Course Proposal: New Course for general education program and inclusion as cultural diversity course

SOC 2710G: Introductory Sociology

1. Catalog description
   a. Course level: Soc 2710G
   b. Title: Introductory Sociology
   c. Credit: (3-0-3)
   d. Term to be offered: (F,S,Su)
   e. Short Title: Intro Sociology
   f. Course Description: Scientific description of the regularities and patterns of behavior that characterize our society and the larger global environment. Sociological analyses of the social forces that affect our daily lives. \textit{S7 900}
   g. Prerequisite: none
   h. Course is writing active

2. Student learning objectives
   Students will:
   a. 
      - learn about the sociological perspective (critical thinking, citizenship)
      - learn the role of theory in the conduct of inquiry (critical thinking)
      - be exposed to the major research strategies with attention to their strengths and weaknesses (critical thinking)
      - increase their understanding of society through the scientific description of the regularities and recurring patterns that characterize social life (critical thinking, citizenship)
      - learn about our nation’s place in the larger global environment -- with particular attention to the interdependence and interrelationships among societies (critical thinking, global citizenship)
      - learn to think critically, e.g., develop the ability to challenge common assumptions, determine and weigh appropriate evidence, and develop reasoned conclusions (critical thinking)
      - explore sociological explanations of the social forces that shape and control individuals’ lives (critical thinking, global citizenship)
      - focus on how societies are established and change (global citizenship)
      - learn to recognize the social diversity of the United States and incorporate the variables of sex, race, ethnicity, social class, and age in developing an understanding of our social world (critical thinking, citizenship)
   b. 
      - learn about the influence of social relationships on individual’s attitudes and behavior

3. Course Outline: (based on 150 minutes of class per week for 15 weeks)
The following is a outline of the major topics covered in the introductory sociology course. The first section focuses on the foundations of sociology. The second section addresses the foundations of society. The third section focuses on social inequality in the United States and throughout the world along a number of dimensions. The last covers one of the institutions of society and social change. Social diversity is embedded throughout the material as students are exposed to an accurate description of our society.

Introduction
Weeks 1 & 2
Introduction and discussion of the sociological perspective
- the sociological imagination
- characteristics of the sociological perspective
- brief history of the discipline
- micro and macro sociology
- applied sociology
Theory and methods
- overview of the conduct of inquiry (the research wheel)
- role of theory in the research process
- presentation of major theoretical perspectives in sociology
  - structural functionalism
  - conflict theory
  - symbolic interaction
- the research process
  - theory, hypotheses, observations, measurement, reliability, validity, intersubjectivity, correlation, causation
- steps in doing research
- ethical considerations

Foundations of Society
Week 3
Culture
- definition and elements of culture (language, values, norms, sanctions, etc)
- cultural integration and diversity
- diversity in the U.S. and in the world
- production of culture
- social policy and culture: multiculturalism

Weeks 4 & 5
Social structure and social interaction
- the nature of social structure
  - elements of social structure (status, roles, norms, groups, institutions, societies)
  - illustrations from the U.S. and other countries
-social structure and policy
-societal structure and policy
-structural interaction
-structural perspectives on social interaction
-explanations of structural influences on interaction
-the making of social structure
-changing social structure

Week 6
Socialization
-the role of socialization
-nature and nurture
-socialization and the self
-theories of the self
-assessing the role of personality
-agents of socialization
-socialization across the life course

Week 7
Groups and organizations
-types of groups and organizations
-social diversity and groups
-formal organizations
-bureaucracies
-social policy and organizations

Weeks 8 & 9
Deviance and social control
-conformity and obedience
-informal and formal social control
-law and society
-deviance
-the sociological approach
-definitions
-explanations of deviance
-crime
-types of crimes
-crime statistics
-crime and the criminal justice system
-international crime rates
-international comparisons
-policing today
-social policy and criminal justice
-the role of variables such as class, race, and ethnicity
Social Inequality - A number of chapters in introductory sociology address this issue. For example, the text listed for this course has six chapters focusing on social inequality in the United States and throughout the world. Faculty will, therefore, emphasize different aspects of the stratification system depending upon expertise and interest.

Weeks 10 & 11

Social stratification and mobility
- understanding stratification (systems of stratification)
- theoretical perspectives on stratification
- description of stratification in the U.S.
- stratification by gender, by race, by age etc.
- social mobility
- social policy and stratification

Social inequality worldwide
- a global perspective
- stratification within nations: a comparative perspective
- social policy and worldwide inequality (e.g., universal human rights)

Social power
- power, authority and the state
- theories of power
- American political system
- economic power
- global power of multinationals

Week 12

Race and ethnic relations
- minority, racial, and ethnic groups
- studying race and ethnicity
- prejudice and discrimination
- patterns of intergroup relations
- race and ethnicity in the U.S.
- social policy and race and ethnicity

Institutions and change - Faculty may select different institutions to investigate in more depth (e.g., educational, religious, economic)

Week 13

Family
- universal but varied (cross-cultural comparisons)
- marriage and family the U.S.
- divorce
- alternative lifestyles
- social policy and the family (e.g., domestic violence)

Week 14
Population
- demography and the study of population
- world population growth
- population and health
- sociocultural aspects of health and illness
- U.S. and world health situations
- population and the ecosystem

Week 15
Collective behavior and social movements
- historical and contemporary theories and research on the crowd
- explanations of crowd behavior
- policing the crowd (cross-cultural comparisons)
- mass hysteria and other forms of collective behavior
- contemporary social movements and social change
- collective behavior and the media

4. Evaluation of Student Learning

a. Four exams (80%) and two writing assignments (20%) will determine grades for the course.

b. Two short papers are required. One requires students to evaluate a research article and relate it to the material presented in lecture and from the text. The student is to discuss how this recent research confirms, modifies or refutes what has been presented. The other paper will be determined by the faculty person teaching the course.

5. Rationale

a. Sociology is a social and behavioral science, and, therefore belongs in that segment of the general education program. As noted in the outline, sociology helps to train students in critical thinking by laying the foundation for the accurate description of social phenomena. It addresses social and cultural diversity throughout the presentation of material. Equally important, it teaches students about the interrelationships and interdependency of our society and what is happening in other parts of the world.

b. It is a sophomore level course and that is appropriate given the course content and requirements.

c. Not similar to existing courses in other departments. This is a revision of SOC 2710 and should retain the same curriculum i.d. as SOC 2710. This course would be a new addition to the general education program. It fills an obvious gap in the social and behavioral science area; is also a course that should be designated a cultural diversity course because of considerable attention to those issues throughout the course; and, it is one of five courses
recognized throughout the state as transferable general education courses from the field of sociology.

d. Currently SOC 2710 is required for sociology major and minor, for the family services option in family and consumer sciences, and for the social science with teacher certification major.

6. Implementation

a. Faculty members to whom the course will be assigned initially: Dr. Wohlstein, Dr. Benedict
c. Specify additional costs to students: none
d. Term to first be offered: Spring 2001

7. Community College Transfer

A community college course may be judged equivalent to this course.

8. Date approved by the department: 2/28/00

9. Date approved by the college curriculum committee: 3/24/00

10. Date approved by CAA: