Introduction to Sociology
Title III Strengthening Institutions Project
Strategies for Success: Increasing Achievement, Persistence, Retention and Engagement

The Strategies for Success Title III initiative is a major, five-year project (2009-2013) funded by a two million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This initiative is intended to transform Middlesex Community College by improving the academic achievement, persistence, retention, and engagement of its students.

The project focuses on reformed curricula and comprehensive advising. *Reformed Curriculum* involves the design of developmental and college Gateway courses and learning communities embedded with Core Student Success Skills related to critical thinking, communication, collaboration, organization, and self-assessment. Overall, 45 courses will be impacted over the five years of the project. *Comprehensive Advising* involves the design of integrated advising services to include identification of academic and career goals, creation of realistic educational plans, and continuous tracking and intervention with an emphasis on the Core Student Success Skills. Comprehensive Advising Services will be specifically tailored to each program of study. Cross-division curriculum and advising design teams composed of faculty and staff are designing, piloting, and assessing the curriculum and advising initiatives.

The Title III grant provides resources to support faculty professional development related to designing and piloting new curriculum and advising students. The grant also supports the purchase of advising software programs and the hiring of a Pedagogical Instructional Designer, Learning Engagement Specialist, Advising Coordinator, and two academic advisors. The resources provided by the grant offer an exciting opportunity for the college community to work together to develop the strong programs and services that will increase student success.
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Introduction: Resource Guide for Infusing College Student Success Skills

Introduction to Sociology focuses on the study of society and social behavior. Major topics covered in this course include culture, socialization, research methods, deviance, social interaction and social groups, race and ethnicity, global inequalities, social class, family and social change. The major objectives of this course are to impart the sociological imagination to students and help them gain an understanding of the special insights into social behavior and social forces that this perspective offers.

This course satisfies a Behavioral Science Elective and also the Multicultural/Global Awareness Intensive Value.

As a part of the Title III grant, Strategies for Success: Increasing Achievement, Persistence, Retention and Engagement, this course has been redesigned to incorporate the following College Student Success Skills (CSSS): Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Organization, and Self Assessment. The course materials and activities focus on helping students to develop these key skills which have been linked to success in college classrooms. The purpose of the grant is to help students apply these skills as they learn the course content. Students will have an opportunity to think more explicitly about these skills, apply them while learning about and engaging with theories and concepts of society, and then demonstrate how they have improved their communication, critical thinking, collaboration, organization and self-reflection skills by the end of the semester.

What are Key Student Success Skills?

Critical Thinking includes the ability to use and analyze information gathered from multiple sources and form conclusions based on evidence rather than assumption. Critical Thinking involves a variety of means for integrating knowledge, using reasoning and solving problems. At its “Developing” Level (Application) it requires that students identify and use relevant information and reach conclusions consistent with evidence presented. At more “Proficient” and “Advanced” Levels it requires that students compare and contrast differing views, analyze and evaluate information logically, and make inferences based on testable hypotheses.
**Communication** skills can include the ability to write, speak, use numbers, and/or use technology effectively. Communication entails the ability of students to explain ideas related to what they are learning in clear oral or written forms. Such information may be presented individually or in groups. Skills may include the ability to break content down into smaller pieces, organizing and summarizing information, and demonstrating informational, technological, and quantitative literacy.

**Collaboration** includes participating as a member of a community, either as part of a group of students in the class, and/or a group of people outside of the classroom. Collaboration rests on the skills necessary for students to work together in group activities and projects. This includes direct skills such as dividing tasks into parts, collecting and sharing information, and making group decisions. It also includes skills related to the processes for learning in community with others such as learning to appreciate differences, negotiating, compromising, and reaching consensus.

**Organization** skills related to time management, note-taking, test-taking, and studying are important for success in college. Organization involves a variety of related abilities. These include the ability to systematically relate areas of content to each other, the ability to take an overarching piece of information and to present concepts in a logical manner, and the ability to come up with an outline to show how concepts relate to one another. It may also include the ability to read and follow the syllabus, time management, and the use of effective study skills.

**Self-assessment** skills include setting academic and career goals, developing and following a plan to achieve those goals, and utilizing college resources to help students achieve their goals. It involves the ability to assess oneself to gain insight into how one learns, plans, makes decisions, and studies. It also involves the ability to examine how relevant theories apply to real life.

**How do Skills Connect to Course Content?**

We designed a number of activities to help students link the course content to different student success skills. We have arranged these activities by course topic for easy reference. The course topics and activities are in the order in which they are frequently found in an Introduction to Sociology textbook. To this extent, the activities can be seen as building from the introductory level of sociological knowledge to a somewhat more advanced level of exposure to sociological thinking as students move through the course. Each activity specifies which student success skills apply; many of the activities emphasize more than one skill. Please
use these activities, amend them to suit your students’ particular needs, and let us know what works in your classes. We would also like to hear from you about activities you have used that you find effective.

This resource guide was designed by two faculty members currently teaching the course to share with other faculty who teach the course. We hope that these activities, which can and should be modified as appropriate, spark ideas for other activities. We have organized the guide as follows:

- A table of contents for the curriculum guide.
- Course lesson plans
- Appendix (consisting of the following)
  - Sample course syllabi page
  - Activity Handouts

We hope you find this guide useful; we enjoyed collaborating to develop it, and our attached syllabi reflect the integration of several of each others’ ideas into our own course.

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**Activity 1: Writing Sociological Stories**

**Learning Objectives** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Relate sociological concepts to their own experiences

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Communication, Organization, and Self-Assessment.

**Course Topic Links:** This is a teaching strategy that can be applied to any course topic. The instructions here relate to Culture, Socialization, Deviance, Social Class, Race and Ethnicity, and Gender.

**Instructions**
1. Provide students with the “Writing Sociological Stories” handout (see Appendix B)
2. Give students one or more of the “Story Prompts” to begin their writing (see Appendix B).

**Assessment/Reflection:** The writing assignment is evaluated based on the following criteria.
- Is your story about the assigned topic?
- Did you include a well thought out reflection paragraph at the end of the story explaining how you think the story relates to terms, concepts and theories in the assigned course reading?
- Does your story show that you put effort and thought into it?
- Does your story have a beginning, middle and end?
- Is your story told clearly? Is it easy to understand?
- Does your story have specific details that reveal what happened?
- Is your story at least 700 words long, double spaced?

**Activity 2: People Watching**

**Learning Objectives** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Apply sociological concepts to observed behavior
Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Organization, Communication

Course Topic Links: Introducing the discipline of Sociology

Instructions

This activity is designed to have students look at their social environment through the lens of a sociologist.

1. Students read C. Wright Mills’ *Sociological Imagination* (a copy of the article is available on the internet at http://legacy.clark.edu/~goldman/socimagination.html).

2. Students are asked to spend an afternoon people watching at the mall. They are given a week to complete their observations. Tell them to take notes about clothing, age, race, gender, as well as the way people interact with one another.

3. Students are asked to make connections between individual appearances and larger societal factors such as social class, political opinion, education, and lifestyles. At the end of the week students share and discuss their observations with the class. Have students answer the following questions:

   - What differences might you observe in how people present themselves?
   - What factors might shape how they dress and talk, whether they are alone or in a group, and how much they buy?
   - How might C. Wright Mills have explained such differences?

Assessment/Reflection: This project is assessed on the basis of the ability of the student to make the connections between the individual and the society and the ability to answer above-mentioned, specific questions based on their observations.

Activity 3: Debates

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate their ability to articulate a point of view regarding a complex subject
Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-assessment, Collaboration

Course Topic Link: Various. This is a teaching strategy that can be applied to any topic.

Instructions

1. The instructor will divide the class into several debate teams of two students each.

2. Each student will choose to present either a pro or a con point of view on the topic they volunteered to debate.

3. The initial presentations will be not more than 10 minutes.

4. After each debate there will be a question, answer, and discussion period.

5. Debate topics will be determined in the first week of classes.
The debates will be graded on the basis of style (whether a student is reading directly from his/her notes, making enough eye contact with the class etc.), and content (students are expected to do library research for their presentation topics. Internet research is allowed in addition to library research. Library sources should be academic books and/or journals. Magazine articles can only be used as additional sources).

The following are possible debate topics:
- Evolution vs. Creationism (intelligent design) in school books
- Same sex marriages
- Removal of the word God from the pledge of allegiance
- Pro-life vs. pro-choice
- Welfare
- Affirmative action
- Socialism vs. capitalism
- Democrats vs. Republicans
- Childhood discipline: Is spanking acceptable?
- Capital punishment
- English in America- should it be the official language?
- Drinking age
• War in Iraq
• Stem cell research
• Animal research
• Legalization of marijuana
• Universal healthcare
• Illegal immigration
• Physician-assisted suicide
• Gender roles: nature vs. nurture
• Racial profiling
• Reparations: Should African Americans be paid monetary compensation for the harm done to them by 200 years of slavery?
• Feminism or not?
• Should we get rid of the Electoral College?
• Gun control
• Internet censorship

**Assessment/Reflection:** The debates will be graded on the basis of style (whether a student is reading directly from his/her notes, making enough eye contact with the class etc.), and content (students are expected to do library research for their presentation topics. Internet research is allowed in addition to library research. Library sources should be academic books and/or journals. Magazine articles can only be used as additional sources).
Activity 4: Community Survey

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Design an effective survey tool

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Collaboration, Communication

Course Topic Link: Research Method

Instructions

1. Have students read the section in the textbook under research methods on survey research, paying close attention to how to construct good survey questions and how to avoid pitfalls.

2. Have students think about the issues that are of concern to people in their local communities. What is on people’s minds? What issues come up often?

3. Each student should choose one such issue and then describe the issue and construct a five to seven question survey designed to find out how people in the community feel about the issue. They must keep in mind the rules for writing good survey questions and put these rules to use in the survey.

4. Working with a partner, share your survey and critique your partner’s survey. Which questions are well constructed and why? Which questions need editing and why? How would you re-write these questions?

Variation: This assignment can be used in a discussion board for an online course. Students post their surveys and then must critique two of their classmates’ surveys.

Assessment/Reflection: This is a graded activity. Grades are based on the degree to which students make an effort to incorporate good survey writing rules in their questions and whether their responses to their classmates’ surveys are well thought out and take these rules into consideration.
Activity 5: Gang Leader for a Day

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the participant observation research method

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Organization

Course Topic Link: Research methods

Instructions

1. Read the section of the textbook on the participant observation research method. Note the pros and cons of this method.


3. What were some advantages and disadvantages of using participant observation in this research? How might Vankatesh have conducted his research differently to address any of the disadvantages?

4. In groups: Select a topic that group members can research, using participant observation. Topic examples include: strategies used by parents when children misbehave in a public space such as a store; topics discussed by community college students while in the school cafeteria; text messaging behavior of students before entering and/or upon exiting class. Design a participant observation activity based on the chosen topic, to be carried out over a period of about 3 days. The activity design must include steps to be taken (who, where, note taking strategies, etc) and a rubric for writing up results (field notes). Groups meet to share results among themselves, discuss pros and cons of their research design and results and finally, share out with the whole class.

5. Whole class discussion of findings and critique of methodology used by each group.
Assessment/Reflection: Groups and class reflect on the activity in the last step listed under #4 above. Each group writes up a brief report of its findings and each student turns in her/his write up of results (field notes) to be read and graded by professor.

Activity 6: Research Design

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Design a research project based on knowledge they acquired in class

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical Thinking, Organization, Collaboration

Course Topic Links: Research Methods

Instructions

1. Students are asked to design (but not conduct) research, investigating the effect TV watching has on school children's grades.

2. Students should indicate what kind of research design they would use to measure this effect: experiment, survey, observational research, existing sources, or content analysis.

3. Students should answer the question: Why did they use one design and not another?

4. If they were to use the experimental design, how might they design the experiment to avoid the Hawthorne Effect? How would their data analysis technique change due to their research design?

Or

1. Students are assigned to four groups.

2. Each group is given a research design (experiment, survey, observation and existing sources).
3. All the groups work on the same research topic and find the best way to investigate that topic by using their assigned research design.

4. They then present their ideas and explain whether their design worked for that topic or not and why it worked or did not work.

**Assessment/Reflection:** This activity tests students’ ability to design a research project based on knowledge they acquired in class. They are assessed on how well their research design fits with the choice they make and how well they defend their choice of design.

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**Activity 7: Is It Ethnocentrism?**

**Learning Objectives** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Identify examples of ethnocentrism

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical thinking, Communication

**Course Topic Link:** Culture

**Instructions**

1. Students read the textbook material on ethnocentrism in the chapter on culture.

2. Using the news links provided in Blackboard or in the Lexus Nexus data base on the MCC library website, students find an example of ethnocentrism in a news article online within the past six months.

3. Students write a summary of their article with the link to the article and provide a clear explanation of how ethnocentrism is demonstrated in the article. They must demonstrate that they understand the meaning of ethnocentrism in their explanation.

4. Students exchange papers in class with other students. Each student then critiques the work written by the other student by answering the question: Does her/his example fit the meaning of ethnocentrism? Why or why not?
5. This is followed by a whole class discussion of examples, differentiating between ethnocentrism and simple “dislike” or “disapproval” of someone or group.

**Assessment/Reflection:** Responses are graded based on whether and to what extent students identify accurate or inaccurate examples of ethnocentrism and adequately explain the rationale behind their assessment.

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**Activity 8: Nature v. Nurture Debate**

**Learning Objectives** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Explain the arguments put forth in the nature versus nurture debate

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Organization

**Course Topic Link:** Socialization

**Instructions**

This debate activity is one of a series of debates assigned during the semester. As in each debate, some students have signed up for this debate and the remaining students comprise the audience.

1. Students read the section of the chapter on socialization that covers nature and nurture. Assign *Final Note On a Case of Extreme Isolation* by Kingsley Davis.

2. Assign the debaters either the nature (human behavior is the product of heredity and genes) or nurture (human behavior is the product of our social environment) side of the debate.

3. Members of each side prepare their arguments, based on the textbook, the article and at least two additional (reputable) sources.

4. Hand out the instructions at least a few days before the debate (see Appendix B).

**Assessment/Reflection:** Grades are assigned to each debater based on the quality and content of their preparation (research notes) and their presentation in the debate.
Grades are assigned to audience members based on the quality of their questions.

Activity 9: Cultural Relativism

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Recognize examples of cultural relativism

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Communication, Self assessment

Course Topic Links: Culture

Instructions

1. Bring a copy of the article entitled “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema”, and have a student read it out loud to class (see Appendix B).

2. Nacirema is American backwards. It is written by an anthropologist as if he were an outsider looking at American culture from an ethnocentric point of view, the same way that many Americans might look at other cultures.

3. Ask students who have heard about or read the article before to keep quiet.

4. Once the reading is finished, ask the students to comment. Tell students to feel free to comment on what parts of this culture they think are strange, unusual, and disturbing.

5. Reveal to students that Nacirema is American backwards and the article talks about the American culture. Go back to passages in the article and ask students to identify what was being described.

6. Ask students to find an American cultural practice such as Halloween, Super Bowl etc. and write about it from an outsider’s perspective.
Assessment/Reflection: This is an exercise on self-identification of ethnocentrism and gives students some practice in applying cultural relativism. Students will be assessed on how well they can describe an American activity from an outsider’s point of view and on whether they can articulate how ethnocentrism and cultural relativism apply to the author’s point of view as well as their own.

Activity 10: Proverbs

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify cultural attitudes common to many cultures despite outwardly different ways of expressing these attitudes

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Self assessment, Collaboration

Course Topic Link: Culture

Instructions This activity shows that although we have many differences when we compare ourselves to other kinds of people, we also have many similarities. We may have different ways of talking and different behavior patterns, but many of our most basic needs and interests are similar. Participants will discover that, in many ways, people from different backgrounds and cultures hold similar values and beliefs.

1. In advance, print the pairs of proverbs listed on the Proverb handout on index cards so that each proverb appears on a separate card.

2. Count the number of participants in the group and select enough cards to equal the number of participants.

3. If there is an uneven number of participants, the leader must participate in this activity.

4. Make sure that the cards are selected in matching pairs (one card with a proverb from the United States and one card with a similar proverb from another country).

5. Mix up the cards and pass out one card to each participant.
6. When all cards have been distributed, ask participants to move around and find the person who has a card with a similar proverb.

7. Ask partners to stand together when they have found each other.

8. For each set of partners, one person should have a proverb from the United States and the other person should have a proverb from another country.

9. After most people have found their partner, ask those who have not found their partner to raise their hands.

10. Ask those with raised hands to search among themselves for partners.

11. When everyone has found their partner, ask each pair to read their proverbs out loud to the group.

12. Ask the person with the proverb from the other country to read first, followed by the person with the proverb from the United States.

**Assessment/Reflection:**
Ask what participants learned from this activity. Ask students how both cultural differences and similarities are reflected in the proverb pairs.

**Activity 11: Whom to Leave Behind**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify their own bias towards favoring one group over another

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Self Assessment, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Social Interaction and Social Groups

**Instructions**
1. Have students organize into groups and solve the dilemma described below (see Appendix B for student handout).

2. The twelve persons listed below have been selected as passengers on a space ship for a flight to another planet because tomorrow the planet Earth is doomed for destruction.

3. Due to changes in space limitations, it has now been determined that only eight persons may go. Any eight qualify.

4. Their task is to select the FOUR passengers who WILL NOT GO on the flight.

5. They must also decide the order in which the passengers should be removed from the list. Students place the number 1 by the person who should be removed first from the list of passengers; the number two by the person who should be removed second and so on.

6. The students may choose only four. These are the four who will not make the trip. They are to be left behind.

7. Have students deliberate on why they want to keep certain people and remove others.

Original passenger list:
- An accountant
- A black medical student
- The accountant’s pregnant wife
- A famous novelist
- A liberal art coed
- A 55 year old university administrator
- A professional basketball player
- A Latino clergyman
- A female movie star
- An armed police officer
- An orphaned Asian 12 year old boy
- A Native American manager
Assessment/Reflection: Give points to students who can successfully articulate their reasoning on why they decided to leave some passengers behind.

Activity 12: Corporate Crime

Learning Objective After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Understand white-collar crimes and how social class influences our perception of punishment of crimes.

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration

Course Topic Link: Deviance

Instructions

1. Have students read about and discuss white-collar corporate crime
2. Students pick a recent/current high profile corporate crime such as Enron, the subprime loan scandals, Bernard Madoff etc.
3. Students study the details of the crime
4. Have students identify
   - Who the parties involved are.
   - How much money did each party receive
   - How much power and prestige does each party have
5. Each student assumes the role of a person involved in the crime or victimized by the crime, i.e. executives, workers, managers, lawyers etc. and students conduct a role play of the event in the classroom.

Assessment/Reflection: The assessment will be based on students’ comprehension of white collar crimes, and on how well the students connect the concept of white collar crimes to the conflict perspective on the role of power and wealth in terms of how white collar criminals are dealt with by the criminal justice system as opposed to “street” criminals.
## Activity 13: Deviance Theories

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the major theories of deviance.

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Deviance

**Instructions**

1. Instructor chooses between four and six news articles that highlight different types of deviant behavior. Examples used for this assignment include articles on teen bullying of homeless people, torture in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, the governor of South Carolina’s extramarital affair, and the denial of steroid use by major league athletes.

2. Divide the class into groups and assign each group a different article to read.

3. Assign the Deviance Theories Assignment worksheets (see Appendix B) for students to fill out.

4. Working in their news article groups, students decide which theories of deviance best explain the act of deviance in their news article and why.

5. Groups report out to the class, explaining their article and which theories apply and why.

**Assessment/Reflection:** Students turn in worksheet for credit and teacher notes participation in groups. The instructor assigns points to the worksheet and class participation credit for group work.

## Activity 14: Living Wage Calculator

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
Assess the adequacy of the federal poverty line formula and propose alternatives to it.

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Organization, Self-assessment
Course Topic Link: Social Stratification

Instructions

This activity is designed to allow students to compare their notion of how much money a family would need to budget in order to meet its basic needs with both the federal government’s poverty threshold and a budget prepared by living wage advocates.

1. Students read the section in the textbook on social class, how sociologists define different social classes, and how the federal poverty line is derived.

2. Divide the class into groups of four students and instruct each group to come up with a very basic monthly budget for a family of four consisting of two parents and two young children living in (for example) Lowell, Ma. The budget should include housing, transportation, food, child care, health care, other necessities and taxes.

3. Groups share the budget numbers they came up with.

4. Hand out copies of the living wage estimate for this budget for Lowell, MA and also write the federal poverty level for a family of four on the board.

5. Groups compare these three figures: the group budget, the living wage budget and the federal poverty level.

6. Each group should write up their budget analyses and submit it to the instructor.

Websites with basic family budgets and living wage budgets for different locations in the United States:
- Living Wage 101 http://www.livingwageaction.org/workshops_lw101.htm#calc
- Basic Family Budget Calculator http://www.epi.org/content/budget_calculator/
- Living Wage Calculator http://www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu/

7. Discuss the following in groups and then as a whole class: the differences in the numbers, the implications of these differences, why the federal poverty level is set so low, how changes could be implemented to bring wages into line with realistic needs.
and cost of living and whose interests are and are not served by the current poverty level

Assessment/Reflection: The budget analysis is assessed based on how well the students justify their conclusions.

Activity 15: Free Rice

Learning Objectives After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe the ways in which technology influences our connection with other cultures
- Describe the ways technology is being used to address social problems

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking

Course Topic Link: Global Stratification

Instructions

1. Have students go to freerice.com.

2. By logging on to this website students learn about hunger and its causes around the world.

3. Freerice.com donates 10 grains of rice through the UN World Food Program to help end hunger when you log on to their website, play an English vocabulary game and select the correct words.

4. Ask students to play the game and donate some rice.

5. Have students write about their experience. Specifically ask them to explain why a vocabulary game would be linked to an ending hunger initiative. Also ask them to brainstorm about other ways in which technology is helping us get more connected with the world's cultures and also facilitating us to help other cultures.
Assessment/Reflection: Each student will write an essay on what they learned about hunger and poverty and how individual action can contribute or help alleviate poverty. They will be graded on the basis of how clearly they articulate what they have learned about global poverty as a result of logging on to the website.

**Activity 16: Country Poster**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
Explain how access to resources impacts a society’s development

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Communication, Organization

**Course Topic Link:** Global Stratification

**Instructions**

1. This activity focuses on comparing the life chances (access to resources and necessities) between the world’s poorest nations and the world’s wealthiest nations.
2. Look at a map of the nations of the world that depicts the most developed, developing and least developed nations.
3. Ask each student to choose a different “least developed” nation and a “most developed” nation and create a poster on the two nations, following the instructions (see Appendix B).
4. Students present their posters to the class, highlighting the most interesting and startling differences between the two nations.

Assessment/Reflection: Students read the textbook on theories of global stratification and discuss the differences between wealthy and poor nations in light of these theories. Students discuss which theories seem most logical and plausible. Posters receive a score based on thoroughness, clarity of presentation and choice of information depicted.
Activity 17: Wal-Mart Field Study

Learning Objectives: After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Use Wal-Mart as an example to explain some of the dynamics of globalization.
- Employ the field study method of research to learn about corporate practices and consumer issues.

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Organization

Course Topic Link: Research methods; globalization; sociology of work

Instructions

1. Assign a reading on Wal-Mart (for example “A Brief History of Wal-Mart”)

2. Show either The High Cost of Low Price or Is Wal-Mart Good For America? in class.

3. Provide students with a set of questions to answer based on the reading and film (see Appendix B). Discuss their answers and the film in class. The questions and class discussion can focus on the role of Wal-Mart in globalization as well as related Wal-Mart business practices, working conditions and labor issues.

4. Arrange a class field trip to the nearest Wal-Mart store. Divide class into teams and give each the field notes form to fill out.

5. Discuss student findings during the next class. How did their findings compare to information in the reading and the film?

Assessment/Reflection: Questions should be written to assess students’ ability to connect information about Wal-Mart with issues raised about globalization in the chosen film and reading. Completed questions are graded based on evidence of these connections; field notes are graded based on completeness.
**Activity 18: Kiva Micro Loan**

**Learning Objectives:** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

Explain some of the causes of global poverty

- Describe some possible methods of alleviating global poverty

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Organization

**Course Topics:** Global Stratification, Social Change and Social Movements

**Instructions**

This is a class project that involves learning about micro lending and making a loan to a small entrepreneur. This activity provides the opportunity to discuss many aspects of global poverty, from its causes to possible solutions. Sociology often points out problems and risks leaving students feeling helpless to solve them. Being a micro lender through Kiva offers a positive experience and an antidote to this feeling

1. Assign the relevant textbook chapter and one or more articles on micro lending. You can also show a film or film clip about micro lending, for example the profile of Muhammad Yunis and the Grameen Bank in the New Heroes series produced by PBS.

2. Show the class the Kiva website (Kiva.org), explaining how the site enables people to make micro loans of very small amounts. Discuss the effect of micro loans on people’s lives. Explain to the class that they will be making such a loan.

3. Assign each student the task of nominating a person or group from the Kiva website. Students then pitch their borrower/entrepreneur to the class and the class votes. Loans can be in amounts as small as $25. The class can decide how it wants to raise funds to make the loan. This can be as simple as requests for small donations among their friends and family or a fully fledged fundraiser, depending on time and resources available.
4. The loan payback rate is extremely high—around 96%. The semester will be over when the loan is repaid. Students can decide if the repaid loan should be donated to Kiva for operating expenses, or to another organization of the students’ choosing.

Assessment/Reflection: The instructor assesses the student’s pitch presentation based on quality of the reasoning used in the pitch.

Activity 19: Sneaker Truth in Advertising

Learning Objectives: After completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Critique the accuracy of advertisements
- Apply information and facts to create an alternative representation of a product’s impact on consumers and workers

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Self Assessment

Course Topic Link: Global Stratification

Instructions

1. Assign the chapter on Global Stratification and readings on Nike’s labor and business practices, for example Worker Rights Violations at Nike Factory in Malaysia, Why Organic and Justice Minded Consumers Should Boycott Nike and Other Multi-National Brand Products, and Nike Lists Abuses at Asian Factories.

2. Ask students to bring in an ad for a sneaker and be prepared to discuss the ad in class. How is the ad attempting to sell the product?

3. Based on their readings, discuss the following questions in class: What do the students think is accurate about the ad? What is inaccurate? How much does the product cost the consumer? How much did it cost to manufacture the product? What did the workers who made the sneaker get paid?
4. Hand out markers and paper. Form groups of three and ask students to create a **true**ful sneaker ad, based on what they have learned about Nike’s business and labor practices. Students show and explain their ad to the class.

**Assessment/Reflection:** Student ads are assessed based upon their ability to reflect the reality of product creation.

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**Activity 20: Why Do White People Have Black Spots?**

**Learning Objective:** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Identify how their cultural values are similar or different from someone living in Ghana

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical thinking, Self assessment, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Culture, Global Stratification, Race and Ethnicity

**Instructions**

1. Have students go to the following website:
   http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/watch/9/why_do_white_people_have_black_spots

2. They should watch the short video featuring youth from Ghana in West Africa posing questions to people in wealthier countries.

3. Have students chose partners and then list the themes that appear in these questions.

4. Next, using the chapter as a guide, have students think about and then list the chapter concepts that relate to the questions posed in the video.

5. Have students choose one or more chapter concepts and explain the concepts and how they relate to the video. Specifically have them explain what concepts are demonstrated in the video and how they are demonstrated.
6. Have students make a list of questions they would like to ask the Ghanaian children if they had the opportunity. Students should answer the following:

- How would some of your questions differ from theirs?
- Why would your questions be different?

**Assessment/Reflection:** Step 4 can be written up and turned in to be graded. Step 5 can take place as a class reflection on the cultural and socio-economic differences (and similarities) between the Ghanaian youth and American youth. Students should be encouraged to think about how their own norms and values intersect or diverge from those of the youth in the video and to reflect on why.

### Activity 21: Immigrant Interview

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the motives that prompt people to immigrate

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Communication, Self-Assessment

**Course Topic Links:** Culture, Ethnicity and Race, Family

**Instructions**

1. This activity involves interviewing someone who has immigrated to the U.S. Students have the opportunity to probe the reasons for immigrating, as well as the challenges and rewards of the immigrant experience. The activity can also be used as a family history project if students are asked to interview family members.

2. Have students arrange to interview someone who has immigrated to the United States after the age of 12. This can be a relative, friend, coworker, or other acquaintance. They should use the “Instructions for Immigrant Interview” handout (see Appendix B).

3. Have students write up their notes from the interview into a formal report.
**Assessment/Reflection:** This activity can be graded based on whether and to what extent the write up of the interview conforms to the criteria listed in the instructions for the interview and write up.

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**Activity 22: Good Wife**

**Learning Objective:** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of how gender roles have changed in the past fifty years

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Communication, Critical thinking, Self assessment

**Course Topic Links:** Gender Roles, Family

**Instructions**

1. This activity is a practice in verstehen (the ability to see the world as it might be experienced by others). Understanding the other, ability to contrast the role of men and women in the 1950s with the role of men and women today, and writing skill will be the criteria used to grade students.

2. Have students read an excerpt from a 1950s Home Economics workbook called *How to be a Good Wife* (see Appendix B).

3. Ask students to write similar advice for men entitled *How to be a Good Husband* for the 1950s and then write advice for *How to be a Good Wife* and *How to be a Good Husband* today.

**Assessment/Reflection:** The writing assignment is awarded points based upon the student’s ability to recognize how gender roles have both changed and stayed the same over the past 50 years.

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**Activity 23: Family History Project**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
• Identify how current family norms are influenced by historical context

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Communication, Self Assessment

**Course Topic Links:** Family

**Instructions**

1. This activity asks students to interview relatives about their family history. It affords students the opportunity to find out about their ancestors and to place current family norms within a historical context.

2. Give students the “Family History Project” handout (see Appendix B).

3. The students should interview one or more relatives who are at least one generation older than themselves, and preferably more than one generation older.

4. The final product will be a **typed narrative of the interview**, written in complete sentences and paragraphs.

**Assessment:** The paper that students write can be assessed based on the effort that went into writing the interview (completeness, attention to detail), and the care and thought displayed in the reflection at the end of the narrative. Points can be assigned for each of these components.

**Activity 24: Create an Ad**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

• Identify how mass media promotes gender stereotypes

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical thinking, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Socialization, Gender Roles
Instructions

1. Have students watch Killing Us Softly 3. This movie is about how magazine ads provide gender role stereotypes and use the female body to sell products and how these images contribute to an environment in which violence against women, sexualization of little girls, and distorted body images become more and more acceptable.

2. Tell students in advance to bring in poster boards, paper, coloring material, glue and scissors to class

3. Divide students into teams of five and have them imagine themselves working for a socially responsible advertising agency.

4. Have students create their own ads that would sell the same products without the harmful effects listed in step one.

5. Have students keep a record of their conversations, concerns and arguments.

6. Have an exhibit displaying both the original ad and the student created, socially responsible version. Ask students to explain the newly-created ad, what they were addressing in their ad, and what the new ad conveys about gender roles.

Assessment/Reflection: Students will get points for creativity, content, effort, and ability to connect their ad to ethical practices and gender stereotyping in marketing.

Activity 25: Open Secrets

Learning Objective After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how private donations influence the American political system.

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking

Course Topic Link: Government and Economy
Instructions

1. The United States is commonly classified as a representative democracy, since the elected members of Congress and state legislatures make our laws. However, critics have questioned how representative our democracy really is.

Ask students the following questions:

- Do congress and the state legislatures genuinely represent the masses? How do they know this?

- Are the people of the United States legitimately self governing, or has our government become a forum for powerful elites?

2. Have students go to http://www.opensecrets.org/ to track down who gives what to whom. Ask students the following questions:

- Who contributed and how much to the senators and representatives in your state?

- What interests do those contributors represent?

- How might these contributions affect legislation?

Assessment/Reflection: Students will be evaluated on their ability to find information about political contributions to their elected representatives and draw conclusions about the possible influence of these contributions on the political process.

Activity 26: Change Makers

Learning Objective After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of individuals in creating social change or contributing to social change.

Core Student Success Skills Addressed: Critical thinking, Self assessment
**Course Topic Links:** Social Change

**Instructions**

1. Online sites such as changemakers.org serve as information clearinghouses and networking hubs for social activists.

2. Have students visit the website and answer the questions on the “Social Change” handout (see Appendix B).

**Assessment/Reflection:** The grade is based on the detail and accuracy of the students’ answers. They will be given extra points if they can both identify a local issue and become part of a network of social activists.

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**Activity 27: Public Service Announcement**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Communicate the essence of a public service issue in a brief advertisement

**Skills:** Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Social Change

**Instructions**

1. This activity is a good way to culminate the semester. It helps students translate their knowledge and curiosity about a social issue into a tangible product that is designed to change the way people think about the issue.

2. Explain to students that for this assignment they can focus on any one of the social issues they have studied in the course or one they would like to know more about. They are provided with a list of possible issues.

3. Have them review samples of PSAs at the Ad Council website [http://www.adcouncil.org/](http://www.adcouncil.org/)
4. Hand out the instructions ahead of time (see Appendix B) and set aside a class day for students to present their Public Service Announcements. Depending on the number of students, 2 to 4 minutes per PSA should be sufficient.

This assignment may be done individually or in groups.

**Assessment/Reflection:** See the grading rubric in the assignment instructions (see Appendix B). If done in groups, the group members should fill out an evaluation form on each member of the group, to be counted toward the student’s grade on the project.

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### Activity 28: Course Commercial

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Select and effectively present key aspects of the course to others in order to communicate what the course is about and what they learned.

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Organization, Self-Assessment

**Course Topic Links:** This activity links to the entire course and should be done as a capstone activity.

**Instructions**

1. Students are given the “Course Commercial for Introduction to Sociology” handout.

2. Students will work in groups to create a commercial to “sell” the course to students who are thinking about enrolling in the future.

**Assessment/Reflection:** The commercial is graded based on how well it imparts information about the course, how creative and interesting it is, and whether it includes all required elements in the directions. A confidential evaluation of each group member is turned in individually and figured into the final individual grade for each student. The class views the commercials and a discussion can follow about what worked well in the commercials and what possible improvements could be made to strengthen the message. Students can also reflect...
with each other about what new learning and insights they are taking with them from the course.

**Activity 29: Barbie Dolls, Strawberries, Nike Shoes**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural and social impact of industrial production

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration

**Course Topic Link:** Global Inequalities

**Instructions**

1. Divide class into four groups. Have each group pick one the following products as their project topic: Barbie Dolls, Strawberries (or grapes, broccoli, pineapples etc), Nike shoes or balls, Ford cars.

2. Have each group investigate where these items are manufactured or grown, where the raw materials, labor, seeds, fertilizers come from.

3. Students should answer the questions in the “Means of Production” handout (see Appendix B).

**Assessment/Reflection:** Points will be rewarded to students who researched and found a concrete item, investigated where and under what condition and through what channels it comes to us and how all of these are connected to advantages and disadvantages of globalization.

**Activity 30: Personal Stories of Racism**

**Learning Objective** After successfully completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Reflect on how racism affects their own experiences

**Core Student Success Skills Addressed:** Self Assessment, Critical Thinking, Communication
Course Topic Link: Race and Ethnicity

Instructions

1. This activity asks students to connect larger issues of racism and ethnocentrism in the society to what happens to them in everyday life. A common outcome of this exercise is that students gain an understanding that many people are involved in and/or witness racism and ethnocentrism in their daily lives.

2. Have students take out a piece of paper and take about 10 minutes to write about an incident they may have experienced, observed, or witnessed that involves racism, ethnocentrism, prejudice and/or discrimination.

3. Have students read what they wrote to the class.

4. After each student reads what she/he wrote, allow students an opportunity to discuss these experiences.

Assessment/Reflection: Students will be graded on the basis of their ability to relate the personal stories to the concepts of prejudice and individual and institutional racism and discrimination.
Appendix A: Sample Syllabi

Sample Syllabus I:
SOC 101: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY (Bedford Service-Learning)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Binnur Ercem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ercem@middlesex.mass.edu">ercem@middlesex.mass.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Bedford-102 Bedford House, Building 5/ Lowell-LC Building, 5th floor, cubicle 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>781 280 3908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00-10:30 in Lowell/ Mondays 12:30-2:30, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:00-10:30 in Bedford or by appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Description:
This course is an introduction to the sociological perspective which emphasizes the effect of society on human behavior. Major concepts covered include race, culture, wealth, poverty and social class, education, the family and social change. This course satisfies a Behavioral Science Elective and also the Multicultural/Global Awareness Intensive Value.

This course was redesigned as part of the Title III grant, *Strategies for Success: Increasing Achievement, Persistence, Retention and Engagement*. The course materials will focus on key skills of Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Organization, and Self-Assessment. As students in the pilot version of this course, you will have an opportunity to think more explicitly about these skills, to apply them to course concepts and then to demonstrate how you have improved in these skills by the end of the semester.

Operational definitions for each term are listed below:

**Critical Thinking** Critical Thinking involves a variety of means for integrating knowledge, using reasoning and solving problems. At its “Developing” Level (Application) it requires that students identify and use relevant information and reach conclusions consistent with evidence presented. At more “Proficient” and “Advanced” Levels it requires that students compare and contrast differing views, analyze and evaluate information logically, and make inferences based on testable hypotheses.
**Communication:** Communication entails the ability of students to explain ideas related to what they are learning in clear oral or written forms. Such information may be presented individually or in groups. Skills may include the ability to break content down into smaller pieces, organizing and summarizing information, and demonstrating informational, technological, and quantitative literacy.

**Collaboration:** Collaboration includes the skills necessary for students to work together in group activities and projects. This includes direct skills such as dividing tasks into parts, collecting and sharing information, and making group decisions. It also includes skills related to the processes for learning in community with others such as learning to appreciate differences, negotiating, compromising, and reaching consensus.

**Organization:** Organization involves a variety of related abilities. These include the ability to systematically relate areas of content to each other, the ability to take an overarching piece of information and to present concepts in a logical manner, and the ability to come up with an outline to show how concepts relate to one another. It may also include the ability to read and follow the syllabus, time management, and the use of effective study skills.

**Self assessment:** Self assessment includes setting academic and career goals, developing and following a plan to achieve those goals, and utilizing college resources to help students achieve their goals. It involves the ability to assess oneself to gain insight into how one learns, plans, makes decisions, and studies. It also involves the ability to examine how relevant theories apply to real life.

**Prerequisite:** Placement above or successful completion of ENG 060(EN2103) and eligible for ENG 101(EN 1103).

**Required Reading:**

**Course Objectives:**

At the completion of this course students will be better able to:

- acquire knowledge on basic sociological concepts;
• understand the sociological vision of social life and the special insights it offers into human diversity, global social forces, and the sociological imagination;

• strengthen critical and analytical thinking and effective communication skills

• evaluate and interpret the meaning of the textual material

• support a thesis with evidence appropriate to position and audience

• organize and connect ideas

• view situations from different perspectives

• compare and contrast source material so that analysis can be made and theories can be proven or disproved

• draw inferences, suppositions, and conclusions from source materials

• perform a rhetorical analysis of a work of art, literature or speech

• postulate a medley of solutions to a possible problem and present those solutions in a logical, coherent manner

• differentiate between fact and fiction, concrete and abstract, theory and practice
• make estimates and approximations and judge the reasonableness of the result

• apply quantitative and/or qualitative techniques, tools, formulas, and theories

• interpret data presented in tabular and graphical form and utilize that data to draw conclusions

• use quantitative relationships to describe results obtained by observation and experimentation

• interpret in non-quantitative language relationships presented in quantitative form
• apply the scientific method including methods of validating the results of scientific inquiry

Teaching Procedures:

The instructor will give lectures on topics listed under “topics and assignments”. The lectures will be partly from the textbook and partly from outside sources. It is very important that the students study both the book and the lectures for tests. It is the students’ responsibility to ask the instructor questions about the parts of the book that are not covered in the lectures. It is also the students’ responsibility to obtain the lecture notes from a classmate in case they have to miss a class. Students are expected to spend minimum of two hours a week on a regular basis on their readings, assignments, and other class related projects. Tests and presentations will require additional time to prepare.

The instructor will also show instructional/educational films in class. Instructional/educational films are an integral part of the learning process in this class. They will enrich students learning options, provide real life examples for abstract concepts covered in class and will take students to different cultures and different historical periods. There will be questions from the films on the midterm and the final exams.

Students will debate current social issues in class as part of the course requirements. Student debates will be scheduled for once or twice a week. The debates and the discussions to follow will take up half the class time.

Course Requirements:

Debate: (20 %) The instructor will divide the class into several debate groups of two students in each. The groups will prepare opposing views on their topics and will present them in class. All members of the debate teams will do oral presentation as part of their group project. After each debate there will be a question, answer, and discussion period. Debate topics will be determined in the first week of classes.

The debates will be graded on the basis of style (whether a student is reading directly from his/her notes, making enough eye contact with the class etc.), and content (students are expected to do library research for their presentation topics. Internet research is allowed in
addition to library research. Library sources should be academic books and/or journals. Magazine articles can only be used as additional sources).

- Possible Debate Topics:
- Evolution vs. Creationism (intelligent design) in school books
- Same sex marriages
- Removal of the word God from the pledge of allegiance
- Pro-life vs. pro-choice
- Welfare
- Affirmative action
- Socialism vs. capitalism
- Democrats vs. republicans
- Childhood discipline, spanking, is it acceptable?
- Capital punishment
- English in America- should it be the official language?
- Drinking age
- War in Iraq
- Stem cell research
- Animal research
- Legalization of marijuana
- Universal healthcare
- Illegal immigration
- Physician assisted suicide
- Gender roles: nature vs. nurture
- Racial profiling
- Reparation: Should African Americans be paid monetary compensation for the harm done to them by 200 years of slavery?
- Feminism or not?
- Getting rid of Electoral College?
- Gun control
- Internet censorship

First Test: (20%) The first test will be on Friday, February 20th. It will be on chapters 1,3,4, lectures and films.

Second Test: (20%) The second test will be on Wednesday, April 1st. The second midterm exam will be on chapters 6,8,9, lectures and films. Please note: If you are doing service learning you don’t have to take the second test.

Classroom Activities: 10%
Final Exam: (30%) The final exam will be cumulative.

Service-Learning Component (Optional):

This is a service-learning course. Service learning is an educational experience that integrates community service with classroom instructions, an opportunity for students to meet identified needs in community settings where the need for assistance is great and ongoing. It is focused on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility – the service and the learning are designed to be valuable both the student and the community.

Service-Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to

- develop a habit of critical reflection on their experiences enabling them to learn more throughout life;
- strengthen their ethic of social and civic responsibility;
- demonstrate more sensitivity to how institutional decisions affect people’s lives;
- demonstrate respect and tolerance for other cultures and be better prepared to learn about cultural differences;
- work more collaboratively with other people on real problems;
- step outside of their comfort zone to enter, participate in and exit new communities respectfully;
- replace assumptions and stereotypes with more accurate information;
- demonstrate an awareness of the connection between community assets & needs to issues of societal inequalities;
- connect experiential learning with abstract ideas in course readings;
• learn from community activists who have dedicated their lives to making change.

**Service-Learning Requirements: (25%)** Service learning participants will not have to take the second test. The requirements will be as follows:

• Attend Service Orientation Meeting either on the Lowell campus or Bedford campus.

• Follow Service-Learning Program Schedule and Requirements.

• Maintain confidentiality, at all times, of the names and situations of persons they work with at work site.

• Contact site supervisor promptly if unable to make it to site as scheduled.

• Ask questions, when appropriate, about things you do not know or procedures you are unsure of.

• Arrange an ending date for service, notify supervisor several days in advance of the last day.

• Sign Time Report and submit it to the Service Learning Coordinator.

• Contact the Program Coordinator with any problems, concerns or questions at 978 656-3159.

• Find an appropriate placement in a community agency. Middlesex Community College has following categories of agencies from which you can choose: Hunger/ homelessness, domestic violence, children and youth programs, elderly/aging/healthcare, environment, physically challenged/developmentally disabled, multicultural/community organizations (for more information contact the Service Learning Coordinator).

• Engage in 2 hours of community service each week for 11 week.

• Complete a Reflection Project: In order to help students capitalize on their service work and assist them in analyzing and synthesizing their service experience, students are
required to complete a 1 or 2 page “reflection paper”. In writing the paper students will consider answering some of the following question:

- How did this experience affect you?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about others in the community?
- What did you learn about an issue or service agency that is particularly interesting or new to you?
- What do you believe is the cause or causes of the societal problems which was addressed through your service?
- Based on your experience, what would you suggest as a reasonable solution to the problem(s)?
- Was this experience everything you expected? If not, why?
- What were the negative and positive aspects of your volunteer experience?
- What types of benefits (academic, personal, professional) did you gain?
- Do you feel you had an effect on a person, group of people, or problem in our community? How and why?
- What impact will this experience have on your future
- Is there anything you would change about your service work?

Where appropriate, students are encouraged to note formal references. You may cite any of the following that are relevant to your service work and your paper: Agency brochures or materials; newspaper or magazine articles; journal articles; textbooks; videos and other visual materials.

**Make-Up Exam Policy:**

There will be no make-up exams or quizzes unless the student provides a legitimate and documented proof that s/he could not be in class on that specific date. Make-up exams will be essay type.

**Attendance/Participation Policy:**

Attendance is required. Each absence after three absences will result in lowering the student’s grade 1 percentage point.

Participation to class discussions is highly encouraged. Students who regularly participate in class discussions will earn extra five percentage points toward their final grade.
Topics and Assignments:

Week 1... The Nature and Uses of Sociology.........................Chp.1
This chapter explores topics such as the sociological perspective, sociology and popular wisdom, sociology and other social sciences, occupational and personal uses of sociology, and fostering civic engagement.

Week 2 ... Research Methods...........................................Chp.3
This chapter examines the basic types of questions that sociologists ask to investigate social events and exposes students to the basic methods of doing sociological research

Week 3... Research Methods Continued...............................Chp.3

Week 4... Culture and Society...........................................Chp.4
This chapter covers the way culture and society act on the individual to produce a social person. The concepts of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism will be discussed in the context of cultural change and cultural diversity.

Week 5...Culture and Communication Continued...............Chp.4
Activity: Nacirema

Week 6... Socialization.......................................................Chp.6
This chapter discusses socialization as a lifelong process. It focuses on the family, education, peer group, and mass-media as major agents of socialization.
   Film: Killing Us Softly 3
   Activity: Create an Ad

Week 7... Social Stratification............................................Chp.8
This chapter includes an expanded discussion of systems of stratification and social class as theorized by Marx, Weber, and Wright. American class system as well as global inequalities will be the focal points.

Week 8... Social Stratification............................................Chp.8

Week 9... Race and Ethnicity..............................................Chp.9
This chapter introduces the study of race and ethnicity by examining issues of racial and ethnic inequalities in the United States as well as around the world. The chapter focuses on the concepts of discrimination, prejudice, racism, ethnocentrism and stereotyping.

Film: Race
Activity: Personal Stories of Racism

Week 10...Race and Ethnicity (con.)..............................................Chp.9
Film: Fighting Back

Week 11... Sex and Gender Inequality.................................Chp. 10
This chapter pursues the issue of gender stratification by focusing on the biological differences between men and women as well as the more salient issues pertaining to the current debates within feminism and gender studies.

Film: Dreamworld
Activity: Good Wife

Week 12... ...Economy and Politics.................................Chp. 15
This chapter studies the complex typologies of democracy, the intricacies of allegiance to nation-states in the form of nationalism as well as how work patterns and machinery and other non-human technologies shape social relationships, people, and social reality through labor.

Film: Business of Hunger, Dirty Business

Week 13...Economy and Politics continued.............................Chp. 16

Week 14 ...Social Change.....................................................Chp.21
This chapter examines sociological theories of social change as well as the causes and types of social change.

Week 15... Overview, Reflections, Applications

Middlesex Community College HONOR CODE

Middlesex Community College seeks to foster a climate for academic achievement, personal growth, and community engagement, based on a strong sense of mutual respect, integrity, and social responsibility.
As individuals, we will be honorable and accountable for our own work and actions in all that we say, write and do. As a college, we will support and promote the integrity and well-being of our community.

I pledge to support and uphold the Middlesex Community College Honor Code as set forth below:

**Rights**
- Quality education and support
- Freedom of inquiry and expression
- A civil and respectful learning and campus environment
- Fair and equal treatment, including due process
- Privacy & confidentiality of academic and personal information and concerns
- Responsibilities
- Respecting the rights and dignity of others
- Reporting incidents or situations that threaten or impact the safety and well-being of the college community
- Knowledge of and compliance with individual course policies and procedures
- Knowledge of and compliance with college policies, procedures, and authorities
- Compliance with federal, state, and local laws

**Academic Misconduct**
- Cheating
- Receiving or giving unauthorized aid
- Plagiarizing
- Misrepresenting oneself or one's work
- Lying, fabrication, and falsification
- Aiding or encouraging the academic misconduct of others

**Personal Misconduct**
- Disrupting class or campus activities or environments
- Harassing or otherwise interfering with the safety, rights, and freedoms of others
- Stealing from or accessory to theft from others or the college
- Misusing computer and network facilities
- Damaging, or unauthorized or inappropriately accessing records, equipment, and facilities
• Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances on campus
• Unauthorized promotion or selling of goods, services, or activities

The College’s honor code applies in the classroom, on the college campuses, and at college sponsored activities off-campus. College policies, the code of conduct, the disciplinary process, and the student grievance procedures can be found in the student handbook located online at www.middlesex.mass.edu (alternative formats available upon request).

Sample Syllabus II:
SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology (3 Credit Hours)

Professor Lucy Ogburn
Office: Bedford House, Room 201
Email address: OgburnL@middlesex.mass.edu (email is the best way to reach me)
Office Hours: Mon. 8-9; Tues. and Thurs. 1:15 to 2:15; Wednesday 10-11
Phone: 781-280-3910

Prerequisites: 9th grade reading level; placement into English Composition ENG 101(old course # EN 1103) OR completion of Basic Writing ENG 071 (old course # EN 1101)
This course meets one of the two Multicultural/Global Awareness core intensive value requirements. Additionally, if you successfully complete the Service Learning option, you will meet the Values, Ethics and Social Policy core intensive value.

This course will focus on key skills of Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Organization, and Self Assessment. As students in this course, you will have an opportunity to think more explicitly about these skills, to apply them to course concepts and then to demonstrate how you have improved in these skills by the end of the semester.
Here are definitions for each of these skills:

Critical Thinking: Critical Thinking involves a variety of means for integrating knowledge, using reasoning and solving problems. At its “Developing” Level (Application) it requires that students identify and use relevant information and reach conclusions consistent with evidence presented. At more “Proficient” and “Advanced” Levels it requires that students compare and
contrast differing views, analyze and evaluate information logically, and make inferences based on testable hypotheses.

**Communication:** Communication entails the ability of students to explain ideas related to what they are learning in clear oral or written forms. Such information may be presented individually or in groups. Skills may include the ability to break content down into smaller pieces, organizing and summarizing information, and demonstrating informational, technological, and quantitative literacy.

**Collaboration:** Collaboration includes the skills necessary for students to work together in group activities and projects. This includes direct skills such as dividing tasks into parts, collecting and sharing information, and making group decisions. It also includes skills related to the processes for learning in community with others such as learning to appreciate differences, negotiating, compromising, and reaching consensus.

**Organization:** Organization involves a variety of related abilities. These include the ability to systematically relate areas of content to each other, the ability to take an overarching piece of information and to present concepts in a logical manner, and the ability to come up with an outline to show how concepts relate to one another. It may also include the ability to read and follow the syllabus, time management, and the use of effective study skills.

**Self assessment:** Self assessment includes setting academic and career goals, developing and following a plan to achieve those goals, and utilizing college resources to help students achieve their goals. It involves the ability to assess oneself to gain insight into how one learns, plans, makes decisions, and studies. It also involves the ability to examine how relevant theories apply to real life.

PLEASE READ THIS SYLLABUS CAREFULLY AND BE COMPLETELY FAMILIAR WITH IT. TAKING THIS COURSE MEANS ABIDING BY THE POLICIES IN THIS SYLLABUS.

REQUIRED READING:

Additional articles will be handed out during the semester, some of which are noted on the assignment schedule.
Catalogue Course Description
An introduction to the sociological perspective which emphasizes the effect of societal arrangements on human behavior. Major concepts covered include culture, socialization, stratification, and social institutions. This course satisfies a Behavioral Science Elective and also the Multicultural/Global Awareness Intensive Value.

EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Sociology is the study of groups and societies built by humans, and how these groups and societies affect our behavior. Sociology begins with the assumption that humans are extremely social animals, and that almost every activity we engage in is influenced by others. Not only do we live and act within groups, but we also think in terms of groups. We group people by race, nationality, gender, age, social class, marital status and other traits. Sociologists believe that our individual identities and lives are influenced, in large part, by the groups and societies in which we live.

Sociology, like other social sciences, studies human behavior. The particular focus of sociology is on the affect of external social forces and groups on human behavior, in contrast to psychology, which focuses more on internal personality traits. There is virtually no aspect of society that is "off limits" for sociological inquiry. The range of questions a sociologist might be interested in asking includes: What effect does our culture have on our values and behavior? To what extent and how does our social environment cause criminal deviance? What is the source of behavior differences between males and females? What effect does poverty have on health, education and job prospects? Why is there resentment of immigrants when almost all of us are descended from immigrants? Why are people very poor in some countries and so much better off in others?

The beginning of the course will focus on what sociology is, and on how sociologists go about asking and answering questions. We will move into specific topics of interest to sociologists. We will look closely at the causes and consequences of inequalities between groups. During the semester, you will become increasingly familiar with the sociological perspective, and how to apply it to the broader society and world in which we live.

TEACHING and LEARNING PROCEDURES: This course will be taught utilizing a variety of procedures aimed at optimizing the five skills described above in this syllabus. I will not spend a lot of time lecturing. I prefer to share information with you, and solicit your input and interaction in class discussions and activities. You will work individually and in groups to complete several activities during the semester and you will be presenting and sharing what
you have learned with your fellow students and me. Keeping up with your reading and other assignments and participating meaningfully in class will yield positive results.

**BLACKBOARD-A COURSE WEBSITE:** A copy of this syllabus and other course materials are posted in Blackboard. I will use Blackboard to post all of your grades during the semester. You may also be using Blackboard to help you complete some group work assignments.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** In addition to making progress in the five key skills described above, by the end of the semester you should be able to demonstrate the following in your tests, written work, group projects and class discussion
- An understanding of how to examine society from the sociological perspective by connecting individual behavior to larger social forces
- Familiarity with sociological methods of conducting research and ethical issues that arise in research
- An understanding of the term "culture" and its various components
- An understanding of the socialization process
- What the sociological meaning of deviance is and how culture and social context affect deviant behavior
- An understanding of some of the basic dynamics of and the reasons underlying racial, ethnic, economic and gender inequalities in society and the consequences of inequality
- An understanding of some of the dynamics of global inequalities
- An ability to think about some alternatives to current attitudes and behaviors related to cultural and social diversity and inequality

**COURSE GOALS:** Goals are less specific than objectives and not always attained easily, but they are well worth reaching for. I will consider the course a success if you make progress in the following areas:
- Think about and comprehend how larger social forces affect personal circumstances and shape individual lives (in other words, apply the sociological imagination)
- Challenge old assumptions about group interaction and social inequality and begin to think in new ways about these assumptions
- Identify and learn about unmet social needs that result from these social forces and think about possible ways of addressing these needs
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (see course schedule for due dates):

1. **Quizzes:** You will take quizzes on most of the chapters assigned in the course. Please see the course schedule for quiz dates. **There are no make-ups on quizzes.** You will be able to write one 3 page paper worth up to 15 points once during the semester to take the place of one missed quiz.

2. **Debates:** You will choose a topic and participate in a debate during the semester. Instructions will be posted in Blackboard.

3. **Group Activities:** Specific instructions for each activity will be posted in Blackboard.

4. **Film and reading response papers:** You will write response papers based on films and readings during the semester. Specific instructions will be posted in Blackboard for each response paper.

5. **Country Poster and Presentation:** You will choose a country in the developing world to research and create a poster and presentation on.

6. **Public Service Announcement (PSA):** You will work in groups to create a public service announcement which showcases an important social issue and conveys a message about the issue to the public. Detailed instructions will be posted in blackboard.

7. **Service-Learning (Optional):** Students may choose to participate in Service-Learning during the semester. If you choose to do service in the community, you will not take a final exam in the course. Instead, you will volunteer two hours a week for eleven weeks of the semester (a total of 22 hours) at a local agency such as a school, a homeless shelter, a program for at-risk youth, or a program to help the elderly, to name a few. You will write three journal reflections on your time spent at the agency and how your service relates to the course content in the three journals mentioned above. Instructions are in Blackboard. Service learning gives you the chance to apply your knowledge to real life problems, contribute to society, learn first-hand about the needs of people whose experiences may differ substantially from your own, meet a variety of people, and develop your interpersonal skills. It enables you to become an active participant in the community, working to address social needs and improve peoples’ lives. This option is a way of extending your learning beyond the classroom and adding a unique dimension to your education. The Service Learning grade will be based on your
journal content as it relates to your service and the course content, fulfilling your service
time commitment, and your onsite supervisor's evaluation of your service.

8. **Final Exam**: Students not doing service learning will take a final exam during final exam
week.

9. **Extra Credit**: You may write one 2 page paper for five extra credit points. Instructions
will be posted in Blackboard.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

Read the entire syllabus and be completely familiar with all course expectations, assignments,
due dates and grading policy. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to comply with all
policies in this syllabus.

1. **Attend class, arrive on time, and stay until class is over.** Bring your textbook, your
syllabus and any articles assigned to class. Leave your cell phone off during class. If you
text message during class, you will be marked absent and may be asked to leave the
class. You’re not really present if your attention is on your phone instead of class.

2. **Participate and be respectful of others.** Our class is a community of learners and we all
have a stake in making the community dynamic, interesting and yes, fun! Participation
consists of asking and answering questions in class, sharing knowledge and experiences,
contributing to a positive class atmosphere, being a good listener, and encouraging the
participation of fellow classmates. Negative or disruptive class participation will result in
a lowered course grade and in serious or persistent cases, being dropped from the
course. Positive class participation will improve your grade! Your **class participation
grade** is based on all of the above.

3. **Hand in work on time.** No group work or activities can be turned in late since you must
be in class to participate. Any other work handed in after the due date will be marked
down one point for each day late and not accepted after one week (including weekends
and vacation days). There are no make-ups on quizzes; if you must miss one quiz, you
may write a paper as described elsewhere in this syllabus.
4. **Proofread and edit your written work for spelling, grammar, punctuation and clarity.** These count towards your grade. The writing lab in AR 212 is free and available to all students for help with your written work. Take advantage of it!

*All* written work must be *typed* and *stapled together*. Unstapled or handwritten papers will not be accepted or graded. Invest in a small stapler and keep it in your book bag.

**Attendance Policy:** Our class relies on you to be present and participating. Attendance will be taken. If you have no absences during the semester, you will earn 3 extra credit points. Each absence above three will lower your course grade by an additional half a grade.

**Learning Needs:** If you need any accommodations to your learning style, please see me so that we can make appropriate arrangements. I also *strongly recommend* that students use the Writing Lab in the Academic Resource building for help with organizing, writing and editing written work. This is a service that is already paid for by your tuition and costs nothing extra. It is well worth using and almost always results in better grades! All written work must always be carefully proof read for clarity, spelling, grammar and punctuation!! Students with documented disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations(s) in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services in order to ensure that such accommodations are accomplished in a timely manner.

**Bedford Campus** – Building 9 (Enrollment Center), 2nd floor  
(781) 280-3630 (on-campus x3630)

**Lowell Campus** – City Campus Building, 3rd floor  
(978) 656-3258 (on-campus x3258)

**Grading:**

Option 1 (with Service Learning):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 quizzes</th>
<th>20 points each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debates</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Activities</td>
<td>between 5 and 15 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>10 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country poster and presentation</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning participation,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>journals, and evaluation</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service Announcement</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Option 2 (without Service Learning):

- 6 quizzes worth 20 points each
- Debates 15 points
- Group Activities between 5 and 15 points each
- Response Papers 10 points each
- Country poster and presentation 15 points
- Public Service Announcement 15 points
- Final Exam 30 points
- Class Participation 15 points

Your grades will be entered in Blackboard as assignments are completed. Grades will be computed by dividing the total points you have earned by the total points possible in the course to get the percent of points earned. Course grades are assigned based on the following:

- 100% to 90% of total possible points = A- to A range
- 80% to 89% = B- to B+ range
- 70% to 79% = C- to C+ range
- 60% to 69% = D- to D+ range
- 59% and below = F

**How to Reach Me:** The best way to reach me is by email. I check my email more often than my voice mail. My email address is: OgburnL@middlesex.mass.edu

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Unless any changes are announced in class, we will follow this schedule of assignments. Additional readings may be assigned during the semester. Class projects/activities will be explained during the semester.

**THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

1/26  Introduction to the course
      Homework: Read Chapter 1

1/28  Discuss Chapter 1

2/2   Discuss research methods
Service Learning information presentation
Activity: Community Survey
Homework: Read Chapter 2; administer survey and tally your results

CULTURE
2/4  Chapter 2; discuss results of surveys
Activity: “Why Do White People Have Black Spots?”
Homework: Read “After Darfur, Starting Anew”
2/9  Chapter 2 continued; discuss “After Darfur, Starting Anew”

2/11  Quiz on Chapter 2
Homework: Read Chapter 3 and “Extreme Isolation”
Begin Service Learning by 2/12

SOCIALIZATION
2/16  Chapter 3 and Extreme Isolation
Homework: Research nature and nurture issues and prepare notes and questions for debate

2/18  Chapter 3 continued
Debate: Nature versus Nurture
Homework: Write Agent of Socialization story

2/23  Discuss stories and watch video “Growing Up Online”
Homework: Write response to video

2/25  Quiz on Chapter 3
Service Learning Journal #1 Due
Homework: Read Chapter 6; write Stepping Out of Line story

DEVIANCE
3/2  Chapter 6; discuss stories and choose debate topic

3/4  Chapter 6 continued; watch “The Lucifer Effect”
Homework: Prepare research notes and questions for debate
Chapter 6 continued; debate
Homework: Read articles and complete worksheets on deviance.

Activity: Theories of Deviance
Quiz on Chapter 6
Homework: Read Chapter 7

SPRING BREAK: March 15 to 19

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION and GLOBALIZATION

Film: “Born Into Brothels”
Homework: write response paper on film

Chapter 7
Choose country to research—create poster on your country

Present your country poster.
Resource allocation exercise in class.
NO CLASS April 1 – Professional Day

Quiz on Chapter 7
Homework: Read Chapter 8
(Last day to withdraw from a course is April 9)

SOCIAL CLASS

Chapter 8; Draw a picture activity
Homework: Reading from Whatever It Takes; write response paper on reading
Service Learning Journal #2 due

Chapter 8 continued
Activity: Living Wage Calculator
Homework: Prepare research notes and questions for debate

Chapter 8 continued
Debate: Causes of poverty: cultural or structural?

Quiz on Chapter 8
Homework: Read Chapter 9 and “My Big Bad Mouth”; write response paper on article
RACE AND ETHNICITY

4/22 Chapter 9; discuss racial/ethnic jokes and “My Big Bad Mouth”
Homework: Conduct immigrant interview and write it up

4/27 Chapter 9 continued; discuss immigrant interviews; video: “What would you do? Shopping While Black”
Homework: Write response paper on video

4/29 Chapter 9 continued
Form PSA groups and choose topics

5/4 Quiz on Chapter 9
Decide on PSA format
Service Learning Journal #3 Due

5/6 Work on PSA

5/11 Work on PSA

5/13 PSA presentations
Appendix B: Assignment Handouts

The following pages contain handouts accompanying specific assignments.
**WRITING SOCIOLOGICAL STORIES (ACTIVITY 1 HANDOUT)**

During the semester you will be writing short, true stories based on your life experiences and the experiences of people you know. Storytelling is something we all do, whether we know it or not. When we answer questions such as “How was your weekend?” or “Have you heard about the new boss?” or “What happened in the fourth quarter?” we are telling stories. We tell stories all the time, and so in one sense we already know how to do this. Why tell stories in a sociology class? Here are some reasons:

Stories ask you to learn in a different way and to exercise a different part of your brain.

- Stories are interesting!
- Stories can make course material easier to understand.
- Stories can shed new light on course material.
- We tend to remember stories.

You will be sharing your stories in small groups in class, and discussing how your stories help you understand your own personal world and the larger society around you. You will be looking for sociological insights that your stories have to offer. You will be investigating how your stories relate to material presented in our textbook and other readings. Sometimes you will be re-interpreting your stories because of new insights gained in your group or class discussions. Stories begin with the personal: What can you learn about yourself, your friends, your family, through stories? From the personal, our goal is to move to the societal. What do your stories tell you about the larger society in which you live, and your role in it?

Here are the **grading criteria** that will be used for your stories:

- Is your story about the assigned topic?
- Did you include a well thought out reflection paragraph at the end of the story explaining how you think the story relates to terms, concepts and theories in the assigned course reading?
• Does your story show that you put effort and thought into it?

• Does your story have a beginning, middle and end?

• Is your story told clearly? Is it easy to understand?

• Does your story have specific details that reveal what happened?

• Is your story at least 700 words long, double spaced?
**Story Prompt: Culture (Activity 1 Handout)**

**Instructions**

**Choice One:**

1. Tell a story about a cross cultural experience that happened to you. The story should be about something that took place between you and someone from another culture. The experience can be funny, frightening, confusing, scary, heart-warming, or whatever adjectives and feelings you associate with it.

2. Describe the people involved, where you were, when it took place, and a detailed account of what happened and how it made you (and others) feel. A few ideas: You could describe an incident that involved travel, meeting someone in the U.S., food, clothes, speaking, misunderstanding, asking directions.

3. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

**OR**

**Choice Two:**

1. Describe an important family holiday or celebration. Choose one day as an example that you remember well. It could be your best or worst or funniest Christmas ever (or Thanksgiving, Easter, Chanukah, etc.)

   - How was this day celebrated? What are the particular things you did? What did you eat?

   - What did you wear? Is there something particular that happened on this day? What sets this day apart from the rest of the year? What made this day unique or different this time?

   - Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

**Ideas to include in your reflection:** subculture, cultural values, norms, culture shock, ethnocentrism, cultural relativity
STORY PROMPT: SOCIALIZATION & SCHOOL DAY (ACTIVITY 1 HANDOUT)

Instructions

1. Tell a story about an experience in school that made you feel proud, smart, stupid, happy, embarrassed, or angry. (You can choose an emotion.)

2. Try to remember as much detail as you can. Here are some questions to get you started: What grade were you in? Where did the event take place? What were you wearing? Who was there? What happened? How did you feel? How do you feel looking back on it?

3. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

Ideas to include in your reflection: self concept, Looking Glass Self, agents of socialization, stages of socialization
**Story Prompt: Deviance—Stepping Out of Line (Activity 1 Handout)**

**Instructions**
1. In this story, describe an incident, behavior or trait that resulted in someone you know breaking one or more rules or norms.

2. Describe the main character(s). What is s/he like? What did s/he do that was considered deviant or against the norm (or “out of line”)? What happened as a result? What are your feelings about the person, the incident, and the results? Remember that the most important element in your story is the details that describe how this person “stepped out of line.”

3. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

**Ideas to include in your reflection:** which theory or theories of deviance fit the incident best and why? Address such issues such as social control, positive or negative sanctions.
**Story Prompt: Social Class--Dream versus Reality (Activity 1 Handout)**

**Instructions**

The “American Dream” rests on these beliefs:

- That everyone can participate equally and can always start over.
- That it is reasonable to expect success.
- That success is the result of individual traits and actions that are under one’s control.
- That success is due to virtue and ability.

1. Tell a story about someone you know who does or does not demonstrate two or more components of the American Dream.
2. Describe the person, his or her life circumstances, and beliefs about success, effort, work and money.
3. Tell about something that happened to this person that led to an economic or job success or failure s/he experienced. Is there an event or occurrence that shows this match or mismatch? The event you write about should help to explain what this person is like—what his or her outlook on life is like in terms of the beliefs mentioned above. Some things you could focus on are: family fortunes, falling on bad times, good or bad luck, staying in school or dropping out, the Great Depression. Feel free to use all, some or none of these ideas. How does s/he either fit into or defy the American Dream as described above?

4. **Then**, choose a character from one of the readings for Chapter 8 and compare or contrast the person you know with the person you chose from the reading in terms of how each fits or does not fit into the American Dream.
5. How close to reality is the American Dream?
6. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection

**Ideas to include in your reflection:** the social class ladder, consequences of social class, social mobility, reasons for poverty (culture of poverty versus features of the social structure)
**Story Prompt: Race and Ethnicity - The Power of Labels (Activity 1 Handout)**

**Instructions**

1. Describe an incident that you either saw or were directly involved in, in which a member of a minority group was the object of racial or ethnic prejudice or discrimination. (Check the definition of minority in Chapter 9.)

2. Describe the incident in as much detail as possible. Who was involved? What led up to the incident? What actually happened? What was the aftermath? Describe your feelings and reactions.

3. Explain what you think caused the incident and the prejudice or discrimination involved.

4. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

**Ideas to include in your reflection:** ideas of racial superiority, the myth of race, minority and dominant groups, prejudice and discrimination, stereotyping, individual and institutional discrimination, theories of prejudice, “The Racist Mind”, immigration
**Story Prompt: Gender--Barbie or Ken? (Activity 1 Handout)**

**Instructions**

1. Pick a typical day in your life and tell the story of what happened on this day. BUT, tell the story as if you were the opposite sex. The same events will occur in this story, but you must imagine how they would occur if you had been the opposite sex.

2. Begin in the morning when you woke up and end the story when you went to bed. What did you do during the day? Who did you interact with and how? What were you wearing? What did you eat? How were you feeling? How did your friends and family fit into your day?

3. Write your story FIRST and then add the reflection.

**Ideas to include in your reflection:** gender differences in behavior (biology or culture?), females as a minority group, males as a dominant group, patriarchy, gender inequality, sexual harassment.
Debaters must:
- Prepare typed notes on your side of the debate
- Include at least three specific reasons for your position
- Include quotes from sources that back up your position
- Prepare a list of sources you used
- Be familiar with your arguments so that you are not simply reading from your notes
- Actively participate in the debate by speaking up and demonstrating that you came prepared.
- Try hard to convince your audience!

Audience members must:
- Prepare typed questions for the debaters: Three questions for each side of the debate (a total of six questions)
- Actively participate by asking questions of the debaters or making points.

Debaters’ notes will be turned in at the end of the debate. Audience members’ questions will be turned in at the end of the debate.
Body Ritual Among the Nacirema (Activity 9 Handout)

The anthropologist has become so familiar with the diversity of ways in which different people behave in similar situations that he is not apt to be surprised by even the most exotic customs. In fact, if all of the logically possible combinations of behavior have not been found somewhere in the world, he is apt to suspect that they must be present in some yet undescribed tribe. The point has, in fact, been expressed with respect to clan organization by Murdock (1949: 71). In this light, the magical beliefs and practices of the Nacirema present such unusual aspects that it seems desirable to describe them as an example of the extremes to which human behavior can go.

Professor Linton first brought the ritual of the Nacirema to the attention of anthropologists twenty years ago (1936: 326), but the culture of this people is still very poorly understood. They are a North American group living in the territory between the Canadian Cree, the Yaqui and Tarahumare of Mexico, and the Carib and Arawak of the Antilles. Little is known of their origin, although tradition states that they came from the east....

Nacirema culture is characterized by a highly developed market economy which has evolved in a rich natural habitat. While much of the people's time is devoted to economic pursuits, a large part of the fruits of these labors and a considerable portion of the day are spent in ritual activity. The focus of this activity is the human body, the appearance and health of which loom as a dominant concern in the ethos of the people. While such a concern is certainly not unusual, its ceremonial aspects and associated philosophy are unique.

The fundamental belief underlying the whole system appears to be that the human body is ugly and that its natural tendency is to debility and disease. Incarcerated in such a body, man's only hope is to avert these characteristics through the use of ritual and ceremony. Every household has one or more shrines devoted to this purpose. The more powerful individuals in the society have several shrines in their houses and, in fact, the opulence of a house is often referred to in terms of the number of such ritual centers it possesses. Most houses are of wattle and daub construction, but the shrine rooms of the more wealthy are walled with stone. Poorer families imitate the rich by applying pottery plaques to their shrine walls.

While each family has at least one such shrine, the rituals associated with it are not family ceremonies but are private and secret. The rites are normally only discussed with children, and
then only during the period when they are being initiated into these mysteries. I was able, however, to establish sufficient rapport with the natives to examine these shrines and to have the rituals described to me.

The focal point of the shrine is a box or chest which is built into the wall. In this chest are kept the many charms and magical potions without which no native believes he could live. These preparations are secured from a variety of specialized practitioners. The most powerful of these are the medicine men, whose assistance must be rewarded with substantial gifts. However, the medicine men do not provide the curative potions for their clients, but decide what the ingredients should be and then write them down in an ancient and secret language. This writing is understood only by the medicine men and by the herbalists who, for another gift, provide the required charm.

The charm is not disposed of after it has served its purpose, but is placed in the charmbox of the household shrine. As these magical materials are specific for certain ills, and the real or imagined maladies of the people are many, the charm-box is usually full to overflowing. The magical packets are so numerous that people forget what their purposes were and fear to use them again. While the natives are very vague on this point, we can only assume that the idea in retaining all the old magical materials is that their presence in the charm-box, before which the body rituals are conducted, will in some way protect the worshiper.

Beneath the charm-box is a small font. Each day every member of the family, in succession, enters the shrine room, bows his head before the charm-box, mingles different sorts of holy water in the font, and proceeds with a brief rite of ablation. The holy waters are secured from the Water Temple of the community, where the priests conduct elaborate ceremonies to make the liquid ritually pure.

In the hierarchy of magical practitioners, and below the medicine men in prestige, are specialists whose designation is best translated as "holy-mouth-men." The Nacirema have an almost pathological horror of and fascination with the mouth, the condition of which is believed to have a supernatural influence on all social relationships. Were it not for the rituals of the mouth, they believe that their teeth would fall out, their gums bleed, their jaws shrink, their friends desert them, and their lovers reject them. They also believe that a strong relationship exists between oral and moral characteristics. For example, there is a ritual ablation of the mouth for children which is supposed to improve their moral fiber.
The daily body ritual performed by everyone includes a mouth-rite. Despite the fact that these people are so punctilious about care of the mouth, this rite involves a practice which strikes the uninitiated stranger as revolting. It was reported to me that the ritual consists of inserting a small bundle of hog hairs into the mouth, along with certain magical powders, and then moving the bundle in a highly formalized series of gestures.

In addition to the private mouth-rite, the people seek out a holy-mouth-man once or twice a year. These practitioners have an impressive set of paraphernalia, consisting of a variety of augers, awls, probes, and prods. The use of these objects in the exorcism of the evils of the mouth involves almost unbelievable ritual torture of the client. The holy-mouth-man opens the client's mouth and, using the above mentioned tools, enlarges any holes which decay may have created in the teeth. Magical materials are put into these holes. If there are no naturally occurring holes in the teeth, large sections of one or more teeth are gouged out so that the supernatural substance can be applied. In the client's view, the purpose of these ministrations is to arrest decay and to draw friends. The extremely sacred and traditional character of the rite is evident in the fact that the natives return to the holy-mouth-men year after year, despite the fact that their teeth continue to decay.

It is to be hoped that, when a thorough study of the Nacirema is made, there will be careful inquiry into the personality structure of these people. One has but to watch the gleam in the eye of a holy-mouth-man, as he jabs an awl into an exposed nerve, to suspect that a certain amount of sadism is involved. If this can be established, a very interesting pattern emerges, for most of the population shows definite masochistic tendencies. It was to these that Professor Linton referred in discussing a distinctive part of the daily body ritual which is performed only by men. This part of the rite includes scraping and lacerating the surface of the face with a sharp instrument. Special women's rites are performed only four times during each lunar month, but what they lack in frequency is made up in barbarity. As part of this ceremony, women bake their heads in small ovens for about an hour. The theoretically interesting point is that what seems to be a preponderantly masochistic people have developed sadistic specialists. The medicine men have an imposing temple, or latipso, in every community of any size. The more elaborate ceremonies required to treat very sick patients can only be performed at this temple. These ceremonies involve not only the thaumaturge but a permanent group of vestal maidens who move sedately about the temple chambers in distinctive costume and headdress.

The latipso ceremonies are so harsh that it is phenomenal that a fair proportion of the really sick natives who enter the temple ever recover. Small children whose indoctrination is still incomplete have been known to resist attempts to take them to the temple because "that is
where you go to die." Despite this fact, sick adults are not only willing but eager to undergo the protracted ritual purification, if they can afford to do so. No matter how ill the supplicant or how grave the emergency, the guardians of many temples will not admit a client if he cannot give a rich gift to the custodian. Even after one has gained and survived the ceremonies, the guardians will not permit the neophyte to leave until he makes still another gift.

The supplicant entering the temple is first stripped of all his or her clothes. In everyday life the Nacirema avoids exposure of his body and its natural functions. Bathing and excretory acts are performed only in the secrecy of the household shrine, where they are ritualized as part of the body-rites. Psychological shock results from the fact that body secrecy is suddenly lost upon entry into the latepso. A man, whose own wife has never seen him in an excretory act, suddenly finds himself naked and assisted by a vestal maiden while he performs his natural functions into a sacred vessel. This sort of ceremonial treatment is necessitated by the fact that the excreta are used by a diviner to ascertain the course and nature of the client's sickness. Female clients, on the other hand, find their naked bodies are subjected to the scrutiny, manipulation and prodding of the medicine men.

Few supplicants in the temple are well enough to do anything but lie on their hard beds. The daily ceremonies, like the rites of the holy-mouth-men, involve discomfort and torture. With ritual precision, the vestals awaken their miserable charges each dawn and roll them about on their beds of pain while performing ablutions, in the formal movements of which the maidens are highly trained. At other times they insert magic wands in the supplicant's mouth or force him to eat substances which are supposed to be healing. From time to time the medicine men come to their clients and jab magically treated needles into their flesh. The fact that these temple ceremonies may not cure, and may even kill the neophyte, in no way decreases the people's faith in the medicine men.

There remains one other kind of practitioner, known as a "listener." This witch-doctor has the power to exorcise the devils that lodge in the heads of people who have been bewitched. The Nacirema believe that parents bewitch their own children. Mothers are particularly suspected of putting a curse on children while teaching them the secret body rituals. The counter-magic of the witch-doctor is unusual in its lack of ritual. The patient simply tells the "listener" all his troubles and fears, beginning with the earliest difficulties he can remember. The memory displayed by the Nacirema in these exorcism sessions is truly remarkable. It is not uncommon for the patient to bemoan the rejection he felt upon being weaned as a babe, and a few individuals even see their troubles going back to the traumatic effects of their own birth.
In conclusion, mention must be made of certain practices which have their base in native esthetics but which depend upon the pervasive aversion to the natural body and its functions. There are ritual fasts to make fat people thin and ceremonial feasts to make thin people fat. Still other rites are used to make women's breasts larger if they are small, and smaller if they are large. General dissatisfaction with breast shape is symbolized in the fact that the ideal form is virtually outside the range of human variation. A few women afflicted with almost inhuman hypermammary development are so idolized that they make a handsome living by simply going from village to village and permitting the natives to stare at them for a fee.

Reference has already been made to the fact that excretory functions are ritualized, routinized, and relegated to secrecy. Natural reproductive functions are similarly distorted. Intercourse is taboo as a topic and scheduled as an act. Efforts are made to avoid pregnancy by the use of magical materials or by limiting intercourse to certain phases of the moon. Conception is actually very infrequent. When pregnant, women dress so as to hide their condition. Parturition takes place in secret, without friends or relatives to assist, and the majority of women do not nurse their infants.

Our review of the ritual life of the Nacirema has certainly shown them to be a magic-ridden people. It is hard to understand how they have managed to exist so long under the burdens which they have imposed upon themselves. But even such exotic customs as these take on real meaning when they are viewed with the insight provided by Malinowski when he wrote (1948: 70):

Looking from far and above, from our high places of safety in the developed civilization, it is easy to see all the crudity and irrelevance of magic. But without its power and guidance early man could not have mastered his practical difficulties as he has done, nor could man have advanced to the higher stages of civilization.
Paired Proverbs (Activity 10 Handout)

He makes a wine cellar from one raisin. (Lebanon)
He makes a mountain out of a molehill. (United States)

Even a tiger will appear if you talk about him. (Korea)
Speak of the devil and he will appear. (United States)

God is a good worker, but he loves to be helped. (Spain)
God helps those who help themselves. (United States)

You can force a man to shut his eyes, but you can’t make him sleep. (Denmark)
You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink. (United States)

A little in your own pocket is better than much in another’s purse. (Spain)
One bird in the hand is better than two in the bush. (United States)

If you climb up a tree, you must climb down that same tree. (Ghana)
What goes up, must come down. (United States)

From the rain into the gutter. (Germany)
From the frying pan into the fire. (United States)

My house burned down, but it was a relief the bedbugs died. (Korea)
Every cloud has a silver lining. (United States)

He who is not in sight is not in the heart. (Tanzania)
Out of sight, out of mind. (United States)

Two captains sink the ship. (Japan)
Too many cooks spoil the soup. (United States)

By trying often, the monkey learns to jump from the tree. (Zaire)
Practice makes perfect (or, if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again). (United States)
A person that arrives early to the spring never gets dirty drinking water. (Zaire)
The early bird gets the worm. (United States)

I will not cry over a mishap and injure my eyes. (Tanzania)
It is no use to cry over spilt milk. (United States)

Trust in God but tie your camel. (Iran)
God helps those who help themselves. (United States)

A sparrow in the hand is better than a cock on the roof. (Russia)
One bird in the hand is better than two in the bush. (United States)

Where something is thin, that’s where it tears. (Russia)
A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. (United States)

Not everyone who has a cowl on is a monk. (Russia)
Don’t judge a book by its cover. (United States)

As you cooked the porridge, so must you eat it. (Russia)
As you sow, so shall you reap. (United States)

Every seed knows its time. (Russia)
All in good time. (United States)
**Whom to Leave Behind (Activity 11 Handout)**

1. The twelve persons listed below have been selected as passengers on a space ship for a flight to another planet because tomorrow the planet Earth is doomed for destruction.

2. Due to changes in space limitations, it has now been determined that only eight persons may go. Any eight qualify.

3. Your task is to select the FOUR passengers who WILL NOT GO on the flight.

4. You must also decide the order in which the passengers should be removed from the list. Place the number 1 by the person who should be removed first from the list of passengers; the number two by the person who should be removed second and so on.

5. Choose only four. These are the four who will not make the trip. They are to be left behind.

6. When you have completed this task, be prepared to explain why your group wanted to keep certain people and remove others.

**Original passenger list:**

- An accountant
- A black medical student
- The accountant’s pregnant wife
- A famous novelist
- A liberal art coed
- A 55 year old university administrator
- A professional basketball player
- A Latino clergyman
- A female movie star
- An armed police officer
- An orphaned Asian 12 year old boy
- A Native American manager
Deviance Theories Assignment (Activity 13 Handout)

Carefully read the section of chapter 6 that explains theories of deviance. Then write a complete summary of each of the six theories. You may do this in bulleted format or paragraph format.

- Differential Association Theory
- Control Theory
- Labeling Theory
- Strain Theory
- Illegitimate Opportunity Theory
- Conflict Theory

Write a summary of the article you were given in class to read for this assignment. Bring the article with you to our next class, along with this homework.
**Country Poster (Activity 16 Handout)**

Create a poster (about 30 X 20 inches) on which you convey information about the “life chances” of the people in the two countries you have chosen to research. Your poster should present a side by side comparison of the two countries. You will present your poster to the class.

List of facts to include in your country poster for each of the two countries:

- Average life expectancy
- Infant mortality rate
- Nutrition: Number of malnourished or undernourished; average calories consumed per person
- Incidence of: HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, other diseases
- Accessibility of doctors, hospitals and numbers per population
- Literacy rate for males and females
- Number of people attending school up to 6th grade (or other benchmark you can find)
- Type of housing
- Annual income per family and per person
- Types of employment and working conditions
- Existence of sweatshops and numbers employed in them
- Incidence of slavery and human trafficking

Any other relevant facts you would like to add that convey the degree of well being of the citizens of your countries.

Some good sources of information:

- [www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)
- [http://www.who.int/countries/en/](http://www.who.int/countries/en/)
FIELD NOTES ON WAL-MART (ACTIVITY 17 Handout)

Name______________________________________________

We will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the

Chelmsford Wal-Mart
66 Parkhurst Rd.
Chelmsford, Ma. 01824
Bring notebook paper and pen.

You will be working in teams.

Each team should generate a list of five items that will be easy to find in at least one other store for price comparisons. In your team’s space below, list five items and the size and the price of each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toiletries team:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toy team:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing team:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household item team:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics Team:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Find at least one “opening price point”, write down the item and the price, and compare this item and price to another brand of the same item and its price. Make sure you don’t repeat another team’s product.

Price point item and price ________________________________
Comparable item and price______________________________

Look at inventory in the store. What items are well stocked?

What items are low on inventory?

Who are the employees? Age? Gender? Race/ethnicity? Social Class? (How can you tell?)
Who are the customers? Age? Gender? Race/ethnicity? Social Class?
• What are customers buying? Are there differences by age, gender and social class?
• Where are products made? Is there a difference between types of products and where they are manufactured?

**Product price comparisons:** Each team member chooses a product from your category to compare to the same product in another store.

Below, enter the information for your product comparison.
Your team name: ____________________________________________
Item name brand, size and price _________________________________________
Price at Wal-Mart _________________
At other store (name the store) and price ________________________________

Below, record any observations and impressions from our trip to Wal-Mart that do not fit into the categories or topics above. In what ways did you experience the store differently that you may have on any previous trips to Wal-Mart?

**OBSERVATION & IMPRESSION NOTES**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Instructions for Immigrant Interview (Activity 21 Handout)

Arrange to interview someone who has immigrated to the United States after the age of 12. This can be a relative, friend, coworker, or other acquaintance. Explain that the interview is for an assignment in your sociology course where you are learning about other cultures and the immigrant experience.

Set aside about one hour for the interview. Bring a notebook in which to jot down your questions and notes on the responses. You may also bring a tape recorder if you have one and if your respondent is comfortable being recorded. This will help you write up your interview later.

Take several minutes to chat informally with your respondent before beginning to ask questions. You want to put yourself and your respondent at ease. If you or your interviewee is uncomfortable with any of these questions, you can skip over them. If you approach the interviewee in a polite manner, and explain that you want to learn more about why people immigrate and how they feel about the process, things should go smoothly. If your interviewee gets side tracked and goes off of the topic, this may lead to valuable information so “go with the flow.” You never know what you might learn. However, if need be, gentle encouragement to get back on track may be necessary. Remember to take good notes.

Interview Questions:

- What country did you come from?
- Did you come alone or with others?
- How old were you when you came?
- Who made the decision to come to the U.S.?
- Why did you and/or your family come?
- Will you be joined by others in your family?
- Can you tell me something about what life was like for you in your country of origin?
- What kinds of work did you or your family do?
- When and why did you come to the United States?
- Was it easy or difficult for you to immigrate? Can you tell me a something about that process?
• Tell me about what you do here in the U.S.
  Are you doing what you want to do? If not, what would you like to be doing?
• Is your past education and experience recognized here?
• In what ways has the U.S. met or exceeded your expectations?
• In what ways have you been disappointed by your experience in the U.S.?
• Have you met with any discrimination here? If so, were you prepared for this or did it take you by surprise?
• If you are comfortable talking about it, what happened?
• How do you feel about going back to your country of origin? For a visit? For good?
• What should Americans know about your country?
• Overall, can you talk about your feelings about having immigrated?

Think up additional questions and add them to this list.

After you have asked all of your questions, ask the interviewee if there is anything else he/she would like you to know. Once you are sure the interview is over, be sure to thank the interviewee.

**Interview Write Up:**

Next, while the interview is fresh in your mind, write it up. You may write the questions and answers word for word, or you may write a narrative that captures the information in your own words. Either way, you should add your thoughts and reflections on the interview, answering these questions:

• What were the most interesting things that you learned?
• What was the most surprising thing that you learned?
• Did any of the responses remind you of stories you have heard friends, acquaintances or relatives tell about their immigration experiences?
• How might you relate any of the responses to current events centered on immigration?
• Did the interview shed new light on the issue of immigration for you? If so, in what ways?
Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal, on time. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospect of a good meal are part of the warm welcome needed.

Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to rest so that you'll be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your makeup, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh-looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting. His boring day may need a lift.

Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the home just before your husband arrives, gather up schoolbooks, toys, paper, etc. Then run a dust cloth over the tables. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift, too.

Prepare the children. Take a few minutes to wash the children's hands and faces (if they are small), comb their hair, and if necessary change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part.

Minimize all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer, dishwasher, or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and be glad he is home.

Some don'ts: Don't greet him with problems or complaints. Don't complain if he is late for dinner. Count this as minor compared with what he might have gone through that day. Make him comfortable. Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or suggest he lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax and unwind.

Listen to him. You may have a dozen things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first.
Make the evening his. Never complain if he does not take you out to dinner or to other places of entertainment. Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure, his need to be home and relax.

The Goal: Try to make your home a place of peace and order where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit.
For this project, you are to interview one or more relatives who are at least one generation older than you, and preferably more than one generation older. You may interview grandparents, great aunts and uncles, or any other relatives who are willing. Your final product will be a typed narrative of the interview, written in complete sentences and paragraphs. It should be between four and five full pages in length. Include a summary at the end of your paper in which you reflect on the following: What are the similarities and differences you see in the family and work lives of your relatives when they were young compared to people’s lives today? Do any of the differences reflect changes in the family discussed in your course readings on the family? What did you learn about your family that you did not previously know? What surprised you? What questions remain that you would like to find answers to?

Here are some questions to get you started:

- When and where were you born?
- If you immigrated to the U.S., why did you come here? Where did you land?
- What kinds of work did people in your family do for a living?
- Were attitudes toward work different when you were younger?
- What did “success” mean?
- What was child rearing like in your family? How did it differ from today?
- What important lessons did parents teach their children?
- What kind of discipline was used with children?
- What was your schooling like?
- What were the major political and social events that happened during your lifetime?
- What sorts of technology did you use that we no longer use?
- How did you spend your leisure time?
- What holidays did you celebrate and how?
- If married, when and whom did you marry?
- If children, how many? At what age?
- What was courtship like?
- Were roles for women and men different than they are today? How?
Visit the online sites changemakers.org which serves as an information clearinghouse and networking hub for social activists. Then answer the following questions:

1. How might the existence of such resources shape social activism both positively and negatively?

2. Are there any issues in your community that people persistently complain about? (If not, go beyond your community to find issues of relevance)

3. What have people done about these issues to change them?

4. What factors might inhibit them from organizing to bring about social change?
PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT INSTRUCTIONS (ACTIVITY 27 HANDOUT)

What is a Public Service Announcement or PSA?
A PSA is a message designed to change public attitudes about a specific issue by raising awareness about the issue. It is often delivered on television or radio as an ad, but can also be delivered in a different format, such as a written brochure or poster. Examples can be seen at the Ad Council website http://www.adcouncil.org/

In what format will your PSA be delivered?
This is up to you. You can make a tape recording of your message; you can video your message; you can create a brochure; you can create a poster, or you can propose another method of delivery.

What should your PSA include?
Your PSA should include information about the issue that is factual and informative and persuasive. You want to alert people about the issue and convince them that it is important. You want to motivate people to take action. Your PSA should be captivating and enlightening. Here are some questions you should think about as you prepare your PSA: What do you want people to know about the issue? Think about the “w” questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? You can include helpful resources such as a website address, contact information, important statistics. Remember that you want to CONVINCE people of the importance of the issue!

What issue should your PSA focus on?
You may choose a social issue/problem to focus on. You will need to get your issue approved by me. Here is a partial list of possible choices. Feel free to think of others!

- Death penalty
- Wrongful conviction
- Child labor
- Child slavery
- Environmental issues such as deforestation, global warming, the need for clean water
- Global poverty
- Gun control
- Homelessness
- Hunger
• Living Wage
• Prison rehabilitation
• Refugees
• Sweat shops

PSA GRADING CRITERIA

• Is it informative about the issue without being too wordy? Does it tell What, Where, Who and Why?
• Is it creative?
• Is it original (in your own words, with important information chosen by you) and carefully constructed?
• Is it convincing?
• Does it get our attention?
Course Commercial for Introduction to Sociology (Activity 28 Handout)

Your last assignment of the semester is to create a commercial for this course. This will be a creative project that you will work in groups to complete. Your commercials will be presented to the class on...... and will be worth......points.

Purpose of the assignment: To think about the strengths of the course and to convey these strengths to students who are considering enrolling in Introduction to Sociology in a future semester.

What format will the commercial be? This will be up to each group but remember that your commercial must be creative. No plain power point permitted. Your choices include video, skit, poem, and song, as well as enhanced PowerPoint with video or audio, or just audio.

How long should the commercial be? Approximately 3 to 5 minutes. If it is too short, there won’t be enough content. If it is too long, the audience may lose interest.

What are the required elements of the commercial?
- Every student in the group must speak/be heard
- A description of what the course is about
- Coverage of at least three different topics studied in the course
- One example of the impact on group members of something we have done in the course
- At least two things you liked about the course
- Why you would recommend the course

Who is the commercial aimed at?
The student who has never taken Introduction to Sociology and is considering it

Technical Help: Middlesex has a Collaborative Learning Space with media equipment and expertise to share with you. Noreen McGinness will be visiting our class to teach you about the equipment and help you make your commercials effective and interesting.
MEANS OF PRODUCTION (ACTIVITY 29 HANDOUT)

As we become more and more of a consumer society, we become more and more detached from the sources of the products, and consumers’ relationship to production. This exercise encourages students to take a conscious step to look into where and at what cost (money, labor, human) the products they use come from.

Pick one the following products as your project topic:

- Barbie Dolls
- Strawberries (or grapes, broccoli, pineapples, etc.)
- Nike shoes or balls
- Ford cars

Investigate where these items are manufactured or grown, where the raw materials, labor, seeds, fertilizers come from. Answer the following questions:

- Who works in the fields and plants? How much money do they earn? Who are the owners of these corporations? Who transports these products to the U.S.A.?
- How much government assistance in terms of trade and tariffs, tax breaks, incentives etc. do these corporations receive?
- How much do U.S. consumers pay for these products?
- How many U.S. jobs are lost due to outsourcing?
- Do CEO's owe anything to local communities, either here or abroad, when they make the decision to move jobs overseas?