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. Popular media direct much of our attention to social problems such as crime, social inequality, and political corruption. Yet rarely are such reports accompanied by analysis of the institutional bases of these phenomena. The focus of this course is to employ sociological methods to critically analyze social problems. We will attempt to answer such questions as: "what is involved in defining an issue as a social problem?" and "how are public resources mobilized to remedy a social problem?"

Required Readings:

Conley, Dalton: *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*
Klinenberg, Eric: *Alone Together: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone*
Massey, Douglas et al.: *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration*

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 essays (9-10 pages). The topics will be assigned by the instructor. These two papers will make up 80 percent of your final grade.
3. Students will write a weekly response essay from a designated reading from *Contexts Magazine* and will be available on blackboard (The assigned *Contexts* 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 (unless otherwise noted) and we will discuss your reactions during class time. The response essays should be between 250-300 words. These assignments will make up 20 percent of your final grade.

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Week 1) Introduction
Feb 2: Introductory Concepts
* Y. Besen-Cassino, “Cool Stores, Bad Jobs” (blackboard)

Week 2) The Sociological Tradition
Feb 9: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapters 1 & 2
*W. Beaver, “A Matter of Degrees” (blackboard)
### Week 3) Socialization and Social Networks
Feb 16: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapters 4 & 5  
* G. Alan Fine & N. Difonzo “Uncertain Knowledge” (blackboard)

### Week 4) Class, Status, and Social Mobility
Feb 23: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapters 7 & 14  
* J. Silva, “Working Class Growing Pains” (blackboard)

### Week 5) Mapping Social Change
March 2: E. Klinenberg, *Going Solo*, ps. 1-130  
*F. Furstenberg et al., “Growing Up Is Harder To Do” (blackboard)

### Week 6) Institutions and Cultural Authority
March 9: E. Klinenberg, *Going Solo*, 131-233  
*L. Hamilton & E. Armstrong, The (Mis)education of Monica and Karen (blackboard)

### Week 7) Race and Society
March 16: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapter 9  
*H. Gans, “Race as Class” (blackboard)

**Paper #1 Due Date: TBA**

### March 23: Spring Break

### Week 8) Culture and Media
March 30: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapter 3  

### Week 9) Gender and Society
April 6: D. Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapter 8 & 12  
* E. Armstrong “Is Hooking Up Bad for Young Women?” (blackboard)

### Week 10) Immigration and National Identity
April 13: D. Massey, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors*, chapters 1-3  
* R. Alba, “Sacco and Vanzetti and the Immigrant Threat” (blackboard)

### Week 11) Globalization and Borders
April 20: D. Massey, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors*, chapters 4-7  
* R. Sampson, “Rethinking Crime and Immigration” (blackboard)

### Week 12) Institutions and Politics
April 27: Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapters 6 & 15  
* M. Schudson, “Telling Stories About Rosa Parks” (blackboard)

### Week 13) Collective Action and Social Change
May 4: Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, chapter 18

**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.

Use of Technology in the Classroom:

Access to the Internet can be a valuable aid to the classroom learning environment. Students may use laptops and other devices in order to explore concepts related to course discussions and topics. Students are discouraged from using technology in ways that distract from the learning community (e.g. Facebook, texting, Tumblr, 4chan etc.) and if found doing so, will be asked to leave the classroom for the day and will not get credit for attendance that class session. Students are expected to respect the educational environment. In class, all cell phones should be on silent. Unless specifically directed by the instructor, students shall refrain from sending email and instant messages, or from engaging in other activities (internet, engaging in private conversations and so on) that undermine the classroom environment for others.