to help you do such active reading & viewing, you will be required to prepare a reflection with notes for all assigned material. It will be due at the beginning of every week on Mondays, unless noted otherwise (like this coming Wednesday 2/5).

In this reflection, you should include:

- ✓ Detailed notes (use paraphrasing, key quotes, ideas, etc...)
- ✓ A personal reflection of the material; consider: what do you think of the reading(s)/ videos (i.e. What might your curiosities be with the material? How does it connect to your life or society in general? How might you connect earlier readings/videos/class discussion to it?)

You will receive points for answering all required questions AND demonstrating a full read/viewing of all of the required readings/videos for each week.

**Diorama & me (30 points):** Towards the end of the semester, you all will complete a diorama and reflection paper for the final project. Further information will be discussed and posted on the blog later in the semester.

\*\* All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, use 12 pt. font, spell-checked and readable. \*\*

### **A note on class structure:**

#### **Beginning of class: Surrender to presence**

A bit about “Presence:” We all will do our best to be present when in the shared classroom space. “Presence” is now a pretty popularized Buddhist (yogi) term that one may feel has this “touchy-feely” sense to it and may see it as not relevant in a classroom setting. But it does have a lot of relevance. Presence means much more than just “showing up” physically. It means actively engaging in wherever you “show up” to. Active engagement takes many forms; some of which we will be discussing the second day of class. But for the moment, in terms of our classroom, it means that you are prepared, you actively listen, and compassionately participate in both one’s voice and one’s actions. If we are fully “present” (and this takes practice by the way; none of us is perfect at it), I do not need to ask you all not be on your phones or to not “shop” on your ipad while in class. This is OUR classroom; OUR community for the next 8 weeks. Let’s all practice presence as we are here. One way to initially practice presence is through our daily check-ins.

Check-ins: We will do a “check-in” with everyone. You are not required to “check in” if there is no need—you can just say “I pass today.” But you do need to be in class at the time of check-ins. Also, this is not part of your participation grade. The purpose of the

check-in is to try to be as present as possible for the day's class. During the check-in, you will be asked to share anything that may need to be said in order for you to be present that day. Examples of what someone might share will be provided in class. Take this as a moment of pause and connection with all of us who share this classroom space.

Once we are as present as we can be, we will begin with our sociological practice.

### Middle of class: Curiosity with grace

Sociological practice: Sociology can be quite an intense discipline to explore. We study quite literally “us.” In doing so, there can be internal struggles, discomforts, and at times complexity of ideas that require personal reflection. Given this, we all need to practice exploring class material—the readings, assignments, class discussion/activities with curiosity.

Curiosity is “a desire to know or learn.” For this class, it can show up in a range of ways:

- Curious about the subject matter in general—a thirst for knowledge
- Curious about our own reactions, feelings, how we relate to the class material
- Curious about our own resistances to such knowledge and/or our own gravitations towards sociological ways of knowing about our own social world

Curiosity is aided when it is supported by grace. As a noun, grace means “the quality or state of being considerate or thoughtful.” As a verb, grace means “to honor.” Sometimes when we learn new ways of thinking about our lives, especially areas of our lives that feel intimate & deeply personal, such learning can be rough on our sense of being and our sense of what we thought we knew about our social world. If we are curious with grace about our learning, we can honor all of the learning that supports us but also the learning that may come with some difficulty or discomfort. We can also be kind & considerate to ourselves during the tough moments. Curiosity with grace allows us to sit with practices in sociology that may represent struggle or discomfort for us. It reminds us that the best learning comes from the discomfort. Practicing grace reminds us that the discomfort is okay. In fact, it welcomes the discomfort with a warm hug.

Lastly, knowing that we will always end with “ease” helps.

### **End of class: Ease**

At the end of class, we will do a number of activities to close out the day and honor the work we did. The first will be rememberings.

Rememberings will begin with each of us jotting down one thing that we remember from that class day. It will be brief—no more than 1-2 sentences. Once we have all done this, we will share out loud our remembering with each other. We will follow the rememberings with some form of “release.”

Release may be a guided meditation, purposeful breathing to music, a comedy sketch to make us all laugh, maybe even a brief dance party....to name a few. The point will be to

end with ease; that is, to surround something unpleasant, painful or intense with joy, lightness and love—or maybe at times, just to further embrace the joy from a class.

### **Policy on late work**

It is expected that assignments will be completed on time. All required assignments will be collected at the beginning of the class period. Under very special circumstances, an assignment may be turned in late, but you need to talk with me about this before you do such. Please come talk with me if these circumstances arise. Do not assume that you may just turn it in.

Note that this policy does not apply to “Notes & Reflection.” If you are struggling with submitting these on time, please come talk with me so we can work on their timely submissions. :)

### **Plagiarism/Academic Honesty**

It is important that the work you do for the class be both your own and original. Failure to provide proper citations and attribute thoughts, words, or ideas to their original source constitutes plagiarism and makes you liable for sanctions from both the instructor and/or the Dean of Students. If you plagiarize or commit academic dishonesty once, you will fail the assignment. If you plagiarize or commit academic dishonesty a second time, you will fail the assignment and be reported to the Dean of Students. If you are unclear about what and how to cite properly or what might be appropriate use of AI, please meet with me or raise the issue in class.

### **Grading Scale**

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Students with Disabilities: Please contact one of us as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements concerning your disability at the beginning of the semester.

Student Responsibilities: Please refer to the “Student Rights and Responsibilities” section of the Student Handbook of College Catalogue (see Policy 3100 and Procedure 3100.2). Students may be dropped from the course as a result of consistently poor academic performance.

Conflict Resolution Procedure: If you have an unresolved conflict during the present class, you must first contact the course instructor in an attempt to resolve the problem. If the results are unsatisfactory, you should next contact the Department Co-Chair, Prof. Wendy Wiehl. If the results are still unsatisfactory, you should speak with our Dean.

### **A bit about being sick & class**

Please do not come to class if you are feeling unwell. We are a community and caring for each other's health and wellness is important for sustaining our community. This is more than just about COVID by the way. But COVID has taught, and continues to teach, us a lot about our own social responsibilities, not only to ourselves, but others. Given this, if you are feeling sick at all, PLEASE DO NOT COME TO CLASS—yes, this means even if you have just “a little sniffles.” If you are unsure if you have COVID, do a home test. Don't guess that it's nothing and risk getting others sick.

Despite public fatigue around COVID, the pandemic is not over, and we should still be extremely careful of others. If you get sick, let me know promptly and we'll work something out. If there is any work due that day, just email it to me. Let's all do our best to make the class engaging, warm, and inviting....and safe for us to share space with each other in person.

As a sidenote, I may request that students who visit me in my office please wear a mask. I will provide one, if you do not have one on you at that moment.

## Course Schedule & Outline

Note: The following schedule is TENTATIVE and subject to change. Changes will always be announced in class early enough to complete assignments. However, it is your responsibility to keep up with schedule changes.

### Week 1

The classroom

**READ:** bell hooks “Engaged pedagogy and love” (blog)

2/3—Introductions

2/5— **DUE:** Notes & Reflection on bell hooks “Engaged pedagogy and love”

### Week 2

What is Sociology?

**READ:** Schwalbe Ch.1 (blog) & Mills (blog)

2/10—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Schwalbe Ch. 1 & Mills

### Week 3

Practicing Sociology

**READ:** Schwalbe Chs. 2 & 3 (blog)

2/19—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Schwalbe Chs. 2 & 3

### Week 4

Socialization & Gender

**READ:** Goffman (blog), Butler (blog) & bell hooks “Understanding patriarchy” (blog)

2/24—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Goffman, Butler, & bell hooks

### Week 5

Gender & Identity

**READ/WATCH:** Katz (blog) & Mirande (blog), & Bamby Salcedo (blog)

3/3—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Katz, Mirande, & Salcedo

### Week 6

Culture & Race

**READ:** Becker (blog) & Hill Collins (blog), & Martinez (blog)

3/10—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Becker, Hill Collins & Martinez

### Week 7

Race & Identity

**READ:** DiAngelo (blog) & bell hooks “Naming what hurts” (blog)

3/17—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on DiAngelo & bell hooks

### Week 8

Capitalism

**READ:** Marx (blog) & Reich 1 (blog)

3/24—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Marx & Reich

## Spring break—NO CLASS 3/31-4/4

### Week 9

How oppression functions

**WATCH:** The documentary, 13th: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8>

**OR** Summer of Soul on Hulu.

### **NO CLASS on Monday 4/7**

4/9—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on chosen documentary

### Week 10

How oppression functions cont'd

**READ/WATCH:** Kimberle Crenshaw TED talk (blog), Foucault (blog) & Dena Simmons (blog)

4/14—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Crenshaw, Foucault, & Simmons

### Week 11

4/21—Diorama workshop

4/23—Diorama draft workshop; **DUE:** Completed draft

### Week 12

Diorama & me: Diorama art walk

4/28—**DUE:** Diorama & Analysis at beginning of class

### Week 13

Hope

**READ:** Emergent Strategy (blog) **AND** Loving Corrections pages 1-51

5/5—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Emergent Strategy excerpt & Loving Corrections

### Week 14

Social Change

**READ:** Loving Corrections pages 85-119; EXTRA CREDIT if you include pages 52-84

5/12—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Loving Corrections

### Week 15

Social Change cont'd

**READ:** Loving Corrections “Murmurations” pages 120-179

5/19—**DUE:** Notes & Reflection on Loving Corrections

### Week 16

Social change & me

5/26—no class

5/28—**DUE:** Reflective essay