

**Sociology 102 – Sociology in Action**  
**(aka Understanding Societies)**  
**Professor David Hachen**

**Class Meetings**

Monday and Wednesday, 1:55 – 2:45  
Carey Auditorium, Hesburgh Library (Room 107)  
Discussion Sections (Tutorials): Friday, Flanner Hall

**Communication:**

E-Mail: Hachen.1@nd.edu  
Office Telephone: 631-5745  
Web Page for this Course: [www.nd.edu/~dhachen/soc102/sp04](http://www.nd.edu/~dhachen/soc102/sp04)

**Teaching Assistants:**

Karen Boyd  
Dan Boudon

**Office Hours:**

3-4 Wednesday in 747 Flanner or by appointment

**Class Objective:**

The objective of this class is to help you develop a new *skill* – the ability to read and analyze situations sociologically. This skill will be developed by having you practice this skill by analyzing decision cases, short problem-centered narratives that promote critical thinking. The ability to analyze situations sociologically will be developed incrementally through five stages in which you will learn how to:

- See situations sociologically by identifying and describing four important *social connectors*: social relationships, groups, organizations, and networks.
- Use *sociological theories* to reframe and develop multiple perspectives on a situation.
- Think about situations from the point of view of insiders by decoding *culture*.
- Uncover *inequalities* by analyzing differences in power.
- Imagine futures by taking into account changes that could result from three important *driving forces*: demography, technology and collective actions.

**Required Materials**

- David S. Hachen Jr. 2001. *Sociology in Action: Cases for Critical and Sociological Thinking*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press
- Blank Journal – to be purchased at the Bookstore
- Electronic Reserve Readings

My book can be purchased at the Notre Dame Bookstore. My book is an innovative introduction to sociology text that contains five chapters on sociological ideas and nineteen (19) decision cases. **This book should always be brought to class.** All readings for the discussion sections have been placed on electronic reserves and can be accessed through

WebCT at Notre Dame (<http://webct.nd.edu>). A copy of the reading for the week should be brought to the discussion section session.

## Course Organization

The course is organized around the five chapters in *Sociology in Action*: Seeing Society, Using Theory, Decoding Culture, Uncovering Inequalities and Power, and Imagining Futures. We will spend four to five class sessions on each chapter. Though this is a relatively large class, I have designed this course in order to facilitate discussion in the Monday and Wednesday classes. For most class sessions, a discussion section group will be assigned to be discussants for that day. They will sit on the stage and I (with the help of the rest of the class) will pose questions that will stimulate a discussion of the case by that discussion group. Each discussion section group will do this *twice* during the semester (see **Discussant Schedule** below). To facilitate and learn from the discussion, students in the selected discussion group are required to write a short pre-discussion paper and a short post-discussion paper (see **Course Requirements** below).

## Course Requirements

1. **Examinations**: There will be three in-class examinations (see **Calendar** and **Requirements Table** for dates). The objective of these exams is to assess your understanding of sociological concepts and ideas and your ability to apply the concepts and ideas to the cases we have discussed. Exams will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The exact format of the exams will be discussed during the first couple of weeks.
2. **Analysis Papers**: You are required to write two pre-discussion papers and two post-discussion papers in conjunction with the two class sessions in which your discussion group's members are the discussants. The purpose of the pre-discussion paper is to help you formulate your ideas about the case prior to the in-class discussion. The purpose of the post-discussion paper is to help you reflect on what you learned for the class discussion. **The pre-discussion paper is due in class the day your section is involved in the large class discussion session. The post-discussion paper is due at the next large class or discussion group session, whichever is first.** A handout on these papers and the criteria the TAs will use to assess them will be distributed separately.
3. **Journals**: You are required to keep a journal. The purpose of this journal is to help you *reflect* upon the material in this course and to relate ideas you have learned about to experiences you have had outside of class. You should purchase a *separate* notebook for your journal. **Do not use the same notebook that you use to keep your notes.** In your journal notebook you should jot down:
  - Reactions that you have to the cases as you read them,
  - Reactions that you have to the ideas in the chapters of *Sociology in Action* as you read the chapters,
  - Reactions to the readings in the photocopied reader and journal,

- Ideas that come to you during class sessions as you observe or participate in the discussion,
- Reflections on the discussions that you have had during discussion section sessions,
- Experiences that you have outside of class or things you hear or read about that relate to the class
- Questions that you have about sociological ideas in the chapters and the readings.

**Entries in your journal must be dated** and should be made as you are doing the activity (e.g. reading a case, listening to a discussion) or shortly after the activity.

**Journal notebooks should always be brought to class and discussion section.**

They will be collected four times during the semester (see **Calendar** and **Requirements Table** below).

4. **Participation:** Because discussions of cases are the way in which you can practice and develop your skill at “reading” social situations, the TAs and I will create an atmosphere within class and the discussion sections that encourages participation. Your participation ( both level and quality) in the discussion sections will be evaluated by your TA.

### Policies

- **Grading:** TAs will do all the grading. Number grades ranging from 0-100 will be used for examination. Papers, journals and participation will be evaluated with letter grades. These letter grades will then be converted to number grades using the following conversion table:

**Letter to Number Grade Conversion Table**

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Number Grade</i>	<i>Range</i>
A	97.5	95-100
A-	92.5	90-95
B+	88.5	87-90
B	85	83-87
B-	81.5	80-83
C+	78.5	77-80
C	75	73-77
C-	71.5	70-73
D	65	60-69
F	0	<60

Final grades will be computed by taking a weighted average of all your numeric grades (with weights determined by how much an assignment contributes to the final grade according to the Requirements Table below). Then a letter grade is assigned that corresponds to the range category into which your averaged number grade falls.

Questions about specific grades should first be addressed to your TA. If you still are unclear about why you received the grade, or if you have any other problems with your grade, you should contact me.

**Requirements Table**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>Exam #1</b>	10%	2/4 (Wednesday)
<b>Exam #2</b>	17.5%	3/22 (Monday)
<b>Exam #3 (Final Exam)</b>	17.5%	5/3 (Monday)
<b>Pre-Discussion Paper #1</b>	10%	See Discussant Schedule
<b>Post-Discussion Paper #1</b>	10%	See Discussant Schedule
<b>Pre-Discussion Paper #2</b>	10%	See Discussant Schedule
<b>Post-Discussion Paper #2</b>	10%	See Discussant Schedule
<b>Journal #1</b>	2.5%	2/6 (Friday)
<b>Journal #2</b>	2.5%	3/5 (Friday)
<b>Journal #3</b>	2.5%	4/2 (Friday)
<b>Journal #4</b>	2.5%	4/28 (Wednesday)
<b>Participation</b>	5%	always

- **Office Hours:** Please take advantage of my office hours to come in and discuss questions about the class material or problems you are having with the course. If you cannot visit during my regular office hour time, please email me or see me before or after class to arrange another time.
- **Attendance:** I expect you to attend all classes. Past experience shows that students who miss classes do not do as well on exams and papers. **Attendance during the two sessions in which your are a discussant is required and will be taken by the TAs.** Absences will be allowed only in extreme circumstances such as a serious illness or a death in the family. If such an emergency arises email your TA. TAs expect you to attend all discussion sections. Your participation grade will be adversely affected if you miss discussion sections.
- **Pedagogy:** I am a strong believer in active learning. There is growing evidence that people are more likely to remember and be able to use what they have learned if they have actively acquired the knowledge. Decision cases are a form of active learning that is widely used in professional schools, and is beginning to be more and more used in undergraduate education. For more information about how decision case pedagogies work I have placed on electronic reserves two essays about teaching with cases:

“Teaching with Cases” by David Hachen, included in *Instructors Manual for Sociology In Action*.

“Teaching with Cases: A Pedagogy for All Seasons” by Selma Wasserman from *Introduction to Case Method Teaching*.

- **Reading:** Reading assignments are an essential component of this course. Good discussions are more likely to occur when students have read and thought about their reactions to the assigned reading material. Decision cases must be read **before** the class in which they are discussed. Articles from the photocopied reader and the journal must be read **before** the discussion section in which they are being discussed. We will assume that you have completely read all assignments. See the **Calendar** below for what you are supposed to read for each session.
- **Academic Misconduct:** Students are strongly encouraged to discuss ideas for papers with other students and to study with other students for the tests. You can also show drafts of your papers to other students and receive from them editing assistance. However all written work (papers, exams, journals) must be written by the student submitting the work. Any suspected instance of cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the Honesty Committee. The course penalty for academic misconduct is a zero credit for the assignment and whatever disciplinary action is levied by the Honesty Committee or the University. No opportunities to re-do assignments will be given. Two instances of academic misconduct will result in automatic failure of the course.
- **Discussion Sections :** The Teaching Assistants will provide additional experiences for you in your discussion sessions on Fridays. The primary focus of the discussion sessions will be the readings in the photocopied reader and the journal. During your first discussion session your TA will discuss the format for the sessions. *If you are ever having difficulty or problems in your discussion section or with your TA that you feel you cannot resolve with the TA directly, please see me.*
- **Exams:** Missed exams cannot be made-up except under extreme circumstances such as serious illness or a death in the family.

### Discussant Schedule

Discussion Group	First Discussion	Second Discussion
#1	2/18 Conflict at Riverside	3/15 Linda Gorman
#2	2/23 Worth of a Sparrow	3/24 MPA Program
#3	1/26 Why Can't Things Stay as They Are?	4/7 Lucy Allman
#4	1/28 Off to College	4/14 Lisa's Hidden Identity
#5	2/25 What's So Scary About the Truth?	4/19 Where Have All the Salmon Gone?
#6	3/1 Perfection or Bust	4/26 Deaf President Now!
#7	2/9 A Towering Dilemma	3/31 Robert Lopez
#8	2/16 Changing a Hospital's Culture	4/5 Girls on the Wrestling Team