



**DIVISION OF ADULT LEARNING**

**SYLLABUS**

**SOCI-200: Understanding Contemporary Society**

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**University Mission Statement:**

Lee University is a Christian institution which offers liberal arts and professional education on both the baccalaureate and graduate levels through residential and distance programs. It seeks to provide education that integrates biblical truth as revealed in the Holy Scriptures with truth discovered through the study of arts and sciences and in the practice of various professions. A personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior is the controlling perspective from which the educational enterprise is carried out. The foundational purpose of all educational programs is to develop within the students knowledge, appreciation, understanding, ability and skills which will prepare them for responsible Christian living in a complex world.

**Catalog Description:**

This course is a study of sociological concepts and social institutions with an emphasis on social problems and social and cultural change. The course is taught within the context of Christian responsibility and social action.

**Required Text(s) and/or Supporting Resources:****Required Text:**

Tweedell, Cynthia Benn, ed. *Sociology: A Christian Approach for Changing the World*. Second Edition. Marion, Indiana: Triangle Publishing. 2010. **(Provided as a link in the course and charged to your Lee account as "Book Bundle" fee.)**

**Recommended Resources but not Required:**

Understanding Contemporary Society: Reader to Accompany Core Text. *The Intersections Collection* from Pearson Custom Sociology. Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing. 2008.

**Additional Supporting Resources:**

Resources provided in the Learning Management System (LMS).

**Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge:**

None

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes:****PURPOSE**

This course is intended to provide students with an understanding of human society in order to help them adapt to the rapidly changing world in which they live. Another purpose is to challenge students to involvement in Christian social action as commanded by the words and deeds of Jesus Christ.

**General Objectives (Course Goals):**

*This course seeks to:*

1. Encourage the application of the sociological perspective in living a more exemplary "Christ-like" life in a rapidly changing and challenging world.
2. Explain the sociological factors that contribute to who we are as individuals.
3. Highlight the role that social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural factors have in shaping societies.
4. Facilitate an understanding of social inequality and stratification systems.

5. Assist the student in developing an understanding and appreciation for other points of view (both personal and cultural).

**Specific Objectives** (*Learning Outcomes*):

*As a result of the activities and study in this course, the student should be able to:*

1. Define the term 'sociology' and explain how one uses the 'sociological imagination' or sociological perspective.
2. Differentiate the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology and describe the basic methods of conducting research.
3. Develop a cross-cultural awareness that incorporates an understanding of human diversity, cultural differences, and the global community.
4. Outline the major ideas about how humans learn, develop, and become integrated into society.
5. Discuss how social roles, social positions/statuses, and social structures relate to one another.
6. Define social stratification.
7. Distinguish between race, ethnicity, and minority group status and discuss the effects of gender stratification.
8. Explain the social construction of age and discuss health care as a social institution.
9. Compare/contrast political and economic systems and apply the theoretical perspectives to political economy in the United States.
10. Analyze the family, religion and education as social institutions.
11. Explain social movements and social change in contemporary society.

**Major Topics:**

1. Sociological Perspective/Social Research
2. Culture/Socialization
3. Social Structure, Social Institutions, Deviance and Social Control
4. Social Stratification, Race and Gender Inequality
5. Aging and Health
6. Marriage, Family, Religion and Education
7. Politics and the Economy
8. Social Movements and Social Change

**Course Assessments:**

- A. **Text/Media.** All text/media is assessed in threaded discussions and other assignments.
- B. **Threaded Discussions.** Everyone is expected to participate in the discussion threads. A question or set of questions will be provided for your initial post. To get full credit, you must make an initial post and respond substantively to at least two peer posts within the deadline designated for both. The threaded discussions are an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the course material and interact with fellow students. Just doing an initial post and/or response will not guarantee any point value. Discussions will be evaluated as follows: a) on the depth of engagement with the discussion topic and/or issue; b) on the depth of understanding of the topic and/or issue; and c) on the depth of interaction with the other students. An initial post is required (evaluation of "a" and "b" above) and then response posts interacting to other students' initial posts (evaluation of "c" above). Once the discussion deadline is reached, there will be no further opportunity to attain points for that discussion. If you have further questions on how these are evaluated, please contact your instructor.

- C. **Unit Assignments (Reflection).** Students will write to reflections papers which should be a minimum of 2 pages each. The topic and instructions are found in the individual assignments.
- D. **Course Project (Essay).** This is an essay that involves reflection and application of the Text/Media material. Response should be thorough and provide evidence of critical thinking. Essay should be 900-1,100 words in length and written in paragraph form. This essay should be submitted in Unit 4.
- E. **Exams.** There will be a quiz at the end of each unit. The quizzes will come from Text/Media assignments and discussions in this course.

**Evaluation:**

A. Threaded Discussions	560
B. Unit Assignments	100
C. Course Projects	100
D. Exams	240

**Grading Scale:**

The standardized grading scale provides a uniform foundation from which to assess your performance.

Grade	Quality Points per Credit	Score
A	4.0	930 - 1000
A-	3.7	900 - 929
B+	3.3	870 - 899
B	3.0	830 - 869
B-	2.7	800 - 829
C+	2.3	770 - 799
C	2.0	730 - 769
C-	1.7	700 - 729
D+	1.3	670 - 699
D	1.0	600 - 669
F	.0	0 - 599

**Letter Grade Equivalencies:**

**A** = Clearly stands out as excellent performance. Has unusually sharp insights into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines. Anticipates next steps in progression of ideas. Example "A" work should be of such nature that it could be put on reserve for all cohort members to review and emulate. The "A" cohort member is, in fact, an example for others to follow.

**B** = Demonstrates a solid comprehension of the subject matter and always accomplishes all course requirements. Serves as an active participant and listener. Communicates orally and in writing at an

<p>acceptable level for a cohort member. Work shows intuition and creativity. Example "B" work indicates good quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a good grade and awarded to those who submit assignments of quality less than the exemplary work described above.</p>
<p><b>C</b> = Quality and quantity of work is average. Has average comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at least minimally.</p>
<p><b>D</b> = Quality and quantity of work is below average. Has marginal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at below acceptable levels.</p>
<p><b>F</b> = Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable and does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of work.</p>
<p><b>Unit and Time Distribution:</b></p>
<p>The time to complete each unit is approximately 17 hours per week on average for a three hour course. Actual assignment completion times will vary. A more detailed breakdown of each assignment can be found within the course.</p>

**POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy:**

At Lee University student success is directly related to the student actively attending and engaging in the course. Online courses are no different from classroom courses in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner.

Online courses will have weekly mechanisms for student participation, which can be documented by submission/completion of assignments, participation in threaded discussions, and/or specific communication with the instructor as outlined within the syllabus.

**Academic Honesty Policy/Information:**

Cheating is defined as the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials or receiving unauthorized assistance or communication during any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating include:

- Submitting work for academic evaluation that is not the your own.
- Receiving assistance from another person during an examination.
- Using prepared notes or materials during an examination.
- Permitting another student to copy your work.
- Plagiarism.
- Falsification.
- Other misrepresentations of academic achievement submitted for evaluation or a grade.

As stated in the LEE UNIVERSITY Catalog, plagiarism is presenting as your own work the words, ideas, opinions, theories, or thoughts which are not common knowledge. Students who present others' words or ideas as their own without fair attribution (documentation) are guilty of plagiarizing. Unfair attribution includes, but is not limited to, a direct quotation of all or part of another's words without

appropriately identifying the source. It is also unfair attribution to have included a source within a Works Cited page without having carefully cited the source within the text of the document. Plagiarism also includes, but is not limited to, the following acts when performed without fair attribution:

- a. directly quoting all or part of another person's words without quotation marks, as appropriate to the discipline.
- b. paraphrasing all or part of another person's words without documentation.
- c. stating an idea, theory, or formula as your own when it actually originated with another person.
- d. purchasing (or receiving in any other manner) a term paper or other assignment, which is the work of another person, and submitting that work as if it were one's own.

#### Late Policy:

- No credit is available for postings of any kind made in the **Threaded Discussions** after a given Unit ends.
- If your faculty approves your submission of late assignments, each assignment score will be penalized 10% per day up to five days late. After the fifth day, late assignments will not be accepted. (Note: An assignment is a paper, a project, a team presentation, etc., **not** a discussion)
- No late assignments will be accepted after the close of the final Unit.

## EXPECTATIONS

#### Faculty Expectations of Students:

- Have consistent access to a computer and possess baseline computer and information skills prior to taking online courses.
- Log into their courses within 24 hours of the beginning of the session to confirm their participation. (Students who register after the session has begun will be responsible for any assignments or material already covered.)
- Take an active role in each unit, participating fully in discussions, assignments and other activities throughout the entire session. If some event interferes with that participation, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor in advance.
- Review the course syllabus and other preliminary course materials thoroughly as early as possible during the first few days of the course.
- Be responsible for raising any questions or seeking clarification about these materials, if necessary, within the first week of the session.
- Frequently check the course calendar for due dates.
- Submit assignments and papers on time, and take tests by the posted dates. Acceptance of late work and any penalties for late submissions are up to the discretion of the instructor, based on the expectations outlined in the course syllabus.
- Contribute meaningful, timely comments to online discussions according to guidelines provided.
- Contribute substantively to group assignments (if required in course).

- Check for University announcements each time you log onto the LMS. These postings are critical.
- Use Lee email address.
- Complete the "Student Survey of Instruction" for each course to evaluate the instructor and the course.

#### Students' Expectations of Faculty:

- The opportunity to be active participants in a stimulating and challenging education that is global in scope, interactive in process and diverse in content and approach.
- A friendly, respectful, open, and encouraging learning environment.
- A course outline or syllabus that clearly provides information regarding course content, teaching methods, course objectives, grading, attendance/participation policies, due dates, and student assessment guidelines.
- Instructors who are responsive and available to discuss within 48 hours students' progress, course content, assignments, etc. at mutually convenient times from the first day of the session through the last day of the session. (Check the faculty contact information regarding weekends and holidays.)
- Individual instructor's contact information, schedules, availability, and procedural details are located within the course.
- To have access to instructor feedback and grading on projects, exams, papers, quizzes, etc., within ten (10) days of assignment due date so students are able to determine where they have made errors or need additional work.
- Final grade/feedback provided within ten (10) days after the last date of course.

### IMPORTANT STUDENT INFORMATION

#### Special Needs:

Lee University, in conjunction with the Academic Support Office, works to ensure students with documented disabilities have access to educational opportunities. Students who need accommodations based on a disability should visit the Academic Support Office, call (423) 614-8181, or email [academicsupport@leeuniversity.edu](mailto:academicsupport@leeuniversity.edu). It is the student's responsibility to share the Accommodations Form with the instructor in order to initiate the accommodations.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### Knowledge Base/Working Bibliography (Reading List):

Henslin, James M. *Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*. 10th Edition. Boston: Pearson. 2012.

Kozol, Jonathan. *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. New York: Crown Publishers. 1995.



Weinstein, Jay. *Social & Cultural Change: Social Science for a Dynamic World*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. 2005.

Weisheit, Ralph A. and Frank T. Morn. *Pursuing Justice*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing. 2004.

Wilson, William Julius. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Vintage Books. 1996.