

Oxford High School Course Outline

Course Title: Introduction to Sociology

Department: Social Studies

Grades: 10-12

Level: Academic

Credits: .5

Course Description:

This Social Studies elective will provide an understanding of the sociological study of society, and explore sociological explanations of some key challenges that face modern society. Sociology focuses on the systematic understanding of social interaction, social organization, social institutions, and social change. Major themes of this course are the social construction of human civilization, interactions between individuals and society, both stable and unstable conditions in society, as well as the reasons for and effects of societal inequalities.

Required Instructional Material: Sociology and You, McGraw-Hill/Glencoe, 2008.

Enduring Understandings:

Course Specific Goals:

- Describe various career trajectories for sociologists at different degree levels; Where sociologists work and what they do
- Identify and correctly apply basic sociological concepts
- Demonstrate knowledge of the crucial social locations and statuses—such as social class, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, marital status, place of residence and educational attainment in determining our social situation
- Show the relevance and reality of structural factors in social life
- Describe, explain, and predict aspects of social problems
- Identify and offer explanations for social inequality
- Perform a sociological analysis of case studies or current events
- Critique the media as a perpetuator of societal institutions.
- Describe the elements of the scientific method in the social sciences
- Evaluate the methodological processes and limits of research (e.g., bias)
- Compare and contrast one's own context with those in other parts of the U.S. and the world
- Understand the role of human agency in social change

- Transform a topic of interest into a researchable, sociological question

Skills:

- Demonstrate tolerance of differences and a respect for self and others.
- Refine such academic skills as critical thinking, writing, and speaking.
- Understand that the manner in which societies respond to change can determine the degree to which they function successfully
- Understand that sociological forces play major roles in the development of human societies.
- Demonstrate an ability to write and speak effectively.
- Demonstrate an ability to read critically.
- Know common terms, specific facts, and basic concepts.
- Use technology as a tool for collection, organizing and presenting information
- Gather, synthesize, and evaluate information and communicate it in a variety of ways.
- Develop and apply problem-solving skills independently and in collaboration with others.
- Produce original and creative work
- Apply higher-order thinking skills to explore, develop, communicate and defend positions on thematic sociological questions.

Instructional Support Material:

Greene, Robert W. and Shepard, Jon M. Sociology and You. New York: McGraw-Hill/Glencoe,

2008.

Assorted Primary Sources, and sociological case studies

Interdisciplinary Sources

Suggested Instructional Strategies:

- Role plays
- Cooperative learning
- Group discussion
- Debates
- Presentations
- Writing
- Modeling

- Use of video/audio sources

Suggested Assessment Methods:

- Tests
- Role plays
- Group or individual projects
- Student participation
- Debates
- Presentations
- Quizzes
- Homework
- Persuasive writing
- Narrative writing
- Research
- Analytical writing
- Journal writing
- Student notebooks
- Portfolios

Scope and Sequence:

Unit 1: Introduction to Sociology / The Sociological Perspective

Content:

- A. Sociology as a scientific field
 1. Sociology as the study of social behavior
 2. Careers in Sociology
- B. The sociological perspective
 1. Basis of sociology
 2. Concentration on categories of people, not the individual (young men, married women, American teenagers, etc.)
 3. Three Sociological Perspectives: Structural/Functional Perspective, Conflict Perspective, Symbolic Interactionist Perspective
- C. Central sociological concepts
 1. social interaction
 2. social structure
 3. social change
 4. Importance of patterns
- D. The emergence of sociology
 1. The influence of the Enlightenment
 - a) Auguste Comte, Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber
 2. Classical sociological theory
 3. The emergence of American sociology
 - a) Jane Addams, W.E.B. Dubois
- E. Sociological theory
 1. Functionalism
 2. Conflict theory
 3. Symbolic interaction
 4. Exchange-rational choice

5. Feminist theory

Essential Questions:

- *What is the purpose of sociological study, and what characterizes it as*
- *How does sociology differ from the other Social Sciences?*
- *In what ways have prominent sociologists contributed to modern sociological theory?*
- *How are each of the three Sociological Perspectives utilized?*

Unit II: Sociological Research Methods

Content:

- A. Methods of Inquiry
 1. Survey research
 2. Interviews
 3. Participant observation
 4. Content analysis
 5. Comparative and historical research
- B. Causation in Science
 1. Qualitative and quantitative research
 2. Inductive/deductive reasoning
- C. The Research Process
 1. Scientific method
 2. Stages of research
 3. Probability and Statistical Analysis
- D. Research Ethics

Essential Questions:

- *How are different research methods used to answer sociological questions?*
- *Which research methods are most effective in sociological study?*
- *What is the nature of causation, and why do sociologists focus on multiple causations?*
- *How do sociologists approach the scientific method in their research?*
- *What is correlation, and how does it apply to the study of sociology?*
- *How does sociology's code of ethics play a role on the sociologists work?*

Unit III: Culture and Social Structures

Content:

- A. Culture and Society
 - a. Material and nonmaterial factors
- B. Culture and Heredity
 - a. Instincts, reflexes, biologically inherited drives
- C. Sociobiology
- D. Symbols, and Language
 - a. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (hypothesis of linguistic relativity)
- E. Societal Norms, and Values
 - a. Ideal and Real Culture
 - b. Mores and taboo

- F. Cultural Diversity, and Similarity
 - a. Subcultures, countercultures, ethnocentrism
 - b. Cultural universals, particulars

Essential Questions:

- *What are the different characteristics of human culture that sociologists must consider in their research?*
- *How do small groups (i.e. families) and large groups (i.e. countries) differ in regards to culture?*
- *What is the relationship between sociologists and sociobiology?*
- *Where do societal norms and value originate?*
- *What are the positive and negative effects of cultural diversity for the sociological perspective?*

Unit IV: Socialization

Content:

- A. The Social Construction of the Self
- B. Theories of Socialization
 - 1. Freud and the psychoanalytic perspective
 - 2. Social learning theory
 - 3. Cooley, Mead and symbolic interaction
- C. Agents of Socialization
- D. Socialization over the Life Course
 - 1. Rites of passage
 - 2. Adult socialization
 - 3. Conversion

Essential Questions:

- Who or what are the primary agents of socialization?
- What happens when infants receive very little human contact?
- When does socialization occur, and how does it differ at various stages of the life cycle?
- What role do “rites of passage” play in transitions through the life course?
- How do sociologists analyze the contents and context of socialization?
- How do various sociological perspectives illuminate socialization processes?
- What do sociologists mean by resocialization and desocialization?

V. Social Organization

Content:

- A. Building Blocks
 - 1. Roles and Statuses
 - a) Ascribed, and achieved status
 - 2. Institutions
 - 3. Social networks
- B. Social Differentiation, and Social Roles
 - 1. Size, scale, and differentiation

2. Differentiation and specialization
 3. Role performance and social interaction
 4. Problems of cooperation and coordination in complex social systems
 - a) Role conflict and role strain
- C. Human societies throughout history
1. hunting/gathering
 2. horticultural
 3. Pastoral
 4. Agricultural
 5. Industrial
 6. Postindustrial
- D. Social Groups and Formal Organization
1. Primary and Secondary Groups
 2. Reference Groups, In-Groups/Out-Groups, Social Networks
 3. Social Interactions
- E. Deviance and Social Control
1. Positive deviance, negative deviance
 2. internal social control, external social control
 3. Strain Theory

Essential Questions:

- *How does social organization allow human societies to survive, and flourish?*
- *What do sociologists mean by social structure?*
- *How do societal roles, either ascribed or achieved, dictate what rights and obligations people have?*
- *What is the difference between role conflict and role strain?*
- *How has the development of human society throughout history effected social organization?*
- *How do primary social groups and secondary social groups effect human development differently?*
- *What role does bureaucracy play in social development?*
- *What is the Iron Law of Oligarchy, and why is it a typical result of social organization?*
- *What are the costs and benefits of social deviance?*

Unit VI: Social Inequalities

Content:

- A. Social Class and Social Stratification
1. Defining and measuring social class
 2. The consequences of class inequality
 3. Models of social class
 4. The class structure of the United States
 5. Class consciousness
 6. Poverty and welfare
 7. Global stratification
- B. Race and Ethnicity
1. Definitions of race and ethnicity
 2. The social construction of race
 3. Prejudice, discrimination and institutional racism

4. Consequences of racial stratification
 5. Diverse group experiences
 6. Intersections of class and race
- C. Gender
1. Distinguish sex and gender; the social construction of gender
 2. Patterns of gender socialization
 3. Gender and sexual identity
 4. Gendered Institutions
 5. The women s movement
- D. Age
1. Social significance of aging
 2. Age stereotypes and age discrimination
 3. Ageing and the life course
 4. Age cohorts
 5. Age stratification
 6. The demography of aging

Essential Questions:

- *Why is there inequality, and what are the different dimensions of inequality?*
- *How are rewards and opportunities distributed differently amongst groups?*
- *How do sociologists define and measure social class, race and ethnicity, and gender (age, region, etc.)?*
- *How does the availability of resources and opportunities connect to larger patterns of power and privilege in a society?*
- *What specific inequalities exist in America, and what are their origins?*

Unit VII: Deviance and Conformity

Content:

- A. Sociological Definitions of Deviance
 1. Positive deviance
 2. Negative deviance
 3. Deviance and the Deviant
 4. Types of Youth Deviance
- B. Costs and Benefits of Deviance
 1. Functionalism
 2. Social Control
 3. Structural Strain
 4. Conflict Theory
 5. Labeling Theory
- C. Deviant Identities
 1. Deviant subcultures/communities
 2. Deviant careers
 3. Stigma
- D. Measuring Crime
 1. Crime
 2. Crime Control
3. Terrorism
 - E. Race, Class, Gender, and Crime
 - F. Criminal Justice System

1. Criminal Justice System
2. Courts
3. Law Enforcement
4. Prisons

Essential Questions:

- *What is the difference between sociological definitions of deviance, and biological and psychological definitions of deviance?*
- *What forces in society promote the breakdown of social order, and/or the breakdown of social control?*
- *Which actions are defined as threatening to the social order, or deviant, and who makes that determination?*
- *How do societal structures dictate a societies' punishment of crime?*
- *In what ways do elements of social control (courts, police, etc.) label those who are socially deviant, and how does this label effect the punishment?*

Unit VIII: Social Institutions

Content:

A. Family

1. Forms of kinship
2. Diversity in family forms
3. Marriage and divorce
4. Family violence
5. Families and social policy

B. Education

1. the rise of public education
2. Education and social mobility
3. Inequality and education
4. Education and social reform/social policy

C. Religion

1. Measuring religiosity
2. Influence of religion on social and political attitudes/behavior
3. Forms of religion
4. Diverse world religions
5. Religious organizations/institutions
6. Religion, secularization, and social change

D. Work/Economy

1. Influence of the Industrial revolution
2. Comparative economies
3. The occupational system
4. Work and de-industrialization
5. Worker alienation

E. Power, Politics, and Government

1. Power and authority
2. Theories of power
3. Political participation
4. Government: who rules?

5. Courts and the law
 6. Military
- F. Media and Culture
1. Media conglomerates
 2. Studies of media effects (violence, etc.)
 3. Popular culture
 4. "High" culture
- G. Health
1. Inequality and access to health care
 2. Structure of health care institutions
 3. Delivery of health care
 4. Death and Dying

Essential Questions:

- *How are social institutions organized?*
- *How is inequality reproduced, and/or challenged in institutions?*
- *How do social institutions change over time?*
- *How do social institutions vary across and within different cultures?*