

# CAMOSUN COLLEGE - COURSE OUTLINE

## INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

### SOCIOLOGY 100

F/01

**Instructor:** Dr. Peter Maidstone  
Office: Dunlop 220  
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**Required Text:** Brym, Robert. *New Society: Sociology for the 21st Century* (3rd ed.).  
Harcourt Canada, 2001.

**1. Calendar Description:**

An introduction to the basic principles and methods of sociology. Emphasis will be placed upon society as institutionalized human behaviour, the various factors which control it or alter it, and the effects upon the individual and the group. The major objective of the course is to develop a critical understanding of modern society.

**2. Intended Learning Outcomes:**

To introduce a sociological perspective, and to give the students an opportunity to become familiar with the basic concepts of sociology. The course will focus on the "classic" tradition in sociological thinking. There will be an emphasis upon examining this thought in terms of its influence upon the current major paradigms of sociology and its relevance to our lives and our society. The course is not intended as a survey of sociological theory, but rather utilizes theory as a means to introduce the student to a sociological perspective.

The intended learning outcomes of the course are twofold:

- (a) the students will be able to view and analyze social phenomena with greater insight, which will enable them to better understand themselves, their society, and the times in which they live; and
- (b) the course will also prepare the students for further study in the social sciences through their grasp of the historical roots and the contemporary directions of the discipline of sociology.

**3. Organization of the Course:**

Three hours per week will be spent in lecture sessions.

**4. Evaluation Procedures:**

i.	First exam	30%
ii.	Second exam	35%
iii.	Third exam	15%
iv.	First essay	10%
v.	Second essay	10%

*Letter Grades:*

The following percentage conversion to letter grade will be used:

A+ = 95 - 100%	B = 75 - 79%	D = 50 - 59%
A = 90 - 94%	B- = 70 - 74%	F = 0.0 - 49%
A- = 85 - 89%	C+ = 65 - 69%	
B+ = 80 - 85%	C = 60 - 64%	

*First Exam:*

The exam will be an "objective style" multiple-choice exam, but will attempt to test one's conceptual rather than factual knowledge. It will focus on material covered to date in the course, and will be written in class on October 15.

*Second Exam:*

The second exam will have the same format as the first. It will be based on material covered in the lectures and readings. It will be written in class on November 14.

*Third Exam:*

The third exam will retain the same format as the other exams. It will focus upon areas covered since the second exam. It will be written in class December 5.

*First Essay:*

Each student is responsible for completing a seven hundred and fifty word typewritten analysis of a current Canadian newspaper or magazine article. This assignment, which will be explained more fully in class, will be evaluated on a Pass-Fail basis. A copy of the article together with the analysis is due October 31.

*Second Essay:*

Each student is responsible for completing a seven hundred and fifty word typewritten analysis of one of the unassigned chapters of the textbook. This assignment, which will be explained more fully in class, will be evaluated on a Pass-Fail basis. A copy of the analysis is due November 28.

**5. Required Reading:**

- a. The student will be required to read selected chapters of the Brym text.
- b. In addition to the above readings, the student may be required to read selected articles on reserve in the library.

**6. Course Topic Areas:**a. **What is Sociology?**

Objective: to gain an understanding of the sociological perspective by examining the following topics:

- A definition of sociology
- The value of sociology
- The characteristics of science
- Sociology as a science
- How sociology differs from the other social sciences

b. **The Problem of Knowledge**

Objective: to develop an awareness of the problems sociology faces in differentiating itself from common sense knowledge and establishing itself as a science. Topics to be examined include:

- Is sociology a science? (an analysis of this debate)
- The value-free debate
- The Hawthorn effect
- Culture-free concepts
- Sociology and its involvement in the "real" world
- What is social reality?
- Is reality constructed?
- Subjectivity and science

c. **Research Methods**

Objective: the aim of this unit is to give the student an introduction to the major types of research designs and the steps involved in the research process.

Topics to be covered include:

- What is methodology?
- What are the different approaches to doing research? (quantitative vs. qualitative)
- Types of research designs, and the special uses of each.

d. **Models of Society**

Objective: to convey to the student an understanding of a number of current major paradigms in sociology, and the roots of these perspectives in the work of the "classical" theorists. The student will be given an insight into the battle between the functionalist and conflict paradigms, and the basis of this "battle" in the positivist and dialectical perspectives. The substantive topics to be explored in terms of the above aims are social stratification and social change.

e. **The Question of Human Nature**

Objective: the aim of this section is to make the student aware of the various conceptions of human nature which underpin the paradigms which have been examined. This unit will focus on the implications of each conception of human nature for the type of social organization that is possible, and how these implications are expressed in social theories.

f. **Introduction to Social Theory**

Objective: to introduce the student to sociological theory and to trace its roots to social theory. Topics to be covered include:

- A definition of theory.
- The differentiation between common sense, sociological, and social theory.
- The history of social theory.
- The relationship of the emergence of social theory to the development of sociology as a discipline.
- The relationship of theory to ideology.
- The approach and uses of the sociology of knowledge.

- g. **Auguste Comte and the Rise of Positivism**  
Objective: to introduce the student to the work of Comte in order to explain the rise and nature of the positivist paradigm. Topics to be examined include:
- The relationship of Comte's ideas to his times.
  - The basis of positive philosophy.
  - The positivist view of social order and social change.
- h. **Emile Durkheim**  
Objective: to trace the development of Durkheim's work out of Comte's, and to thereby give the student an insight into the positivist paradigm, and its influence on the social sciences. Topics to be examined include:
- Social facts and the development of a positivist methodology.
  - Durkheim's views on social order, the division of labour, and anomie.  
The relation of these perspectives to positivism.
- i. **Karl Marx**  
Objective: the aim of this unit is to impart to the student an understanding of the dialectical paradigm, and a materialist perspective. Marx's views of social class, social change, historical development, consciousness, and ideology will be examined with the intention of illustrating the contrast between a critical and a positivist interpretation of society.
- j. **Max Weber**  
Objective: Weber's work will be examined in order to illustrate the growth of an alternative theoretical perspective. Stress will be put on the psychological orientation developed by Weber, and the impact of this orientation on the development of social theory. The aim will be to make the student aware of the nature of Weber's voluntarist explanation of historical change, and the challenge that this view presented to the work of Marx.