Required Reading:
James M. Henslin. 2007 Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach Fourteenth Edition

Materials:
Students will need a three ring binder for reading reflections and notes. All assignments must be in blue or black ink OR typed.

Course Goals:
- Understand the basic concepts, theories, and methods of sociology
- Analyze the social processes that influence people’s lives, identities, beliefs, and behaviors
- Understand the social institutions in which people and groups operate.

Course Overview:
Welcome! Sociology is a branch of social sciences intended to identify and understand patterns that govern social life on a variety of levels. Our focus will be on groups of people and how those people interact with each other. We will be exploring the social world in nine units. Students will gain an insight in to how each of these concepts interacts with the others to create the complex society we interact with on a daily basis. Each of the units will last from two to four weeks (Units 1-5 Fall Semester, Units 6-9 Spring Semester). The units will be as follows:

Unit 1: What is Sociology? The Sociological Perspective
Students will explore of what sociologists focus on and how this perspective is different from other social sciences. Students will be presented three major theories of social life – Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Symbolic Interactionism as tools to examine how interactions within society operate. These theories will help explain social interaction, social structure and social change and will be referred to repeatedly over the course of the year.

Unit 2: Research Methods
Students will be presented two major research methods used by social scientists, qualitative and quantitative research. The advantages and disadvantages of each method will be discussed and students will be given the opportunity to utilize each format in a real world setting.

Unit 3: Culture
Students will explore the nature of beliefs. We will discuss how beliefs are a reflection of group interactions and how rational choice plays a part in the development of the concept of “self”. Students will look at the nature of language, norms and values as methods for the development of a self-identified unit, a cultural identity.

Unit 4: Socialization
Students will examine how individuals gain the attributes of culture and integrate (or fail to do so) into the dominate culture (and regional/local/attributed subcultures).

Unit 5: Social Organization
Students will explore the roles of institutions as methods for building society. Students will look at how the size, location of a nation can affect the level of specialization within a society and how specialization can cause social instability. We will look at kinship organizations, the development of bureaucracies, and role of markets (economic sociology) as a method to address weaknesses within social organization.

Unit 6: Social Inequalities
Students will explore how social class and social stratification can lead to issues of unequal power within a society. We will look at the development of class consciousness and how this begins the development of haves and have-nots. Concepts that will be explored in this unit include racism, sexism, and ageism.
Unit 7: Deviance and Conformity
Students will explore what constitutes deviance and how deviance can be measured. Theories of deviance will be explored and evaluated in terms of their effectiveness. Discussions will include topics such as juvenile crime, white collar crime, crime control methods, and the role of attributes in criminal behavior (race, class, gender)

Unit 8: Social Institutions
Students will explore the role of the following institutions on the development of society: Family, Education, Religion, and Work/Economy. We will discuss the nature of each of these elements and how society is affected when these institutions breakdown.

Unit 9: Social Change
Students will look at how the demographics of a society can influence the social norms and values of that society. Students will explore the role of birth and death rates, migration patterns and population composition can alter the values of society.

Classroom Expectations:
**Respect all peers and their opinions. This course will explore many sensitive issues including racism, religion and family. It is your role as a student to approach these topics in a mature way. Your experiences will be different than those of your classmates and it is important to listen to their views and be respectful of their point of view. You do not have to agree with them but no personal attacks will be tolerated. Any personal attacks will result in you being removed from the class for the day.**

Be a positive member of the class
Please keep electronic devices silent and in your bag. (The use of cellphones during class time will result in a loss of participation points)
Finish your food before you walk into the classroom.
Be on time – it is a major distraction if you are not.

Homework:
You will have to keep up with the reading in order to be successful in this class. Students will be required to keep reading reflection logs for each reading assignment. There are a variety of other projects and assignments that will be explained as we go.

Absences: You must have an excused absence to be able to make up missed assignments and have as many days as you are absent to make up any missed assignments. Any assignments that were due on your first day of absence are due immediately upon your return. It is your responsibility to inquire as to the assignments missed.

Late work: Late work will not be accepted.

Tardies: I follow the schools TNT policy. If you are not in the room then you must go to the office to get a TNT slip. No student will be admitted without a slip or a pass from another teacher. Any student who is not in their seat when the bell rings will be marked tardy.

Grading:
Students are assigned letter grades based on the points earned for all assignments. Your final semester grade will be divided between the following categories.

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*Participation consists of contributions to class discussion and degree to which students work cooperatively and thoughtfully during class.

Questions:
Please feel free to ask for additional assistance with any assignment! I am available advisory, before school, lunch, after school and by appointment. We are looking forward to an exciting year of Sociology!
**Mature Topics Notification**

Sociology is a course designed to explore the nature of how society is constructed. As such we will be addressing the questions of why particular events, actions and decisions have been made over time. We will be examining many topics over the course of the year that is of a mature nature. Topics that will be discussed include racism, sexism, various types of crime and delinquency, religion, poverty (and programs that relate to it), drug use, and body image issues. The readings and discussions will be accompanied by videos, documentaries and films where appropriate. The goal will be to encourage the students to think about, research and ultimately form their own opinions regarding these topics. Some of these topics may be uncomfortable for students and accommodations will be made when possible, however, students will have to be prepared to address these issues in order to obtain a passing grade in this course. No gratuitous imagery will be used and only elements that further the students understanding of the society in which we reside will be permitted.

Parents are welcome to come in and observe the class in order to better understand the nature of the material that will be presented. Thank you.

Parents Signature: ___________________ Student Signature: ________________

I have read and understand the course syllabus.

Print Student Name _________________________________________ Period ________

Student Signature _________________________________________ Date _________

Parent/Guardian Name _______________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature __________________________________ Date _________

Parent E-Mail address ________________________________

Home Phone ________________________________

Work Phone ________________________________

Are there any goals, concerns, or information you would like to share about your student?

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