Introduction to Sociology  SOC 101-2

MWF 9:00-9:50        Hibbard 102

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(I use e-mail almost exclusively for UWEC business)

http://people.uwec.edu/ergerjs/
(Copies of syllabus, other useful information here)

NOTE: I do NOT use D2L for my classes.

Office: 618 Hibbard         phone: 836-5483
Office hours: MW 8-9, 12-1 and by appointment at other times.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Sociology, 16th ed.       John Macionis

NOTE: there are no suggested texts

Course Description:

“Many eyes see the truth, therefore be not alone.”—S. Tepper

“Language serves not only to express thought but to make possible thought which could not exist without it.”—B. Russell

“It is not the going out of port, but the coming in, that determines the success of a voyage.”—H. W. Beecher

“Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself.”—J. Dewey

This is a class about the world in which we live. In this class we will use various perspectives from Sociology to look at the world. These perspectives can be thought of as lenses or glasses. The lenses we wear can make us see things in different ways; amber lenses make the world look different than blue lenses. In a similar way the big three lenses of sociology, Structural Functionalism, Conflict, and Symbolic Interactionism make the world look very different when we look at it through them. That’s what we are going to do.

I do mean that is what we are going to DO. Most of the class will be active. When I say active I mean that you will discuss Sociological concepts and put forth your own ideas. We will construct theories about things in the world (e.g. homelessness, crime, religion, etc.) from within the various Sociological perspectives. I firmly believe that learning is best done by doing and that practice makes perfect. Much like any
physical task, mental tasks require much practice before any degree of proficiency is developed.

You will not sit for 50 minutes and take page after page of notes. I call on individual students to answer questions. I also expect students to be prepared for class, and that means reading the material ahead of time. I will rarely, if ever, discuss the textbook readings in class, but all of the materials in the readings as well as materials from lectures and discussions, even things said by other students, may be included in exams. Because of this I suggest you do not miss class.

Why do I do this? In a few years you will be out in the world working. You might be working for pay in an office, or working at a community organization as a volunteer. Regardless of where you work, you will not be able to sit silently. You will be expected to participate! You will be expected to speak not only when spoken to, but to put forth your ideas when you think they can help accomplish the task at hand. You might as well get used to this idea now, when the consequences are relatively mild. Consider it as a chance to be socialized into the professional world.

**Goals of the Sociology Major:**

Students who complete the sociology major will be able to:

1) Apply the sociological perspective in a way that contributes to your collective understanding of social reality, and is distinct from other perspectives on the social world;

2) Construct, evaluate, and communicate empirically based arguments about the social world;

3) Connect your sociological training with larger issues of social justice, sustainability, and cultural pluralism in a way that fosters active citizenship and civic engagement;

4) Promote equity, diversity, and inclusivity through the critical analysis of existing social structures and institutions which create and sustain systems of oppression and privilege;

5) Apply your sociological training to your own professional development and career aspirations.

While this is the first course in the Sociology Major, there are also goals for non-majors in terms of the goals of the University.
Course Objectives:

This course counts as an LE-K2 and LE-R1 course in the Liberal Education Curriculum. (It also counts as a GE-III in older catalogs). Specifically, these LE goals are measured in the following ways:

Knowledge Outcome 2 (K2): Social Sciences. Use knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to explain and evaluate human behavior and social institutions: exams, paper, group work.

Responsibility Outcome 1 (R1): Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity. Use critical and analytical skills to evaluate assumptions and challenge existing structures in ways that respect diversity and foster equity and inclusivity: group work, paper, exams.

Within the context of these overall goals, the specific goals for this course are as follows.

At the end of this course you will:

…know the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology, and be able to make arguments from each of these perspectives.
...know the major theories within each of those perspectives.
...have an awareness of the main sociological research methods.
...have knowledge of social problems and conditions in both America and the global community. These will include, but not be limited to topics such as crime, the family, inequality, education, government, socialization, and social movements.
...have some knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative information on the major aspects of society listed above.
...have the critical thinking skill to gather and analyze additional information on these and any other topics in society that might be of interest to you in the future.

Requirements:

Exams:

There will be three exams. They will be true-false, multiple choice, and short essay for a total of 100 points each. The final exam is cumulative in that you must be able to make an argument from each of the three sociological perspectives, but other than that it is the same as a the first two exams. Exams can only be made up if you contact me before the exam. All make up exams are essay.

Exam schedule (tentative, the dates may change as announced in class):

exam 1: Mar 4th (chapters 1-8 + structural functional materials from other chapters)
exam 2: Apr 15th (chapters 9-16 + conflict theory materials from other chapters)
A few things about the readings and lecture as they relate to exams. First, there is a lot of information to cover in the book for each exam. You need to read two chapters every week to be on schedule. This reading is separate from lecture; in other words the reading and the lecture do not match up topic for topic. Because of the length of the readings covered for each exam, if you put this weekly reading off you will find yourself with too much material to learn at one time. DO NOT PUT OFF READING THE BOOK EVERY WEEK.

Second, each exam requires you to find material from a theoretical perspective in the entire book. This does not mean you have to read the entire book for each exam. Most chapters have a section in them titled “Theoretical Analysis of ___________” which will have sub-sections on each of the perspectives. These subsections are what you need to look for when studying for the exam and are typically one page or less in length.

Third, review sessions will be held during the class period immediately preceding the exam. These exam sessions are a chance for you to clarify your notes and understanding of the readings by asking questions. Review sessions consist only of your questions and my answers to them. Exam questions are taken 50% from lecture and 50% from the book.

Fourth, taking notes in this class requires a different strategy from many courses. Sometimes I will lecture, and give you many points and definitions. Those you should write down. However, many students initially have a difficult time taking notes when class moves to discussion format. Often there will be a 30 minute discussion, and I will notice that many students write nothing down. That is a mistake. What I suggest you do is make sure to write down something, even if it is only a few words, every 3-4 minutes of class. Use these words to jog your memory about what happened during class. Then, at the end of class take a minute or two to expand on those brief notes. Try to find ten minutes as soon after class as possible and flesh these brief notes out as best you can.

Finally, remember when taking exams that this class emphasizes sociological thought, and therefore you should always keep in mind that the exam questions are to be answered from the perspective being covered (unless specifically told otherwise.) What this means is that on the first exam you should try to think like a Structural-Functionalist, on the second exam like a Conflict theorist, and on the third exam like a Symbolic Interactionist. If you do this you have a very good chance of answering a question correctly even if you cannot remember that specific material.
Paper:

Please note that due to changes in class size over time, there are limitations on what I can grade and return in terms of feedback on the paper process. However, I promise you that I will read your final paper very closely, and will give you feedback along the way during the process to the extent that you ask for it. Details follow.

You will be required to write a 10 page paper. This paper is worth 100 points. In addition, you will turn in a paper proposal (worth 10 points), a rough draft of your paper (worth 20 points), and a 2 page critique of two other rough drafts (worth 10 points each). This means that your paper and related work are worth a total of 150 points.

All writing assignments in this class should be typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt type, and with no larger than 1” margins. Do not leave blank lines between paragraphs. Papers should be stapled with a single staple in the upper left hand corner. Do NOT use plastic binders. For the rough and final drafts there should be a title page with the title, your name, and the course title on it. There should be a separate bibliography page at the end of the paper. The title page and the bibliography do not count in the 10 page required length. Critiques should identify both the person critiquing and the author of the paper.

You should assume an intelligent but uninformed reader for your paper, meaning the reader knows something about sociology but not about the specific topic of your paper. The best way to do this is to give the paper to a friend of yours and have them read it to see if it makes sense to them. If it does not make sense to someone who has not been in class, you should clarify your arguments.

Your task in this paper will be to look at a social problem or condition of your choice from each of the three Sociological perspectives discussed in class. While you can choose almost any topic, be aware that certain topics are very common. These include abortion, divorce, teen pregnancy, legalization of drugs, capital punishment, video games and violence, and social networking. Also, some common topics are difficult to discuss from a sociological perspective. Eating disorders is an example. Papers on eating disorders tend to slip into a psychological framework if the author is not very careful, and that will result in a reduction in the grade, since the task is to take a sociological perspective.

The final paper will consist of:

Introduction and Literature Review: 2-3 pages. This section introduces your topic and tells why it is important or interesting. It also provides research on facts, statistics, and qualitative data about your topic. This is the result of your research.

You will mostly use your sources in the first part of the paper, but you can use them in the theoretical sections as well, as it makes sense for you to do.
You should find at least 10 total sources for this paper, as of the final version. A general rule of thumb for college papers is one source per page, so 10 sources for a 10 page paper is a good target. This does not mean one and only one source per page, but in total. At least 5 of your sources must be from peer reviewed academic journals. You can usually find out if a journal is peer reviewed from the journal site itself, or Wikipedia’s entry on the journal. I do suggest you have a dictionary open, as well as Wiki, for background as you will likely be looking up some words along the way. I do.

Start searching using Google Scholar: [http://scholar.google.com/](http://scholar.google.com/) To start, try searching on Sociology other search terms. That will give you more relevant hits. Try your searches without “sociology” at the start too. If you do this search on a campus computer, or logged into the campus network, all results that have information to the right side should be available to you.

Also, you can often get results with “the sociology of topic”. There are articles on the sociology of sports, the sociology of cosplay, the sociology of work, and many other topics.

Second, you will likely want to do some searches using JSTOR:

[http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch?acc=on&wc=on](http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch?acc=on&wc=on)

You will want to scroll down, click on the “sociology” box, and then do your search. This will give you good results for this class. Again, do broader searches later, but start with the field relevant hits you turn up.

When searching, JSTOR start with a title word search. This will give you the most directly relevant hits. Then look at full text searches for the same search terms. Do not expect to find one source that provides everything you need, in fact you might find no sources directly on what you are interested in. For example, if you want to write about gender roles in Spiderman movies, I doubt you will find more than one or two articles about gender and Spiderman movies. But you can find lots of articles on gender and movies, gender, movies, super hero movies, comic books, etc. Weaving together a picture of gender in Spiderman movies from those sources would be the way to go.

You may consider using other search engines. The library website will search on a variety of databases (e.g. Academic Search Complete/EBSCOhost), but you might not find the full text to be available like on JSTOR.

When searching, you will want to use a variety of search terms, and try to add more as you find sources. Use the terms they use. So if you are interested in poverty and its effects on education, you will search for poverty and education. But also stratification, class, income. And educational attainment, educational aspirations, drop outs, or other terms. Cast a wide net, then narrow your sources. For example, if you want to use something by a conflict theorist, you might look on this site:
https://www.marxists.org/ If you want something from a symbolic interactionist perspective, you probably want to include “symbolic interactionism” in your search terms (as there is a journal by that name). If you want to find functionalist sources, look for articles with “functions” or “functional” in the title.

If this is the first time you are reading social science journals, you might feel overwhelmed. Consider this as a way to break down approaching reading such articles: [http://people.uwec.edu/ergerjs/articles.html](http://people.uwec.edu/ergerjs/articles.html) That will help. But know that if you read the abstract, intro, and conclusion you will get a lot of what they are saying, even if you can’t understand exactly what they are doing.

You may use web sources in addition to those print sources. Some web sites have good information on them and usually have a .gov or .edu domain (for example, the Department of Justice, [http://www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov), but many do not. Many web sites are pushing a political agenda, and so do not offer unbiased or even accurate information. *Wikipedia, while a good place to get started at times, is not acceptable as a college level source.* When in doubt about the quality of a web site, or any other source, e-mail me and I will let you know what I think.

Don’t forget about books in the library, or elsewhere in the UW system (many of those books are online, and you can get them easily through the library website). You might, depending on your topic, find these books I have ordered for the library over the years helpful: [http://people.uwec.edu/ergerjs/books.html](http://people.uwec.edu/ergerjs/books.html)

Use the citations in the articles as a template for your own citations, or you may use MLA or APA or ASA style as long as you are consistent.

If you choose to use journal articles you found online, please cite them as if they were print sources, then provide the “permanent link” or the “stable link” to the web source you used. This will look something like, “Smith, 2004. *Important Things About Society. American Journal of Sociology*, v100 no. 2. pp.112-140. Retrieved 11-1-04 from http://www.jstor.org/1232192387gjfkfdllg.”

Structural Functionalist theory and analysis of your topic: 2 pages

Conflict theory and analysis of your topic: 2 pages

Symbolic Interactionist theory and analysis of your topic: 2 pages

Each of these sections will use the theoretical perspectives as discussed in class and in the text and in your other sources to analyze and interpret the data you presented in your introduction. It is important that you relate the theoretical ideas in each of these sections to the research findings from your introduction.
Conclusion and Discussion: 1-2 pages. This is where you discuss what you have learned. Potential material includes the strength and weaknesses of each of the perspectives as they apply to your topic, solutions to social problems, or theoretical integration. Also, this is the section where your opinion can be included, although opinion statements should be backed up with evidence from the body of your paper. Your opinions should not appear elsewhere in the paper.

This paper project has several graded components that must be completed over the course of the semester. These include:

Paper Proposal: February 18th

This is a one page typed proposal of the topic you intend to cover. This should clearly explain what your topic is, why it is appropriate for a sociological analysis, and what steps you plan on taking in your research.

Turn in ONE copy of this assignment.

You will hear back from me on your topic ONLY if there is a problem with your topic. Assuming you turn this in on time, and follow instructions in the syllabus, you should get full credit.

Rough Draft: April 5th

This draft must be at least 5 full pages of text. This can be a mini-paper with short versions of each of the 5 sections, OR it can start at the beginning and stop after 5 pages. It would be to your advantage to write as much as possible on this draft as the more you write, the more feedback you will be able to receive. It should not surprise you that it is typical for students turning in 7-10 page rough drafts to receive very high final paper grades.

Turn in THREE copies of this assignment.

I do not grade rough drafts on quality, as I expect them to be rough. If you make a good faith effort and turn in 5 full pages in proper format, you can expect full points. I do not return these, but you can pick them up from my office after they are graded, and we can meet to discuss where to go next if you have many questions. Or you can e-mail me for feedback if you have one or two questions.

Critiques: April 29th

You will get two other student’s drafts on April 5th, and it is your task to write critiques of these papers (2 pages each, typed). Critiques will be graded on how well they help the author improve their paper. You should point out both things they do well and things that are weak, unclear, or need additional research to back them up.
Questions you might ask yourself when critiquing include but are not limited to: did I understand the topic, is the topic important to society, did I learn anything, is anything missing from the research or could the paper use more facts, were each of the three perspectives explained in general and were those general ideas applied to the topic, what in the paper made me say “wow!”, what in the paper made me say “huh?”, what in the paper did I not believe?

Turn in TWO copies of this assignment.

I do not return these, but will inform you of your score via e-mail up on request. If you write two full pages, and help the person make their paper better, you can expect full points.

Final Paper: May 10th

Turn in one copy of this assignment. E-mail one additional copy to me as a Microsoft Word document. I will also accept PDFs or Rich Text Format (.rtf) if you do not use Word. Or if you do for that matter.

Group assignments:

There will be group work in this class. Early in the semester you will be assigned to a group for the remainder of the semester. There will be 5-7 group assignments on random days in the semester, all of which will be done in class, and for which all group members present will receive the same grade. Group members absent will receive a failing grade for the day, and those lost points cannot be made up or recovered. Total of 50 points over the course of the semester come from these group assignments.

Attendance policy:

Daily attendance is taken starting the second week of classes. There is no specific penalty for missing class, however missing classes will lower your grade in two ways. First, you will miss material that will be on the exams. As 50% of the exams comes directly from lecture, missing a few classes can dramatically lower your grade. Second, missing class can mean missing a group assignment, which cannot be made up.

Grading policies:

93=A, 90=A-, 87=B+, 83=B, 80=B-, 77=C+, 73=C, 70=C-, 67=D+, 63=D, 60=D-, 59=F.

Extra Credit: there is none. Don’t ask.
Late assignments will receive a 10% deduction per day they are late. The first day begins at the end of the class period in which the assignment was due.

I consider any academic misconduct in this course as a serious offense, and I will pursue the strongest possible academic penalties for such behavior. The disciplinary procedures and penalties for academic misconduct are described in the UW-Eau Claire Student Services and Standards Handbook in the section titled, “Chapter UWS 14—Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures.”

I make use of www.plagiarism.org to check for plagiarism on papers, and I suggest you check that website out, especially the articles section which includes information on how to avoid plagiarizing. There is one way to be sure not to plagiarize, and that is to give credit to ideas in your paper that are not yours. Citing a source for a fact or argument is good scholarship, failing to cite the source is plagiarism.

Important dates for the Semester:

February 8  Last day to register for or add full-semester courses without instructor’s approval

February 15 Last day to drop full-semester Spring courses with no record. Last day to register for or add full-semester Spring courses without deans approval. Last day to change grade basis to/from Satisfactory- Unsatisfactory or Audit. After this date a Change of Registration form with proper signatures is required.

April 19  Last day to file withdrawal from the University with “W”s. Last day to withdraw from individual full-semester classes.

Accommodations for Learning Disabilities:

If you have a certified learning disability, please contact me early in the semester so we can discuss appropriate arrangements for testing and other class components.

Accommodations for non-native English speakers:

Students who are non-native speakers of English may request extended test-taking time (time and a half). To determine eligibility, English proficiency is evaluated by the Academic Skills Center (for U. S. permanent residents/citizens) or by the Department of Foreign Languages (for international students). Students approved for the accommodation are given a verification form to present to their course instructors. Students must provide verification during each semester at least one week before the test for which accommodation is needed. Verification is valid for one semester. The accommodation policy does not apply to other forms of evaluation (e.g., papers, projects,
group presentations) or to situations in which students must demonstrate clinical or similar skills.

**A final thought.**

I enjoy doing what I do, and I think that you will enjoy this class if you put forth some effort. Sometimes I will do and say some seemingly weird things. I assure you that when I do or say weird things in class it is for an educational purpose. (When I do or say weird things outside of class, that’s a different story).

For example, in this class I ask that between 8:50 and 8:59, if you are in the room, you spend your time talking with other people in the class. Not sitting silently, not surfing the web, not texting, but talking to actual living human beings in person. Why might I do that?

**GRADED COMPONENTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exam 1</td>
<td>100pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>exam 2</td>
<td>100pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>final exam</td>
<td>100pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>paper proposal</td>
<td>10pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>rough draft of paper</td>
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<td>critiques of drafts--2@10pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>final paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>group work</td>
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### Reading Schedule with Due Dates:

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<th>chapters read</th>
<th>assignment due</th>
<th>date due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>1&amp;2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>3&amp;4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>5&amp;6</td>
<td>paper proposal</td>
<td>18th</td>
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<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>7&amp;8</td>
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<td>exam 1</td>
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<td>Mar 11</td>
<td>9&amp;10</td>
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<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>11&amp;12</td>
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<td>Mar 25</td>
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<td>Apr 1</td>
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<td>15&amp;16</td>
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<td>exam 2</td>
<td>15th</td>
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<td>Apr 22</td>
<td>17&amp;18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>19&amp;20</td>
<td>critiques</td>
<td>29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>21&amp;22</td>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>May 10th</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td>23&amp;24</td>
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<td>May 20</td>
<td>finals week</td>
<td>final exam</td>
<td>Monday, May 20 10-11:50</td>
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<td>Week Starting (Monday)</td>
<td>Macionis Reading Topics</td>
<td>Lecture Topics</td>
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<td>Theory, methods</td>
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<td>Structural functionalism (SF), SF-crime</td>
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<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Socialization, social interaction</td>
<td>SF-religion, SF-education</td>
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<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Organizations, sexualities</td>
<td>SF-stratification, SF-gender</td>
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<td>Mar 4</td>
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<td>Conflict theory (C), C-crime</td>
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<td>Mar 11</td>
<td>Deviance, stratification</td>
<td>C-education, C-religion</td>
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<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>Stratification—USA and global</td>
<td>C-gender, C-stratification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>Gender, race and ethnicity</td>
<td>C-politics, C-race</td>
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<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>Aging, economy and work</td>
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<td>Apr 8</td>
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<td>C-heath, C-aging</td>
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<td>Apr 15</td>
<td>Politics, families</td>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism (SI), SI – Mead</td>
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<td>Apr 22</td>
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<td>SI-Goffman, SI-crime, SI-gender</td>
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<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>Religion, education</td>
<td>SI-Social Construction of Reality, SI-race</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Health, medicine, population</td>
<td>SI-health, SI-online interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Social movements, social change</td>
<td>SI-identities, social change, and changing identities</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
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