This course is designed to introduce students to the discipline of sociology. The course will review and discuss sociological concepts, theories, and research. First, the course will look at the role of sociology as a tool for examining the social world. Secondly, the course will introduce major theorists, perspectives, and research problems in sociology. Finally, the course will review major theoretical approaches e.g., macro and micro methodologies to critically analyze social problems.

**Required Readings:**

Conley, Dalton: *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*
Venkatesh, Sudhir: *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets*
Lareau, Annette: *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life (2nd edition)*
Goodwin, J. and Jasper, J.: *The Contexts Reader*

**Course Requirements:**

1. Come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and offer constructive/critical comments on the course materials.
2. There will be two required papers (8-9 pages). The topic will be assigned by the instructor. These two papers will make up 90 percent of your final grade.
3. Students will write a weekly response essay from a designated readings in the *Contexts Reader* (The assigned readings are denoted with an *). Your response should assess the strengths and/or weaknesses of the author’s argument. These will be due at the beginning of class each Friday and we will discuss your reactions during class time. The response essays should be between 250-400 words. These assignments will make up 10 percent of your final grade.

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Week 1) Introduction: What is Sociology?
Sept 5: Conley, chapter 1

Week 2) Culture and Media
Sept 12: Conley, chapter 3
*Sternheimer “Hollywood Doesn’t Threaten Family Values” (blackboard)

Week 3) Socialization and Social Networks
Sept 19: Conley, chapter 4 & 5
*Contexts, chapter 5

Week 4) Stratification
Sept 26: Conley, chapters 7 & 14
*D. Downey and B. Gibbs “How Schools Really Matter” (blackboard)
Week 5) Reproducing Inequality  
*William Beaver “A Matter of Degrees” (blackboard)

Week 6) Class and Status Boundaries  
*E. Telles “Mexican Americans and Immigrant Incorporation”

Week 7) Science, Environment and Society  
Oct 17: Conley, chapter 17

Oct 24: **Fall Break**

Week 8) Gender and Family  
Oct 31: Conley, chapters 8 & 12  
*E. Armstrong “Is Hooking Up Bad for Young Women” (blackboard)

Week 9) Racial Stratification  
Nov 7: Conley chapter 9  
*Contexts, chapter 40

Week 10) Social Control and Deviance  
Nov 14: Conley chapter 6  
*Contexts, chapter 51

Week 11) “Two Societies”  
Nov 21 (short week): Venkatesh chapters 1-4  
*D. Tomaskovic-Devey “Explaining and Eliminating Racial Profiling” (blackboard)

Week 12) Sociology in the Trenches  
Nov 28: Conley, chapter 15 and Venkatesh chapters 5-8  
*G. Harkness “Hip Hop Culture and America’s Most Taboo Word” (blackboard)

Week 13) Collective Action and Social Change  
Dec 5: Conley, chapter 18  
A. Perrin, “Why You Voted” (blackboard)

Week 14) Wrap Up Session  
Dec 12 (short week)

Paper # 2: DUE DATE TBA

*The instructor reserves the right to amend/revise the syllabus at his discretion.

**Honor Code:** This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html).