



**SO201 CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**  
**Sociology Program**  
**College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

**Professor: Laurie Tumaneng**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The general intent of this course is the application of sociological principles to contemporary society. Students will gain an understanding of leading-edge research within the discipline worldwide. They will be encouraged to apply this understanding critically to their own social context and their place within it.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The academic discipline of sociology might best be described as a way to learn and to know more about one's own community and the social interactions among people that are at the heart of any community. So, in other words, to study sociology is to learn about ourselves, our own families, neighborhoods, schools, churches, sports teams, relationships, and the natural environment around us. To understand all of this we use the scientific method to study these aspects of the social world. Sociology provides a framework for understanding many of the social problems that society faces and how we might appreciate the root causes of these problems.

Sociology offers a distinctive and enlightening way of seeing and understanding the social world in which we live and which shapes our lives. Sociology looks beyond normal, taken-for-granted views of reality, to provide deeper, more illuminating and challenging understandings of social life. Through its particular analytical perspective, social theories, and research methods, sociology is a discipline that expands our awareness and analysis of the human social relationships, cultures, and institutions that profoundly shape both our lives and human history.

## **SOCIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM**

As we make our way through the 21st century, a common memory for all those who have lived through these years are the momentous changes wrought in society by a set of interrelated forces. These changes have not been leisurely nor partial, but have affected everyone on the planet amounting to a fundamental transformation of the world. Innovations in information and communication technologies have brought the most diverse peoples into greater interdependence. Massive movements of populations have contributed to both an awareness of difference and a growing recognition of a common human destiny. The advanced nations dominate the rest of the world with their institutions and technology and, in the process, trigger reactions that affect their own stability and their social structures and cultures. Various social and political movements have been shaped by these interactions. It is hence possible to speak of a world society and to see it as undergoing a series of major transitions. For Sociology at this point in history, a key priority is to transcend the parochialisms of the past to focus on those processes that are so rapidly transforming

the world.

From the diffusion of institutional forms to international migration, from the revolution in communications technologies to the challenges posed by earth's habitat, the time seems right to take a broad look at what has changed and what we have learned about it. Sociology at the University of Guam is dedicated to this pursuit. Its hope is that it will inspire and train students to evaluate the past and make daring prospectives on the direction in which these transitions will take our own society and indeed humankind into the future.

Sociology, the scientific study of the causes and consequences of human interaction, has much to offer Guam and the Micronesian region in general. It combines scientific and humanistic perspectives in the study of family patterns and relationships, social change, inter-group relations, social movements, community development, and such pressing social issues as ethnic, religious, political and gender relations. Sociology is most interested in the diversity of our world. Everywhere one looks one sees diversity of action, thought and custom. Everywhere one finds people behaving differently. And it is for this world that we prepare our students. The sociological problem is to make sense of this diversity, to not simply ask what and how but more importantly why.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

All readings and course material will be provided on moodle free of charge.

### COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the nature of the sociological perspective and the major theories of contemporary society
- Offer a critical and creative reading of the set texts and be able to select relevant material cited by the authors selectively in your examination answers
- Evaluate the sociological debates surrounding the processes of globalization and be able to compare and criticize them.

### FOUR BROAD THEMES COVERED IN THIS COURSE

**Social Institutions: family, religion, and the life course:** In this section, we explore a range of topics concerned with subjectivity and identity. The module will include topics such as the family, religion and ages and stages of life. The topics look at how the sociological studies of these areas have been re-invigorated in response to global changes.

**Global inequalities - class; gender; race and age:** This section investigates key theories of inequality in a global context. It offers the conceptual background of these research fields and presents specific cases as illustration. The major areas of inequality that are examined are social class, race, ethnicity, and gender.

**War, Conflict, Crime and Health in the global age:** Here the focus will be on the study of crime and deviance and on health and medicine in a global context, and cybercrime. Our focus will be on crime in global context and global health. We will explore the field of deviance studies and offer a backdrop of perspectives and discussion of the law and punishment. We will also examine global health and medicine.

**New forms of communication: media and the new forms of social life:** This final section of the course takes account of some of the profound changes that have been occurring in social life as a result of the rapid recent transformations in technology and communication. The first chapter looks at media in the global age, including the digital revolution and the emergence of the global media corporation. The final area if focus us on changes in social life with the emergence and spread of the Internet and the growing importance of social media.

### COURSE STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

- The course is divided into 4 Modules and at the end of each Module there is Reflection Paper (Each paper is worth 15% of your final grade = **60%**): At the conclusion of each Module you will write a reflection paper on your learning and insights from what is covered in the module. The **MIMUMUM WORD COUNT for each paper is 1200-1500 words.**
- Term Paper (**25%**): **This term paper should be NO LESS THAN 8 PAGES.** *This is a minimum and students are encouraged to go well beyond this MINIMUM.* I will pay special attention to grammar and overall presentation of the content of the paper –You will submit your paper on moodle in “Turnitin” which will indicate any areas of plagiarism so please be very careful while writing to make sure your writing is indeed your own work.
- Attendance and Participation = **15%**

### CLASS SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES

Module	Class Meetings	Due Date for Reflection
Introduction	August 19, 21, 26, 28	n/a
Module 1	September 4, 9, 11	September 13, 2024
Module 2	September 18, 25, October 2	October 4, 2024
Module 3	October 14, 16, 21, 28	October 30, 2024
Module 4	November 13, 18, 20	November 22, 2024
Reflection Paper	December 2	December 4, 2024

## MODULE SUMMARY REFLECTION PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

This course will be structured and organized into 4 Modules. Each Module will focus on a broad theme and will correspond to selected readings assigned for that Module. Students will write a reflection paper at the end of each Module that captures their learning and insights from the material covered in that Module. As the course advances students will want to start to synthesize their learning and connect and build on concepts from previous Modules. **The Minimum word count for your paper will range between 1200-1500.** Each of these reflection papers are **very important** and I will pay special attention to the content in relation to how well you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. I will also be looking at the level of **comprehension, writing, and organization.** Submission of assignments: Your module papers will be submitted on moodle using turnitin. You will have the opportunity to submit two drafts and see where you can improve using the wonderful tool of turnitin. Then you will submit the final paper for grading.

## TERM PAPER

**This TERM paper is worth 25%** of your course grade and is your opportunity to theorize any aspect of contemporary society, so long as you incorporate one of your course readings. The following will help you understand the assignment.

**The paper should be 8 pages long, double-spaced, 12-point-font, and in Cambria or Times New Roman.**

## GRADING RUBRIC FOR REFLECTION PAPERS

*Graded according to a 10-point scale.*

### **A - Substance**

The work directly addresses the assignment and meets or exceeds the requirements for length, sources, and topic. There is a strong main argument or thesis, supported by significant, concrete examples in an organized fashion. The writer's intention is clear; they know what they want to say and why they are saying it. The student has used sufficient high-quality sources to accomplish the aims of their Paper. The work exceeds the standards for undergraduate.

### **Mechanics**

The student uses correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and they exhibit an excellent command of academic prose. Sources are correctly cited (in any format style that you prefer).

### **B - Substance**

The work addresses the assignment and adequately meets the requirements for length, sources, and topic. The main argument is focused but not strong. Examples are not always significant. The writer's intentions are not consistently clear, and the paper is loosely organized. The work meets the standards for undergraduates.

### **Mechanics**

The work contains occasional but limited mechanical errors, and it shows an adequate command of academic prose. Sources are correctly cited (in any format style that you prefer).

### **C - Substance**

The work addresses the assignment but does not meet the minimum requirements for length, sources, or topic. The main argument is weak and not developed. Examples are listed but not organized, and they lack significance. The writer's intentions are not clear and they rely on generalities to fill space. The paper meets the minimum standard for undergraduate work.

#### **Mechanics**

The paper contains frequent mechanical errors, and sources are either absent or incorrectly cited.

### **D - Substance**

The paper does not address the assignment, and it does not meet the minimum requirements for length, sources, or topic. It lacks a thesis, merely containing a list of observations or unrelated evidence. The paper falls below the minimum standard for undergraduate work.

#### **Mechanics**

The paper contains frequent and consistently repeated mechanical errors.

**F** - The paper falls well below minimum standards for undergraduate, or it has plagiarized content.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **ADA Compliance**

Students requiring accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act must notify the Office of Student Affairs (who will then contact the instructor) regarding any necessary accommodations. You can also visit the [UOG ADA compliance office](#) for more information.

### **Incompletes**

The instructor is under no obligation to grant an incomplete. It is the responsibility of the student to request an incomplete and one may be given if:

- The student at the time of his/her request has a passing grade.
- The student can demonstrate extreme hardship, eg. long hospitalization, etc.
- The request for the incomplete is made at least two weeks prior to the beginning of finals week.

If the instructor agrees to give an incomplete the instructor will send the requirements and the deadline for completing the course to the student and copy it to the chair. Generally, Incompletes should be finished in the semester immediately following semester in which the incomplete was received. It is the responsibility of any student receiving an incomplete to plan a timetable with the instructor for the completion of the work no later than the first week of the semester in which the work is being completed. **IT IS THE POLICY OF THIS COURSE THAT TO CONSIDER AN INCOMPLETE REQUEST AT LEAST 80% OF THE COURSE ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED**

### **Academic Honesty**

If a student does not properly cite the creator/s of a work he/she has committed plagiarism and therefore violated UOG's Academic Dishonesty Policy, which could result in the failure of the

course or possible suspension/ dismissal from the university. Plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance to the Student Handbook. The UOG Student Handbook p. 49 defines plagiarism as: “The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” Please refer to your Student Handbook for more information as well as for the Code of Honor at UOG.

### **Instructor Contact**

Students can contact the professor via email and generally during the workweek, a response to a student inquiry within 24 hours is appropriate. Meetings can also be scheduled with the professor.

### **Course Evaluation**

In order to ensure quality in the courses offered, the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences will ask each student to submit an evaluation of each course taken. The evaluations will be requested toward the end of the semester.

### **ADA Policy and Commitment to Student Learning**

The University is committed to maintaining the campus community as a place of work and study for faculty, staff and students, free of all forms of discrimination and harassment. If you experience harassment or discrimination, then you should report it immediately to the EEO/ADA & Title IX Office, Institutional Compliance Officer (671) 735-2244 located in Dorm 1. For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

### **ADA Accommodation Services**

If you are a student with a disability who will require an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact the Disability Support Services office to discuss your specific accommodation needs confidentially. You will need to provide me with a Faculty Notification letter from the DSS counselor. If you are not registered, you should do so immediately at the Student Center, Rotunda office #6, ph/TTY: 735-2460, or uogdss@triton.uog.edu to coordinate your accommodation request.