

MONTE VISTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
SOSC 3422, Sociology
Course Syllabus

Course Description:

An elective social science course designed to develop cultural literacy by learning to make sense of everyday life especially through learning to read cultural scripts and trends. This class emphasizes the systematic study of people's interactions within the context of social structures from a decidedly Christian and Biblical perspective. As an introductory course, we will study the foundational sociological paradigms and their relationship to social interaction and structures. In so doing, we will not only learn how these influence our behavior but will to carefully observe and study in our local and global settings. An emphasis will be placed upon problem solving; problems, directly applicable to what has been learned, will be presented that are both hypothetical and real to our experience. This will empower us to be proto-Sociologists in our research and better equipped to love our neighbor as ourselves both in our communities and in the world.

Curricular Mapping:

This course will draw upon the educational experience and social science classes the students have taken to date - both in accrued knowledge and skills. After completing this course, students will be prepared for further sociological or social science study in college.

Course Objectives:

- Appreciate and enjoy sociology.
- Be challenged intellectually, socially, and spiritually.
- Understand and apply sociological principles and paradigms to shape our thinking and action.
- Identify and evaluate our socialization in light of the structures of society that has shaped us.
- Learn and apply the principles of sociological research.
- Explain and defend one's personal lens of evaluating society and societal practices.
- Consistently be able to artfully articulate (through written, visual, and oral communication) thoughts, opinions, reflections, and responses to what is studied, researched, encountered, and developed.
- Interact with others outside of our comfort zones.
- Enjoy the fruit of the iterative process and learn to be dissatisfied with mediocrity.
- Practice being hard on ideas and soft on people.
- Learn that being made in the image of God impacts how we see ourselves and one another.
- Learn how to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Text:

Course material will be provided by your instructor and available in the classroom.

Prerequisites:

None

Course Outline:

Most of the following sections will be covered but not all. We will selectively choose some units over others based on time constraints, current events, and class interest.

- I. The Foundations of Sociology
 - a. The Sociological Perspective
The Sociology Perspective, The Importance of a Global Perspective, The Origins of Sociology, Sociology Theory, Cultural Scripts and Plausibility Structures
 - b. Sociological Investigation
Basics of Sociological Investigation, Three Ways to Do Sociology, Research Orientations and Theory, Gender and Research, Research Ethics, Methods of Sociology Research, The Interplay of Theory and Method, Putting It All Together: Ten Steps in Sociological Investigation
- II. The Foundations of Society
 - a. Culture
Definition of Culture, The Elements of Culture, Cultural Diversity: Many Ways of Life in One World, Theoretical Analysis of Culture, Culture and Human Freedom
 - b. Society
Gerhard Lenski: Society and Technology, Karl Marx: Society and Conflict, Max Weber: The Rationalization of Society, Emile Durkheim: Society and Function, Critical Review: Four Visions of Society
 - c. Socialization
Social Experience: The Key to Our Humanity, Understanding Socialization, Agents of Socialization, Socialization and the Life Course, Resocialization: Total Institutions
 - d. Social Interaction in Everyday Life
Social Structure: A Guide to Everyday Living, Status, Role, The Social Construction of Reality, Dramaturgical Analysis: The "Presentation of Self", Interaction in Everyday Life: Three Applications
 - e. Groups and Organizations
Social Groups, Formal Organizations, The Evolution of Formal Organizations, The Future of Organizations: Opposing Trends
 - f. Deviance
Definition of Deviance, The Functions of Deviance: Structural-Functional Analysis, Labeling Deviance: Symbolic-Interaction Analysis, Deviance and Inequality: Social-Conflict Analysis, Deviance, Race, and Gender, Crime, The U.S. Criminal Justice System
 - g. Sexuality and Society
Understanding Sexuality, Sexual Attitudes in the United States, Sexual Orientation, Sexual Issues and Controversies, Theoretical Analysis of Sexuality
- III. Social Inequality
 - a. Social Stratification

Definition of Social Stratification, Caste and Class Systems, The Functions of Social Stratification, Stratification and Conflict, Stratification and Interaction, Stratification and Technology: A Global Perspective, Social Stratification: Facts and Values

b. **Race and Ethnicity**

The Social Meaning of Race and Ethnicity, Prejudice and Stereotypes, Discrimination, Majority and Minority: Patterns of Interaction, Race and Ethnicity in the United States

c. **Aging and the Elderly**

The Graying of the United States, Growing Old: Biology and Culture, Transitions and Challenges of Aging, Theoretical Analysis of Aging, Death and Dying

IV. **Social Institutions**

a. **The Economy and Work**

The Economy: Historical Overview, Economic Systems: Paths to Justice, Work in the Postindustrial U.S. Economy, Corporations

b. **Politics and Government**

Power and Authority, Politics in Global perspective, Politics in the United States, Theoretical Analysis of Power in Society, Power beyond the Rules, War and Peace, Pursuing Peace

c. **Families**

Families: Basic Concepts, Families: Global Variations, Theoretical Analysis of Families, Stages of Family Life, U.S. Families: Class, Race, and Gender, Transitions and Problems in Family Life, Alternative Family Forms, New Reproductive Technologies and Families

d. **Religion**

Religion: Basic Concepts, Theoretical Analysis of Religion, Religion and Social Change, Types of Religious Organizations, Religion in History, World Religions, Religion in the United States, Religion in a Changing Society

e. **Education**

Education: A Global Survey, The Functions of Schooling, Schooling and Social interaction, Schooling and Social Inequality, Problems in the Schools, Current Issues in U.S. Education

f. **Health and Medicine**

Definition of Health, Health: A Global Survey, Health in the United States, The Medical Establishment, Theoretical Analysis of Health and Medicine

V. **Social Change**

a. **Population, Urbanization, and Environment**

Demography: The Study of Population, History and Theory of Population Growth, Urbanization: The Growth of Cities, Urbanism as a Way of Life, Urbanization in Poor Nations, Environment and Society

b. **Collective Behavior and Social Movements**

Studying Collective Behavior, Localized Collectivities: Crowds, Dispersed Collectivities: Mass Behavior, Social Movements

c. **Social Change: Traditional, Modern, and Postmodern Societies**

Definition of Social Change, Causes of social Change, Modernity, Theoretical Analysis of Modernity, Postmodernity, Modernization and Our Global Future

Grading:

In this course, we will learn about cultural scripts that shape our thinking and actions. One of the primary scripts that drives our educational thinking is that good grades are the goal. My desire is to

flip the script in terms of this course; I want you to focus on your learning instead of your grade(s). To facilitate this, I will refrain from giving a grade in this class as long and as much as I can. Unfortunately, I will need to give you a grade at midquarter, at the end of each quarter, and for the semester, but we are going to try to put this out of our minds as much as we can. For the most part, during any given quarter, you will not receive any grades, but you will receive feedback. Instead of numbers and letters, you will receive written, narrative feedback on your work that will indicate its alignment to standards, relative strength, and how it can be improved. At the end of each quarter/semester, you will have an opportunity to reflect and conduct a self-assessment on your work to date. We will then meet together to determine the grade that is the most accurate of representation of your work and learning. Though you will not necessarily know your grade during the year, you (and your parents/guardians) will be able to know how you are doing in your learning by following your Personal Reflection Form (see below for an example).

When you look at the following table, it is unlikely that it will appear to be like any course you have taken to date. Instead of multiple gradebook categories, it has only one. This means all the learning you do during the quarter will be aimed at, well, learning - and not a grade. When you look at the semester weighting, you might be tempted to lose your lunch. A Demonstration of Learning instead of a final - and it is worth 90% of your grade?!? What is a “Demonstration of Learning” anyway? My hope is the following resources will answer these questions more thoroughly. However, the short answer is that a Demonstration of Learning will allow you to exhibit your portfolio of work via an oral explanation showing how you have met and/or exceeded the sociology standards, skills, and objectives.

Helpful resources to understand the grading policy:

- [Letter to Parents/Guardians of Sociology Students from Mr. Davis](#)
- [Sociology Objectives, Skills and Standards](#)
- [Example of Personal Reflection Form](#)
- [Demonstration of Learning Reflection Form](#)
- [Demonstration of Learning example](#) (for another course and another teacher)

<u>Grade Book Category</u>		<u>Semester Weighted Grading Configuration</u>	
Learning	100%	Quarter	5%
		Quarter	5%
		Demonstration of Learning	90%

You will be able to demonstrate your learning in this course through the following fairly traditional categories:

- In Class Work & Homework

- o Most work for this course will be done in class. In class work and homework can include reading, blogging, forums, short written assignments, and, of course, studying.
- o Even as a course without grades, all work needs to be handed in on time. Late work inhibits your ability to keep up with class.
- o Homework expectations per night: There will not be regular homework in this course. If you have homework it will be no more than twenty minutes. However, if you do not manage your time in class well, your class work may become homework which may exceed twenty minutes. Since the nature of the class is outside our heads and in relationship to other people, there will necessarily be work done outside the classroom. Most of this will come in the form of projects and community engagement rather than regular homework.
- Quizzes
 - o Quizzes, which are cumulative, will require you to be familiar with the material we have studied. Quizzes will be primarily short answer or oral questions and will allow you to demonstrate not just content but the application of content. Please note—if you know about a quiz before an absence you will be required to take the quiz directly upon returning to school.
- Projects/Research Papers/Essays/Oral Reports
 - o Projects will provide opportunities for you to go in depth with a particular topic, person or event that we are studying. Often they will have a research component and provide opportunities to express yourself creatively and artistically. Many projects will provide the opportunity to work cooperatively in groups with your classmates. Also, many projects will require you to be active (whether interviewing or observing) with your friends, community, and people you encounter. Writing assignments will allow you to do some research and express yourself through prose. Oral reports will require you present something that you have studied and researched in front of the class and/or members of the community. On all work, please note that plagiarism will not be tolerated. This demonstrates a lack of learning rather than an expression of learning. The guidelines in the student handbook will be followed.
- Participation
 - o The backbone of this class is your participation. You will be given ample opportunity to discuss and wrestle with societal issues. The more you are able to actively participate in class, the more you and your fellow students will derive benefit. Not all participation is found in class discussion; other important functions will be through forums, blogging and observations.

High School Standard Grading Policy:

Please refer to the policy and procedures posted online in our Parent-Student Handbook.

Class Policies:

The following policies are non-negotiable. Please see the teacher if you have any concerns with your ability to follow these policies:

1. Love God. Love your neighbor as yourself. These establish the foundation for all our interpersonal interactions. Though I will not attempt to mandate the first command, I want to invite you into a space where we all actively love one another.
2. Be hard on ideas, but soft on people. In this class, you will be expected to engage with ideas - and be critical in your judgments about them. Therefore, you should engage ideas well but always tempered with grace for the person(s) who represent those ideas.
3. Attendance: Students are expected to be in class daily. If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to get the class work and homework missed. If you have questions, seek out answers.
4. Tardiness: When the bell rings, be in your seat and ready for work.
5. Enjoy water (in a bottle) in class but not food or other drinks.
6. Bathroom: Students should plan on using the bathroom before or after class.
7. Your iPad will need to be present in class every day and should be charged sufficiently to make it through class. The iPad can be used for note taking and will be often utilized for various in class work.

School Policies and Expected Student Learning Results (ESLRs):

Students are subject to all academic policies of the school as found in the Parent-Student Handbook. Furthermore, it is each student's responsibility to read and follow all academic policies of Monte Vista Christian School. In addition to addressing each ESLR every year, we target a specific ESLR each academic year for particular focus.

Tips for the Students:

1. Remember: Love God and love your neighbor as yourself.
2. Focus on your learning. Pursue knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.
3. Be proactive in improving your skills, work hard, come to class prepared, and seek help early.
4. Participate.
5. Ask questions.