

July 19, 2013

1. College: **Liberal & Applied Arts**
2. Department: **Social & Cultural Analysis**
3. Course status: **existing; does not require modification**
4. Course prefix and number: **SOC 137**
5. Course title: **Introduction to Sociology**
6. Course catalog description: **General examination of culture, socialization, roles, values, social inequalities, population, social institutions and social change**
7. Number of semester credit hours: **3**
8. Estimated total course enrollment per year: **550**
9. Course prerequisites and/or required qualifications for enrolling in the class: **none**
10. Course **is/will be** available online.
11. Foundational Component Area: **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
12. Explain why this course fits into this foundation component area: **This course meets the Coordinating Board's description of social and behavioral science courses because it focuses on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human by instructing the student in a variety of research elements such as research design, experimentation, survey techniques, sampling and measurement. It shows how well designed social research has provided insight into what humans do in groups and why they do it. The course involves the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals (by discussing, for example, symbolic interaction and other micro-sociological approaches), groups (such as peer groups and work groups), institutions (such as the family and religion), and events (such as political and industrial revolutions), examining their impact on the individual (via, for example, socialization), society (via, for example, functionalism), and culture (via, for example, cultural diffusion).**
13. Core Objectives
 - Critical Thinking - Students learn critical thinking by acquiring skills in inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information. Students are asked to question their taken-for-granted world of social customs and to analyze differences in social structure and culture across historical periods and national borders. Because sociology incorporates multiple theoretical perspectives (for example, functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism), students must evaluate the applicability of each perspective to particular social phenomena such as increasing economic inequality or inter-racial relations. Skills are taught through lecture and readings. They are developed through question and answer and through discussion; and they are demonstrated through examination and through a "Social Policy" assignment which requires students to evaluate contrasting proposed solutions to a social problem, evaluate the research evidence supporting each proposal, and formulate and justify their own position on the issue.
 - Communication Skills - Instructors use class time to explain the importance of communication skills and the social science norms for written communication. Instructors will also provide instruction on the correct and incorrect construction and interpretation of visual displays of data such as charts and graphs. Students

will develop and demonstrate their writing skills by completing a “Social Policy” paper in which they evaluate contrasting proposed solutions to a social problem, consider the research evidence supporting each proposal, and formulate and justify their own position on the issue. This paper will require students to draw correct inferences from both visual and written information. In addition to the paper, students will also engage in oral communication through class discussion (orally in face-to-face courses, electronically in online courses) but only after instructors have explained the guidelines for effective group discussion.

- Empirical and Quantitative Skills - Instructor will use class time to teach basic empirical and quantitative skills such as research design, data gathering, sampling, measures of central tendency, dispersion, correlation, and comprehension of statistical tables and graphs. It will be pointed out how these skills lead to more informed conclusions. Class readings will supplement and illustrate class instruction. The essential empirical and quantitative skills will be reviewed in discussing what students should demonstrate in doing class assignments. The “Social Policy” paper for the course will require students to evaluate the adequacy of published articles in terms of research design, sampling, measurement, and analysis. The paper will require students to correctly interpret measures of central tendency, dispersion, and correlation.
- Social Responsibility - A student’s intercultural competence will be enhanced by class lectures and readings explaining the nature and development of culture, highlighting cultural universals, cultural differences, and patterns of interaction between cultures. Civic engagement will be encouraged by lectures and readings which show how societies are social creations created, maintained, and improved through the actions of individuals in groups. The possibility of a student’s participating effectively in regional, national, and global communities will be increased by instruction and readings on persistent social issues such as poverty and racism and the dynamics of social change. The “Social Policy” paper for the course requires students to demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences and an ability to propose a solution to a social problem that addresses the needs of diverse groups.

Contact person for questions about this submission:

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