

SOC 102: SOCIAL DISLOCATIONS
Sociology in a Changing World

Instructor: Mary Shi
Email: maryshi@umich.edu
Office Hours: Drop-in Wednesdays 2-3:30pm
Location: LSA 3220

Lecture Time and Location:
MW 10:00-11:30 AM
G322 DENT

Graduate Student Instructors:

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Sections 002, 003, and 004
Sections 005, 006, and 007

Course Overview:

Through processes of socialization individuals learn how to produce and reproduce the social order, as well as their positions therein. What happens, then, when individuals are dislocated from the social worlds they have been prepared to inhabit?

This course introduces students to the field of sociology through a series of ethnographic and interview-based studies examining individuals, communities, and organizations navigating our changing society. Topics covered will include inequality and social mobility; transformations in the nature of work and new geographies of opportunity and decline; global issues of migration, development, and national belonging; and the role of gender and race within these processes. By being invited to inhabit social worlds foreign to their own, students will learn how to question what is taken for granted in social life and “think like a sociologist.”

Course Design and Requirements:

By the end of the course students should be able to (a) recognize key concepts in sociology and apply those concepts in their everyday lives; (b) be introduced to social science research methods; and (c) be equipped with knowledge and concepts to understand our changing world. The below course requirements are designed to help students achieve these learning objectives.

Photo Essays (5% x 3) and Place Analysis (15%)

These assignments ask students to develop their “sociological imagination” by applying sociological concepts to their everyday lives and to the analysis of a particular place using [Social Explorer](#).

Midterm (20%) and Final (25%)

In-class examinations provide opportunities to review, integrate, and solidify knowledge. Both exams will be a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative.

Section (15%) and Reading Accountability Checks in Lecture (10%)

Discussion with your peers is an integral part of exploring, critiquing, and integrating new knowledge. As such, both section and lecture attendance are mandatory. To incentivize timely completion of the required readings, we will also occasionally administer pop quizzes in lecture as reading accountability checks.

Grade Composition and Key Dates:

15% Photo Essays x 3 (5% each) - September 18, October 23, December 1
20% Midterm - September 30
15% Place Analysis - November 13
25% Final - December 17
10% Lecture Attendance and Reading Accountability Checks
15% Section Participation

How to Succeed in this Class:

The most important thing you can do to succeed in this class is to *read* and to do the required reading *before* lecture. Below you will find a required reading associated with each lecture. These readings are your windows into other social worlds, and are chosen for their ability to engage and immerse you. Some of the page numbers may be intimidating, but they should be fast, easy reads—although there are a few pieces to limber you up for reading more challenging, technical writing. Do not wait until the night before exams to read. These readings provide essential context to help you make sense of the sociological concepts that will be presented each lecture, and therefore it is essential you keep up with the reading throughout the course of the semester.

To get the most out of this class, do not be afraid to ask questions or attend office hours. Questions and office hour conversations give the instructors valuable feedback that improves the class for everyone. They also ensure you don't get lost in the crowd, boost your participation grade, and lay the groundwork for future letters of recommendation.

Lecture Attendance Policy

Lecture attendance is required and will be tracked with periodic pop-up quizzes on assigned readings at the beginning of class. Students are allowed to miss one of these quizzes with no penalty. Absences beyond the allowance will result in a grade deduction. Absences can be excused due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness, family emergency, athletics obligations) with appropriate documentation. If you need to have a lecture absence excused, please contact your GSI.

Late Policy

Late assignments will be subject to a one-notch grade deduction for every day they are late (e.g. ✓+ to ✓, B+ to B).

Email and Office Hours Policy

Please direct all bureaucratic and logistical questions to your GSIs. Save substantive questions for class or office hours. All students are encouraged to attend the professor's drop-in office hours (no appointment necessary) and should feel free to come to office hours with any questions they have about the course, course content, or being a university student more generally with all of its associated opportunities and challenges. Students can email the professor for alternative office hour meeting times by appointment as necessary.

Generative AI Policy

We are all learning how to navigate a world being rapidly reshaped by Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) together. GenAI is here to stay, and as such, it would be counterproductive to wholly ban its use in the classroom. Students are allowed to use GenAI to help complete their assignments, but they are *required to disclose how they use AI*. Honest disclosure is a matter of academic integrity. It also provides the instructional team information to better assess how AI is impacting students' learning. *However, all student writing must reflect the students' scholarly and writerly voice—not that of AI*. Students violating or suspected of violating these policies will have their assignment grade docked by half. A student wishing to contest this penalty will be asked to reproduce their written assignments in-person with their GSIs.

Having said that, students are **strongly discouraged from using AI** in any form. GenAI may help you save time and reassure you that your writing is polished or your understanding of the readings correct, but it ultimately robs you of the opportunity to *learn how to learn* by working through course materials on your own and practicing your own reading, writing, and analytical skills. The *worst* thing you can do is use AI to summarize the readings. As you read, you're giving yourself time to make connections, explore an idea from multiple angles, and develop your own critiques. Reading a summary of the text sidesteps all of this. Moreover, how can we learn how to check AI outputs if we never develop our own reading comprehension skills? The second worst thing you can do is use AI to brainstorm ideas (including generate first drafts of your writing) instead of working through the discomfort of staring down an empty page. This moment is when creativity happens. Finally, using AI to wholly do your writing for you is just a waste of everyone's time. You only get out of your learning as much as you put in.

Academic Dishonesty

Do not plagiarize under any circumstances. Plagiarism is the use of intellectual material produced by another person without properly citing its source. If you are unclear as to what constitutes plagiarism, you should immediately consult with your GSI and/or review the LSA Community Expectations Regarding Academic Integrity and associated resources. Although students are encouraged to collaborate on their assignments all students are expected to submit their own written response, providing their best answer in their own words. Any instances of cheating will not be tolerated and be addressed promptly.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

A map of gender inclusive restrooms is [available here](#). Students who have been issued a letter of accommodation from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) should contact me to ensure the necessary arrangements have been made. All students should feel free to contact me with other accessibility and/or inclusivity concerns, such as accommodations for observance of religious holidays.

Campus Resources

The Sweetland Center for Writing offers free one-to-one writing support to all students regardless of assignment type. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers a wide range of resources to support campus community, well-being, and mental health.

COURSE THEMES AND REQUIRED READINGS

UNIT 1. INDIVIDUALS IN SOCIETY

August 31: Introduction to Class

- Read section and course syllabi

September 2: What is Sociology?

- Mills, C. Wright. 1959. "The Promise" excerpt. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 3-13.
- Burawoy, Michael. 2021. "Introduction" excerpt. *Public Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1-5.
- Currell, Daniel. 2025. "Disney and the Decline of America's Middle Class." *The New York Times*.

September 7: Labor Day, no class

September 9: Social Structure

- Durkheim, Emile. 1982 [1895]. "What is a social fact?" *The Rules of Sociological Method*. Steven Lukes, ed. W. D. Halls, trans. New York: New Press. 50-59.
- Wright, Erik Olin and Joel Rogers. 2014. "Explanation: Thinking Like a Sociologist" AND "What Kind of Society is American Society?," excerpts from *American Society*. 2nd ed. W.W. Norton and Co. 3-5, 10-33.

September 14: Sociological Research Methods

- Khan, Shamus. 2011. "Introduction" and "Methodological and Theoretical Reflections." *Privilege*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1-17, 201-205.
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September 16: Socialization and Social Construction

- Karin, Martin. 1998. "Becoming a Gendered Body." *American Sociological Review*

63(4): 494-511.

- Khan, Shamus. 2011. "Chapter 3: The Ease of Privilege." *Privilege*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 77-113.
- ***Photo Essay 1 due Friday, September 18, 5pm via Canvas***

September 21: Performativity

- Goffman, Erving. 1956. "Introduction." *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. University of Edinburgh: Social Sciences Research Center. 1-9.
- Khan, Shamus. 2011. "Chapter 2: Finding One's Place." *Privilege*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 41-73.

September 23: Social Reproduction in a Changing World

- Khan, Shamus. 2010. Chapter 1: The New Elite." *Privilege*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 18-40.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2004. "The peasant and his body." Richard Nice and Loïc Wacquant, trans. *Ethnography* 5(4): 579-599.

September 28: Midterm Review

September 30: **IN-CLASS Midterm**

UNIT 2. CHANGING PLACES, CHANGING SOCIAL CONDITIONS

October 5: The Postindustrial Economy

- Moretti, Enrico. 2012. "Introduction." *The New Geography of Jobs*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 1-17.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2005. "The Global City: Introducing a Concept." *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 11(2): 27-43.

October 7: New York pt 1 - Analyzing a Place Using Quantitative Survey Data

- Sassen, Saskia. 2025 [1991]. "Chapter 8. Employment and Earnings" excerpts. *The Global City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 201-209, 221-234.

October 12: New York pt 2 - Knowledge Workers at Work

- Ho, Karen. 2009. "Chapter 2. Wall Street's Orientation." *Liquidated*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 73-121.

October 14: New York pt 3 - New Labor Precarities

- Ravenelle, Alexandra. 2019. "Chapter 1. Strugglers, Strivers, and Success Stories." *Hustle and Gig*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1-25.
- Kelley, Lora. 2026. "The Work of Helping A.I. Destroy Work." *The New York Times*.

October 19: Fall Study Break, no class

October 21: Pittsburgh pt 1 - Gender and the Family Wage

- Winant, Gabriel. 2023. "Chapter 2. Dirty Laundry." *The Next Shift*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 63-97.
- **Photo Essay 2 due Friday, October 23, 5pm via Canvas**

October 26: Pittsburgh pt 2 - Political Economy and the Welfare State

- Winant, Gabriel. 2023. "Introduction" *The Next Shift*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1-25.

October 28: Anytown USA - Poverty Governance

- Seim, Josh. 2020. "Introduction" and "Chapter 6. Burden Shuffling." *Bandage, Sort, and Hustle*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1-22, 114-128.

November 2: Pikeville pt 1 - Rural America

- Hochschild, Arlie. 2024. "Chapter 1. A Polite Voice," "Chapter 2: "We're Good People Here"," and "Chapter 4. Insiders, Outsiders." *Stolen Pride*. New York: The New Press. 3-22, 43-60.

November 4: Beardstown - Immigration and Race

- Miraftab, Faranak. 2015. "Part 1. Beardstown: A Place in the World." *Global Heartland*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. 27-75.

November 9: Pikeville pt 2 - Symbolic Domination and the Politics of Recognition

- Hochschild, Arlie. 2024. "Chapter 3. The Pride Paradox" "Chapter 6. Bootstrap Pride," and "Chapter 8. Survivor's Pride." *Stolen Pride*. New York: The New Press. 23-42, 81-96, 115-134.

November 11: Pikeville pt 3 - Constructing the American Nation

- Bloemraad, Irene. 2021. "Claiming membership." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 45(6): 1011-1033.
- Hochschild, Arlie. 2024. "Chapter 11. Trial Run." *Stolen Pride*. New York: The New Press. 171-180.
- **Place Analysis due Friday, November 13, 5pm via Canvas**

UNIT 3. GLOBAL SOCIOLOGY

November 16: Colonialism, Empire, Development

- Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2015. "Introduction," and "Chapter 1. Sex Work in HCMC." *Dealing in Desire*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1-38.

November 18: Gender and Economic Action

- Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2015. "Chapter 2. The Contemporary Sex Industry," and "Chapter 3. New Hierarchies of Global Men." *Dealing in Desire*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 39-77.

November 23: Sex Work and the Possibilities for Global Justice

- Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2015. "Chapter 5. Autonomy and Consent in Sex Work." *Dealing in Desire*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 104-125.
- Shih, Elena. 2023. "Conclusion: Redistribution and Possibilities for Global Justice." *Manufacturing Freedom*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 181-200.

November 25: Thanksgiving Break, no class

November 30: Climate Change

- Norgaard, Kari. 2011. "Prologue," "Introduction," and "Chapter 2. "Experiencing" Global Warming." *Living in Denial*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 12-32, 51-78.
- ***Photo Essay 3 due Tuesday, December 1, 5pm via Canvas***

December 2: Culture and Making Sense of Climate Denial

- Norgaard, Kari. 2011. "Chapter 3. "People Want to Protect Themselves a Little Bit," and "Conclusion.." *Living in Denial*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 79-109, 212-233.

December 7: How Can Sociology Change the World?

- Burawoy, Michael. 2021. Excerpts from "Preface," and "Part Two: Professional Sociology" and intro to "Part Three: Public Sociology." *Public Sociology*. London: Polity Books. *iix-xi*, 43-65.

December 9: Final Review

DECEMBER 17: FINAL EXAM, in-class, 10:30am-12:30pm