Fall 2____
SOC 101: Introduction to Sociology (3 credit hours)
Instructor: Cindy Shanks Brueggenjohann (former Florissant Valley instructor)

“It can be said that the first wisdom of sociology is this—things are not what they seem…”

(Peter Berger, 1963)

NOTE : Service Learning component highlighted in red.

Course Description and Objectives
"The factors which determine social organization and behavior are considered in this course. Study is concentrated on the social interaction of individuals with one another, of individuals with groups and of groups with one another. Consideration is given to culture, social classes, population, institutional life and major trends in sociology." (SLCC Catalog)

This course is designed to introduce you to the basic concepts, theories and methods of the discipline of Sociology. A course in Sociology invites you to examine the familiar world of human society and social interaction. However, Sociology is also “…an unfamiliar way of looking at the familiar…” consequently, this course also asks that you “suspend” what you know about society. In doing so, you can move toward an objective and critical examination of human group behavior in society, and of the social forces that have a hand in directing that behavior.

By the end of the semester, you should have a handle on the critical perspective of sociology, the “sociological imagination,” that is, a way of placing your personal experiences into the larger social and historical context of the world around you. You should be able to do the following:

• Talk and write about those who contributed to the development of sociology and be able to identify the key assumptions of at least three theoretical perspectives
• Differentiate between culture and society
• Delineate the various components of culture and distinguish between an ethnocentric and a culturally relative point of view
• Define and apply critical sociological concepts
• Better understand various sources of social inequality and other social problems/issues
• Better understand the nature, pace and consequences of social change
• Relate and apply the concepts in the above objectives to your own reality, interpreting what you observe and experience in everyday life.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, given your greater insight into human social organization and your enhanced understanding of your ability to impact the “system” of society, I hope this class will inspire you to be a more active and engaged student, community member and citizen. Education is both a privilege and a responsibility; I hope you choose to do something personally meaningful and empowering with the knowledge and insight gained from this class.
**Course Format, Attendance and other Policies; Classroom Expectations**

Class will be organized on a lecture/exercise/discussion/collaborative group work basis. Class meetings may also include videos, guest speakers and role-play, when/if appropriate. Your questions and comments are encouraged and even expected at all times. I need your participation, and frankly, so do you.

**Course Material**

The following books are required and are available in the bookstore. There are also copies on reserve at the circulation desk in the library.


- Patricia and Peter Adler (2001), *Sociological Odyssey: Contemporary Readings in Sociology*

- Leonard Cargan and Jeanne Ballantine (2003), *Sociological Footprints: Introductory Readings in Sociology*

The Kendall book is a custom textbook that includes a study guide for all chapters included. We also have online access to other chapters, if necessary. The two readers were included free with our customized text. These two excellent readers include original publications from the fields of sociology, social psychology and psychology. You will be required to do homework based on assignments from these readers.

**Please note:** If you plan on selling the textbook back to the bookstore, you are strongly advised to use pencil in the study guide section and to erase your answers when the semester is over. **Also, it is imperative that you not lose the two readers. In order to be able to sell back your textbook, all three texts must be sold back simultaneously! You have been warned!**

**Course Requirements**

**A. Exams**

There will be 3 noncumulative regular exams. They are worth 50 points each and include both objective and written components (e.g., identification, short essay, exercises). They may include a take home section. Roughly 2/3s of the material on tests will be from in-class work, including lectures, discussions, videos and exercises; the other 1/3 will be taken from the readings, (textbook and homework readings). Pay particular attention to material that is covered in both places. See your course calendar for tentative exam dates.

You will also have a final exam scheduled during finals week in December. The final exam is worth 50 points and is noncumulative. Taken together, exams are worth a total of 200 points.

**Please make sure you understand the following:**

You must bring a #2 pencil (or two or three) for all exams. They are partially objective in nature and thus will require you to fill out a scantron sheet.
You are expected to be on time for an examination. If you come 20 minutes after the start of the test, then you have 20 minutes less than everyone else. There is no extended time for exams unless documented by the Access Office.

You are expected to take exams at the time/date scheduled. Makeup exams will be given as detailed essay tests administered during the final week of class. There is no make-up of the final exam (Exam 4).

**Grading Scale for All Exams**

- 45 – 50 A
- 40 – 44 B
- 35 – 39 C
- 30 – 34 D
- > 30 F

**B. Collaborative Groupwork/Readings Homework/Critical Incident Analysis Papers**

Small group work/exercises will “count,” that is, you will be credited for your participation. Homework assignments based on the readings in your textbook and critical incident analysis papers, whereby you reflect on sociological concepts by relating them to “real life” situations, will also be credited. Regardless of how much small groupwork we have in class, and how many homework and critical incident analysis papers are assigned, cumulatively, this work is worth a total of 200 points.

**Guidelines: Please follow these guidelines for all homework and critical incident papers turned in for this class:**

a. Each paper must be clearly labeled. It must state your name, your section number, the assignment, the date it is turned in and a title, if appropriate. Multiple pages must be stapled.

b. All homework should be typed/word processed.

Most papers are graded on a Check Plus/Check/Check Minus basis. If you receive a check minus on your paper, be sure to read my comments and suggestion for what to do to improve your work. Check Plus/Check/Check Minus will all eventually translate into a point total (200 points, cumulatively), so it is imperative that you earn as many points as possible.

**C. Sociology Research Project: Good Neighbor Initiative**

The SLCC Good Neighbor Initiative (GNI) Research Project began at Meramec last year as a way to enable the College to become more responsive and relevant to the communities it serves, and as a way to more effectively prepare students to be engaged and knowledgeable citizens. To that end, sociology students at Meramec participated in survey research by distributing questionnaires to the residents of Kirkwood. In addition to compiling basic demographic data, the questionnaire asked residents to indicate their beliefs about the community's strengths and weaknesses. Data from over 400 completed questionnaires is now being plugged into service-learning and other civic engagement initiatives at Meramec. For example, services for older citizens emerged as
a major need within this area. In response, Meramec will tailor GNI projects for local seniors. (The information is also tentatively being used by local government to create services around expressed needs.)

**Florissant Valley** now has the opportunity to replicate this research project and you are its foot soldiers! Here’s your chance to take part in some real social science research. For our project, we will focus on our SLCC-FV host community, Ferguson, MO. Here’s what we’re working toward:

**Objectives for the Good Neighbor Initiative Research Project**

**For students:**
1. To increase understanding of theoretical and methodological issues being addressed in class;
2. To stimulate critical thinking about the social arrangements discussed in class;
3. To gain insight into the interrelated nature and underlying causes of social problems and issues;
4. To gain a more comprehensive view of the needs of the community;
5. To potentially gain exposure to subcultural, economic, racial and/or ethnic communities that may differ from your own;
6. To encourage future community engagement; and,
7. To encourage civic responsibility and the development of civic competencies and skills.

**For the community:**
1. To participate in a needs assessment of the Ferguson area.
2. To identify neighborhood weaknesses as perceived by community members.
3. To identify neighborhood assets as perceived by community members.
4. To collaborate with SLCC-FV and its students.
5. To potentially respond (via local government entities) to needs/issues as expressed by its citizens.

**Aspects of this research study are still being streamlined, but here is what is required of you:**

- Students will create research “teams” in order to facilitate travel/time needs.
- Student teams will be assigned a 1- or 2-square block area in Ferguson.
- Students will write a brief “preflection” (pre-reflective) paper detailing their expectations/hopes/ideas, etc., for/about the project. This paper is worth 25 points.
- Each student is required to administer questionnaires to 5 different households in Ferguson.
- Once you attain 5 completed questionnaires you are finished with “your” data collection, even if you have not been to every house on your “block.” If you want to finish the block, you may do so (the bigger our sample, the better).
- If you do not want to finish the block, you must keep track of which houses were not accessed, so that someone else can finish “your” area.
- When/if residents don’t agree to participate in the survey, you will give them a card that has an SLCC website on it, where they can access the survey instrument online, in case they change their minds.
- Students must complete all data collection by the due date, as assigned. Data collection is worth 50 points.
Students must write a second paper detailing their experiences with data collection. This paper is worth 50 points.

Students must write a third paper that examines an issue that emerges in our data, and which integrates other relevant data (some of which we'll look at in class). This paper is worth 75 points.

Specific paper requirements are forthcoming. Please see the course calendar for tentative due dates.

**Cumulatively, the GNI Research Project is worth a total of 200 points.**

**Other**
I reserve the right to require additional work assignments based upon readings and/or videos. Point totals for any additional work will be added to the overall grading scale. Ample notice will be given for extra assignments.

**Bonus Points**
You may earn up to 15 bonus points toward your final grade. You *may not substitute* bonus work for any of the exams, homework assignments, or for the sociology research project. Bonus work is due by the end of the 14th week of class. Your options are as follows:

1. **Book Review:** Read and review a nonfiction book dealing with sociological subject matter. There are several books that deal with social issues/problems for sale in the bookstore, located by the sociology textbooks—please feel free to choose from those that are available. *I must approve other books.* I strongly encourage you to read this year’s “OneBook, OneCollege” choice, Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel & Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America.* Ehrenreich’s book is a brief but hard-hitting study of the poor conditions and low pay faced by millions of today's workers. Discussions of the OneBook, OneCollege book are being planned for the academic year; in the meantime, you are encouraged to read and report on this important book, for which there is lots of application in our class.

2. **“One-shot” service work** through St. Louis Cares is worth 15 points per project, with a maximum of 1 project allowed. You are required to write a small report of your one-shot service experience. Participation in a St. Louis Cares project does require certification and training which can be facilitated in class.

3. **Other opportunities** will be available throughout the semester such as attendance at campus forums, local speaker forums, discussion groups, plays of relevance, field trips, etc. I will announce these as I’m made aware of them. Please feel free to bring in information about anything you run across. Bonus points for these opportunities may be earned by completing the following:
   a. You must attend the event.
   b. You must hand in a typed report with two parts. The first paragraph should briefly summarize the activity. The second part should analyze and critique it, and relate it to sociological concepts and theory.
   c. This report should be at least one page in length, but not more than two total pages.
Campus-based activities are worth approximately 5-10 points each. If we happen to take an off-campus field trip, this report could be worth the entire 15 bonus points.

**Honors Credit**  
If you are interested in completing a project for honors credit in this class (and if you qualify for the Honors program), please let me know as soon as possible. There are many benefits to doing honors work while at the college, not the least of which is the “H” designation on your transcript (translation: more money, potentially). Also contact Sue Saum, Honors Coordinator, for more information. She is at 314-513-4808. You can checkout the honors program by going to:  
[http://www.stlcc.edu/Programs/Honors_Program/Florissant_Valley_Honors/Index.html](http://www.stlcc.edu/Programs/Honors_Program/Florissant_Valley_Honors/Index.html).

**Free tutoring** for all students is available in the Academic Support Center located on the 1st floor of the Student Center. For more information and for Center hours, please contact the Academic Support Center at 314-513-4858. The URL is [http://www.stlcc.edu/Student_Resources/Academic_Resources/Tutoring.html](http://www.stlcc.edu/Student_Resources/Academic_Resources/Tutoring.html).

**Classroom Assessment**  
SLCC is committed to the continuous improvement of student academic achievement. The college undertakes assessment of its academic programs and courses to assure that student learning is not only occurring, but improving. Further, classroom assessment by individual instructors discovers what is working in the particular classroom to facilitate learning. At each of these levels of academic achievement—classroom, course and program—the student will be asked to participate to enable the college to improve its product, which is student learning. Assessment is a means to evaluate the learning process and is separate from the grading process. Student participation will be solicited at some point during the course. Thank you for your participation and cooperation!

**Final Grading**

Total points available: 600 (4 Tests + Groupwork/Homework/CI Analysis Papers + GNI Research Project).

Final grades for the course will be assigned according to the following scale:

- $540 – 600 = A$
- $480 – 539 = B$
- $420 – 479 = C$
- $360 – 419 = D$
- $< 360 = F$

Read and reread this syllabus! Keep this syllabus for future reference!!!