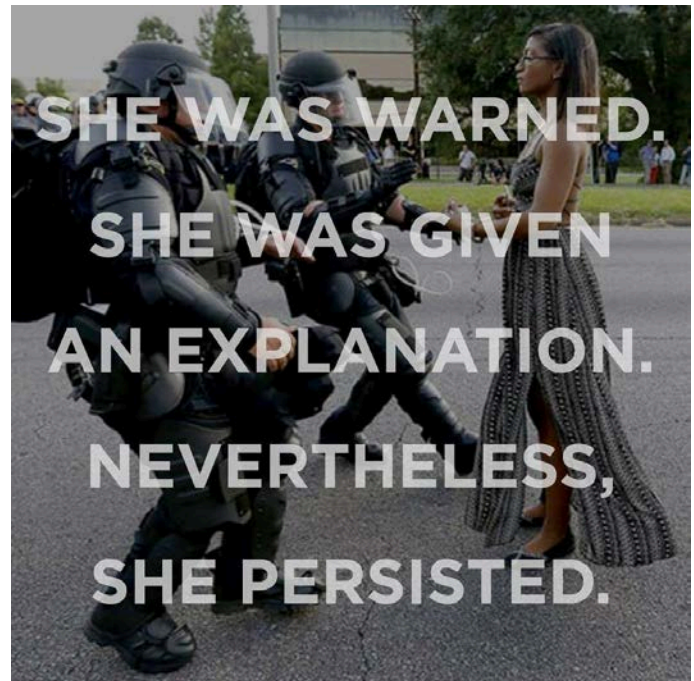


Southeastern Louisiana University  
DE Sociology  
Spring 2021

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Office hours:  
Online only this semester. Please feel  
free to email or to set up an  
appointment for a Google Meet.



*Original photo of Ieshia Evans by Jonathan Bachman*

#### **Mission Statement of the Sociology Program at Southeastern:**

To prepare students for full participation in the modern world, both by providing the sociological perspective for understanding how social, cultural, and physical environments affect how humans live, and by providing the sociological skills needed to contribute in an ever-changing global society.

#### **What's this class about?**

C. Wright Mills famously described sociology as the "intersection of biography and history." All of us are born into pre-existing cultures and social structures that are specific to the times and places where we live, and as we grow up we have to learn how to negotiate them successfully in order to become fully accepted members of our societies. The institutions in which we are embedded—family, religion, economics, politics, health care, media and technology, education, and the like—can be either harmful or helpful (or some of both) as we make decisions about how we want to live. Not all of us are born into the same "social locations," and differences among us such as race and ethnicity, sex and gender, social class, age, disability, etc. can lead to very different life chances and life outcomes depending on what resources we have available to us and how well we are able to make use of them.

Sociologists are interested in studying the many ways in which social life is *patterned*—how and why different groups of people with similar social locations tend to have similar cultural beliefs and life experiences, and what kinds of consequences those beliefs and experiences can lead to. We look at how and why there is so much inequality in our society, the ways in which belief systems are acquired and transmitted, and what makes us take some aspects of our society for granted but question the legitimacy of others. This kind of research requires taking a fresh look at our everyday, familiar ways of being and thinking in the world; we must carefully gather empirical evidence to help us learn more about the realities of the social world (and perhaps discard what is considered "common knowledge" in the process), and use that data to create theoretical explanations for what we have discovered.

This course is designed to introduce you to the “sociological perspective” and to help you understand the basics of what kinds of research sociologists do, what we have learned in the century and a half that the discipline has existed, and how that knowledge can be applied to “real life” situations.

### Course Objectives:

- ❖ Students will understand the concept of a “sociological perspective” and be able to apply this perspective to everyday situations.
- ❖ Students will develop a greater awareness of and ability to think critically about the role that cultural forces play in our personal lives and in the creation of larger social structures.
- ❖ Students will be able to make connections between things that happen in our personal lives (micro-level) and the larger social forces that impact our lives (macro-level).
- ❖ Students will sharpen their analytical tools for recognizing and understanding the causes and consequences of social inequalities in our society.

### Required Textbook and Reader:

*Experience Sociology: Make the Familiar New, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* by David Croteau and William Hoynes  
*Introductory Sociology Reader—Norton Custom Edition for Southeastern*

### Your GRADE for Southeastern will be calculated as follows:

Tests (4 @ 10% each)	40%
Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	<u>35%</u>
	100%

Final grade scale: 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B, etc.

Please note that this class is NOT graded on a “points” system—quizzes and tests are *weighted* differently, as indicated above. Final grades for the course ending in .5 or higher will be rounded up.

The TESTS AND EXAMS will consist of a combination of true/false, multiple choice, and matching questions. The questions will appear *in random order* as you take the tests. The final exam will be cumulative but will stress the second half of the semester. Dr. Youngman will give you study guides for the midterm and final exams.

Any decisions regarding MAKE-UP quizzes/exams or changes to/extensions for assignment due dates will be made by the high school teacher (facilitator) in accordance with the high school's relevant policies. Any quizzes, tests, or exams that are missed WITHOUT an excused absence as defined by the high school may be made up with a 20% late penalty at the high school teacher's discretion.

REMEMBER that you will receive TWO separate grades for this course—one from Dr. Youngman at Southeastern for college credit, and one from your high school teacher for high school credit. You may be given additional work by your high school teacher (homework, writing projects, reading quizzes, etc.) that will count towards your high school grade but not your grade at Southeastern.

Students are REQUIRED to check their SELU email at least once a week. Moodle passwords must be changed periodically and it is your responsibility to make sure that this is done as soon as you receive notification from Southeastern that this is necessary.

Students are welcome to email Dr. Youngman at any time with questions, etc. These emails MUST be sent via your SELU email addresses, not via any other personal or school email accounts you have.

Your FINAL GRADE in this class is in fact your final grade. It is NOT subject to negotiation after the fact and **you will NOT be given any opportunities to earn extra credit**. I will only make changes to your grade if you can clearly demonstrate that I have made a mistake in calculating the grade. You are expected to monitor your grades on Moodle as the semester progresses and to remain aware of how well (or not) you are doing in class at all times. *You do have the right to contest a grade if you feel that you have been treated unfairly according to the conditions laid out in this syllabus; contact the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice directly for more information.*

## Important Class Policies

1) YOU WILL BE HELD TO THE SELU HONOR CODE. ANY instances of cheating or plagiarism WILL result in the student being reported to the SELU administration for academic dishonesty. Such instances may result in a ZERO for the test or exam in question, a failing grade in the course, and/or other disciplinary action. Dr. Youngman will determine what measures need to be taken in such situations, in consultation with your high school teacher and the SELU administration. Please see [http://www.southeastern.edu/resources/policies/policy\\_detail/acad\\_integrity.html](http://www.southeastern.edu/resources/policies/policy_detail/acad_integrity.html) for details of Southeastern's policies and procedures regarding academic dishonesty.

2) IF YOU HAVE ANY CONDITIONS OR DISABILITIES that require special arrangements or assistance, please advise us of them *immediately* so that we can make sure you are properly accommodated throughout the semester. *If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Disability Services, Room 117, Mims Hall. No accommodations will be granted without documentation from the Office of Disability Services.* Please see <https://www.southeastern.edu/admin/ds/> for more information.

3) EMAIL IS THE BEST WAY TO CONTACT ME. Remember that you are required to use your SELU email account for communicating with faculty. I'm more than happy to answer questions, address concerns, etc. as they come up. (Do NOT wait to tell me if you have a problem. I will NOT be able to help you fix issues at the last minute.) I will not be having in-person office hours this semester due to the pandemic, but will always be available to talk online during regular business hours when I am not in the classroom. Feel free to email me anytime and/or to request a meeting via Google Meet.

4) IMPORTANT DISASTER INFORMATION:

- ❖ Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this class may be required to switch to an online-only format, with no face-to-face meetings with your high school teacher, on short notice at any point throughout the semester. Should this occur, we will continue the class remotely, and you will still be responsible for completing the coursework by the end of the semester. HOWEVER, if you or someone close to you is impacted by the virus, contact both your high school teacher AND Dr. Youngman as soon as possible, and we will work with you however we can.
- ❖ Likewise, IF WE HAVE AN ICE STORM, HURRICANE, or other regional or campus-wide emergency, we will endeavor to continue class on schedule and will make reasonable accommodations for anyone who is directly impacted. KEEP US INFORMED of your situation should this occur.
- ❖ Please see the Provost's page for further information about measures SLU is taking to deal with the pandemic at <https://www.southeastern.edu/admin/provost/fall.html>

## General Email Policies:

- 1) I am glad to answer questions or discuss anything related to class via email. Feel free to send me any items you run across online that you think may be of interest to me or to the class.
- 2) I will generally respond to emails within a few hours (often sooner if you mail when I'm already online) on weekday mornings and afternoons, but my response time may be longer on days when I am in the classroom a lot or when I have a lot of meetings, etc. I will usually answer emails received after school hours the following morning; emails received on weekends, breaks, or holidays may not be answered for a couple of days.
- 3) Please tell me which class you are in when you write so that I'll know what you've been studying and will be able to easily find your information in the appropriate Moodle gradebook.

## Class Schedule:

*Please note that this syllabus is not carved in stone; we may need to make changes as the semester progresses, particularly as unusual current events continue to unfold. **Additional readings and/or videos are posted on Moodle that are NOT listed here. It is YOUR responsibility to keep up with all class assignments, test dates, etc. and to be aware of any changes.***

## SECTION ONE

### Objectives:

- ❖ Recognize how key human characteristics make us different from other intelligent animals
- ❖ Understand the basics of the "sociological perspective" and how sociologists do research
- ❖ Know how to recognize key cognitive biases and how they can interfere with scientific analysis
- ❖ Be able to distinguish among empirically based facts, educated opinions, purposeful satire, and fake news

- ❖ Appreciate how and why human cultures are created and maintained

**Content:**

- ❖ Charon, "What Does It Mean to Be Human?" (reader)
- ❖ Animal behavior videos (Moodle)
- ❖ Chs 1 & 2 highlights: The sociological perspective and the importance of empirical evidence
- ❖ Mills, "The Promise" (reader)
- ❖ Empirical evidence, cognitive biases, and media bias ppt slides (Moodle)
- ❖ Fact, opinion, and satire articles (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 3, "Culture"
- ❖ Miner, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" (reader)
- ❖ Culture and race/ethnicity/religion videos (Moodle)

**TEST 1**

**SECTION TWO**

**Objectives:**

- ❖ Learn how and why humans create and maintain various levels of structured interactions
- ❖ Understand the importance of examining *power structures* in sociological analyses
- ❖ Recognize the many ways in which humans are socialized into various belief systems throughout our lifetimes

**Content:**

- ❖ Ch. 4, "Social Structure" **and** Ch. 7, "Interaction, Groups, and Organizations"
- ❖ Collective behavior and race/ethnicity/religion videos (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 5, "Power"
- ❖ Readings & videos re: privilege (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 6, "Socialization"
- ❖ Piaget, Mead, and Cooley videos
- ❖ Kane, "No Way My Boys Are Going To Be Like That!" (reader)

**TEST 2**

**SECTION THREE**

**Objectives:**

- ❖ Be able to recognize how various forms of contemporary media influence our economic choices AND our sense of self-worth, particular re: how we view and judge our bodies
- ❖ Understand how and why media ownership and control has shifted in recent decades and the social impacts of these changes
- ❖ Expand analysis of inequalities to encompass an understanding of how social classes are created and maintained both in the U.S. and elsewhere around the world
- ❖ Understand the concept of a "housing wage" and how housing inequalities in particular are related to social class and recent economic changes

**Content:**

- ❖ Ch. 8, "Deviance" and Ch.14, "Media"
- ❖ Body image issues articles and videos (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 9, "Class and Global Inequality"
- ❖ Video & chart: wealth inequality in America
- ❖ Ehrenreich, "Nickel and Dimed" (reader)
- ❖ Poverty & housing articles and videos (Moodle)

**REVIEW FOR MIDTERM & TAKE MIDTERM EXAM**

**SECTION FOUR**

**Objectives:**

- ❖ Understand the relationships between education and employment systems and structures, particularly in the U.S.
- ❖ Understand the connections between our political and economic systems as well as alternative structures that exist (or may someday exist) elsewhere
- ❖ Demonstrate familiarity with the terminology used to describe and analyze various political ideologies, and be able to use those terms correctly

**Content:**

- ❖ Ch. 13, "Education and Work"
- ❖ Mutari and Lakew, "Class Conflict" (reader)
- ❖ Kozol, "Savage Inequalities" (reader)
- ❖ Articles and videos re: school funding inequalities nationwide and Louisiana's recent higher education funding crisis
- ❖ Ch. 16, Politics and the Economy
- ❖ Clawson, "Money and Politics" (reader)
- ❖ "Understanding political ideologies" study guide (Moodle)
- ❖ Current events readings/videos (Moodle)

**TEST 3**

**SECTION FIVE**

**Objectives:**

- ❖ Understand how inequalities of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality intertwine with each other and with issues of social class
- ❖ Understand how and why both race/ethnicity and gender are socially constructed
- ❖ Be able to identify strategies for creating safer spaces for girls and women
- ❖ Recognize how various agents of socialization create and enforce gender roles AND our ideas about what constitutes a "normal" family

**Content:**

- ❖ Ch. 10, "Race and Ethnicity"
- ❖ Articles and videos re: the social construction of race, current immigration issues, and disproportionate racial impacts of the coronavirus (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 11, "Gender and Sexuality"
- ❖ "Zhu zhu pet" ads videos
- ❖ Boswell and Spade, "Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture" (Moodle)
- ❖ Articles and videos re: gender roles, violence, and sexual consent issues (Moodle)
- ❖ Ch. 12 pt. 1, Families
- ❖ Stephanie Coontz: On Marriage TED talk video (Moodle)
- ❖ Marriage equality and anti-miscegenation laws articles (Moodle)

## TEST 4

### SECTION SIX

#### Objectives:

- ❖ Understand the key provisions of "Obamacare," what issues the legislation was meant to ameliorate, and how those policies have been altered in recent years
- ❖ Recognize the concept of "environmental racism" and why it is such an issue in Louisiana
- ❖ Be able to identify and explain the many interlocking reasons why Louisiana's wetlands are disappearing, along with their causes, effects, and possible remedies

#### Content:

- ❖ Ch. 15, "Communities, the Environment, and Health"
- ❖ Universal health care and Obamacare readings and videos (Moodle)
- ❖ Environmental issues in Louisiana readings (Moodle)

**SELU SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POST-TEST (Does NOT count towards either grade)**

**REVIEW FOR FINAL & TAKE FINAL EXAM**