

Saint Leo University

SOC 110HA

The McDonaldization of Society

Course Description:

What can a fast-food chain teach us about society? Following George Ritzer's theory of McDonaldization, this course examines the pros and cons of living in a rationalized world where standardization, predictability, and control prevail. As students learn the sociological concepts of bureaucracy, consumer society, social structures, social change, and social interaction, they will develop their sociological imagination to reclaim a place for creativity, meaning, individuality, and free will in the late modern world.

Prerequisite:

None

Main textbook:

Ritzer, George. 2018. *The McDonaldization of Society: Into the Digital Age*, 9th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 9781506348551

Supplemental Reading:

Selection from:

Ritzer, George (editor). 2010. *McDonaldization: The Reader*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 978-1-4129-7582-7

III. LEARNING OUTCOMES (IOR may add, but not delete learning outcomes below):

As a result of taking this course students should be able to:

1. Analyze major historical, political, social, economic and/or life events in context **HA1**
2. Apply principles from the social sciences to individual experience **HA2**
3. Define the sociological concepts related to the theory of McDonaldization
4. Assess the impact of McDonaldization on various social groups and social institutions, such as the economy, religion, and education
5. Decide how to address McDonaldization in their own lives, using their sociological imagination and the core value of Personal Development **CC1**

IV. CORE VALUE (IOR may not alter):

In this course, the value of **Personal Development** will be emphasized as students explore the effects of McDonaldization on various groups in society.

Personal Development: Saint Leo University stresses the development of every person's mind, spirit, and body for a balanced life. All members of the Saint Leo University community

must demonstrate their commitment to personal development to help strengthen the character of our community.

V. METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Item	Points Each	Points Total	Percent Each	Percent Total
Examinations (2)	60	120	20%	40%
Journal Entries/Class Papers (4)	100	400	10%	40%
Class Presentation (1)	100	100	10%	10%
Discussions (8)	100	800	1.25%	10%

Examinations (40%)

There will be a Midterm and a Final Examination. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Because of the nature of the course, the Final Exam will be cumulative. Each exam will contribute 20% of the final grade.

Journal Entries/Class Papers: Your McDonaldized Life (40%)

To what extent is your life McDonaldized? Students will critically analyze their everyday life using the four principles of McDonaldization (efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control) to answer this question in a series of four (4) journal entries written throughout the semester. For the first three entries, they will focus on specific aspects of McDonaldization and develop specific examples to show how these concepts apply to their lives, or not. In the final journal entry, they will reflect upon the first three entries to decide, overall, how much or how little their life is McDonaldized, and state how this impacts their relationships, their sense of identity, and their choices in life. Students will use the course core value of community to interpret their findings.

Each journal entry should be double-spaced, in a font size 12, and include a title page and a references page. The body of the paper, excluding the title and references, should be 2 to 3 pages in length. In each journal entry, students will use and cite their textbook, reader, and one additional valid source (newspaper, magazine or journal articles, books). All citations and the reference list will be formatted using MLA, APA, or ASA style. Each journal entry will contribute 10% of the final grade.

Class Presentation (UE Key Assignment) (10%)

At the beginning of class, students will choose a chapter in the supplemental reading that they will submit as a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation. The presentation should include the following elements:

- Summary of the content of the article
- Analysis of how it connects to at least two relevant aspects of McDonaldization
- Assessment of how students may use the content of the article in their own life, as part of their Personal Development

- One or two discussion questions for the class

At the end of the presentation, they will provide the class with a list of 3 to 5 broad discussion questions focusing on linking the reading to McDonaldization that the class will answer as a group. They will also give a written summary of the chapter to their instructor. The presentation should incorporate the core value of Personal Development, by showing how the student can use the content of the reading for their own personal growth.

You must submit your Class Presentation to Chalk and Wire. The Chalk & Wire link is located in the Key Assignment Module. Students who do not submit the assignment to Chalk & Wire will receive a zero. This is a key assignment assessment; the results are used to ensure students are meeting University Exploration program goals. Video and PDF instructions can be found on the course home page. PDF instructions are also located in the Start Here folder.

The presentation will be assessed using the following rubric:

SLO	Criterion	No Evidence	Partial Evidence	Solid Evidence
CC1	Presentation is clearly organized according to the elements listed in the instructions			
CC1	Presentation provides accurate summary of the material from the article			
HA1	Presentation clearly explains the link between the article content and at least two aspects of McDonaldization			
HA2	Presentation successfully demonstrates how the student may use the reading for Personal Development			
CC1	Presentation uses PowerPoint features in a visually appealing fashion			

Grade: _____

All items listed above are equally important in the grade. The comments in the cells reflect the instructor's assessment of the student's performance on each item. The grade received reflects the balance of overall achievement. Plagiarism will result in a 0 and be reported to the Academic Standards Committee, which may decide on further sanctions. Students should consult the resources available in D2L to learn more about plagiarism. They may also submit early to Turnitin.com to check their similarity report and revise their paper before the due date.

Class Participation (10%)

Students will participate in a graded discussion in each module. Each discussion will contribute 1.25% of the final grade.

Course Schedule:

Module 1 Introduction to McDonaldization

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Define McDonaldization.
- ✦ Describe the outreach of the franchise industry in general and McDonald's in particular.
- ✦ Define the four dimensions of McDonaldization.
- ✦ Differentiate between what is McDonaldization and what is not.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an introduction to the class	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Read assigned materials	
Visit the McDonald's website	
Watch an introductory video on McDonaldization	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Email choice of reading for the Course Presentation	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 2 Past and Present of McDonaldization

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Relate the social and economic developments that preceded McDonaldization.
- ✦ Apply the reasons for the spread of McDonaldization in contemporary society to your own life.
- ✦ Explain Weber's theory of rationalization.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Journal Entry 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 3

Efficiency and Calculability: Consumers 1

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Explain how McDonald's achieves greater efficiency.
- ✦ Illustrate the concepts of efficiency and calculability in various areas of social life.
- ✦ Assess the extent to which efficiency and calculability affect your life.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Journal Entry 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 4 Predictability and Control: Consumers 2

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Describe how various settings, from motel chains to mega churches, make our experiences predictable.
- ✦ Assess the benefits and drawbacks of increased predictability for consumers and corporations.
- ✦ Identify instances of predictability in your own life and behavior.
- ✦ Assess the ways our society tries to control birth and death.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the Midterm Examination	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 5 McJobs and Other McDonaldized Occupations

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Describe how the four dimensions of McDonaldization apply to the fast food industry.
- ✦ Apply the concept of McJobs to settings other than the fast food industry.
- ✦ Evaluate the pros and cons of McJobs.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Journal Entry 3	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 6 **McJobs and Other McDonalized Occupations 2**

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Describe how the four dimensions of McDonalization apply to the fast food industry.
- ✦ Apply the concept of McJobs to settings other than the fast food industry.
- ✦ Evaluate the pros and cons of McJobs.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Journal Entry 4	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 7 **Irrationality of Rationality**

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Explain how rational systems can produce irrational outcomes.
- ✦ Apply the concept of irrationality of rationality to various social settings (eating, customer service, education, healthcare, politics, and entertainment).
- ✦ Describe the various irrationalities produced by McDonalized systems, particularly the fast-food industry.
- ✦ Assess the extent of McDonalization in your own life.

- ✦ Describe groups and organizations that resist McDonalization.
- ✦ Give examples of non-McDonalized activities.
- ✦ Clarify your own attitudes towards McDonalization.
- ✦ Assess the benefits and drawbacks of non-McDonalized activities.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Course Presentation	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 8

Dealing with McDonaldization

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- ✦ Evaluate alternatives to McDonaldization.
- ✦ Explain how McDonaldization fits with globalization and its variations.
- ✦ Define globalization and related concepts.
- ✦ Critically assess the future of McDonaldization in the context of globalization.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read assigned materials	
View the Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the Final Examination	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT