

## Course Information

### Sociology

**Department:** Social Studies

**Course Length:** 1 semester

**Grade levels):** 11-12

**Date Last Reviewed:** August 2024

**Prerequisite (if applicable) :** None

**Board Approved (if known):**

**Course Description and Purpose:** Sociology is designed to help students understand the social consequences of people in groups. Sociology involves the scientific study of these groups with the goal of helping students understand society. Understanding social problems in America and their effect on our society requires students to be willing to do considerable reading and partake in class discussions. Note-taking and research projects are required. Units covered include: personality development, the family, social institutions, social class, race relations, crime, and the problems of the cities. Within each unit, at least one social problem is isolated and studied in detail. These include topics such as: the changing role of women, the media industry, science and sports, divorce, religious cults, death and dying, problems of the elderly, and others. Guest speakers are invited to help students understand the reality of these topics.

#### Course Standards:

[Wisconsin Standards for Social Studies](#)

**Behavioral Sciences Strand:** Learning about the behavioral sciences helps students understand people in various times and places. By examining cultures, students are able to compare our ways of life and those of other groups of people in the past and present. As citizens, students need to know how institutions are maintained or changed and how they influence individuals, cultures, and societies. Knowledge of the factors that contribute to an individual's uniqueness is essential to understanding the influence on self and on others.

#### Wisconsin students will...

#### Social Studies Inquiry Practices and Processes

1. Construct meaningful questions that initiate an inquiry.

2. Gather and evaluate sources.
3. Develop claims using evidence to support reasoning.
4. Communicate and critique conclusions.
5. Be civically engaged.

### **Behavioral Science**

1. Examine individual cognition, perception, behavior, and identity (Psychology).
2. Investigate interactions between individuals and groups (Sociology).
3. Assess the role that human behavior and cultures play in the development of social endeavors (Anthropology).
4. Examine the progression of specific forms of technology and their influence within various societies.

## **Desired Results**

### **Unit 1:**

#### **Learning Objectives:**

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1. **Understand the Core Sociological Perspectives:** Students will be able to identify and explain the three major sociological perspectives: structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. They will analyze how each perspective views society, its structures, and its functions. Students will compare and contrast these perspectives to understand how they provide different explanations for social phenomena and issues.
2. **Apply Sociological Perspectives to Social Institutions and Issues:** Students will be able to use the three major sociological perspectives to analyze various social institutions, such as the family, education, religion, and the economy. They will examine how these institutions operate and affect individuals and groups within society. Students will also apply these perspectives to current social issues, such as inequality, deviance, and social change, to gain a deeper understanding of these problems and potential solutions.
3. **Evaluate the Strengths and Limitations of Sociological Perspectives:** Students will critically assess the strengths and limitations of each sociological perspective in explaining social behavior and structures. They will evaluate the contributions

of key sociologists, such as Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber, to the development of these perspectives. Students will discuss the importance of using multiple perspectives to gain a comprehensive understanding of complex social issues and to develop well-rounded sociological analyses.

## Unit 2:

### Learning Objectives:

- 1. Understand the Sociological Theories of Family and Marriage:** Students will be able to identify and explain key sociological theories related to family and marriage, including structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. They will analyze how each theory interprets the roles, functions, and dynamics of family and marital relationships within society.
- 2. Analyze the Changing Patterns and Structures of Family and Marriage:** Students will examine the evolution of family structures and marriage practices over time, including trends such as delayed marriage, cohabitation, single-parent families, and same-sex marriages. They will evaluate how social, cultural, and economic factors contribute to these changes and how they impact individuals and society.
- 3. Evaluate the Impact of Family and Marriage on Socialization and Well-being:** Students will assess how family and marriage influence individual socialization, identity formation, and overall well-being. They will explore the effects of family dynamics on psychological and emotional health, as well as the role of marriage in shaping social roles and expectations. Students will also discuss how changes in family and marriage patterns affect broader social issues, Students will discuss and explore how changes in family and marriage patterns impact society and the economy.

## Unit 3:

### Learning Objectives:

- 1. Understand the Concept of Culture and Its Components:** Students will be able to define culture and identify its key components, including norms, values, beliefs, symbols, language, and material artifacts. They will analyze how these components interact to form cultural systems and influence individual and group behavior.
- 2. Analyze Cultural Diversity and Its Impact on Society:** Students will examine the concept of cultural diversity and explore how different cultures coexist and interact within societies. They will analyze the impact of cultural diversity on social relationships, communication, and conflict. Students will also discuss the challenges and benefits of multiculturalism and cultural exchange in a globalized world.

**3. Evaluate the Role of Culture in Shaping Social Identity and Socialization:** Students will assess how culture shapes individual and group identities, including aspects such as ethnicity, nationality and social class. They will explore the role of socialization in transmitting cultural values and norms, and how cultural influences impact social roles and personal development. Students will also discuss the ways in which culture evolves and adapts over time in response to social changes.

#### Unit 4:

##### Learning Objectives:

- 1. Understand the Theories and Types of Collective Behavior:** Students will be able to identify and explain major theories of collective behavior, such as the contagion theory, convergence theory, and emergent norm theory. They will also describe different types of collective behavior, including crowds, mobs, panics, fads, and social movements, and analyze the characteristics and dynamics of each type.
- 2. Analyze Factors Influencing Collective Behavior:** Students will examine the social, psychological, and environmental factors that influence collective behavior. They will explore how factors such as group dynamics, social norms, communication, and situational contexts contribute to the formation and outcomes of collective actions. Students will also analyze real-world examples of collective behavior to understand how these factors interplay in various situations.
- 3. Evaluate the Impact of Collective Behavior on Social Change and Stability:** Students will assess how collective behavior can lead to social change or reinforce social stability. They will explore the role of collective actions in shaping public opinion, initiating social movements, and influencing policy decisions. Students will also discuss the potential positive and negative consequences of collective behavior on individuals and society, including issues related to social cohesion, conflict, and reform.

#### Unit 5:

##### Learning Objectives:

- 1. Understand the Process and Theories of Socialization:** Students will be able to define socialization and explain its importance in the development of individuals and society. They will identify and describe major theories of socialization,

including the symbolic interactionist perspective, the functionalist perspective, and the conflict perspective. Students will analyze how these theories explain the process through which individuals learn social norms, values, and roles.

**2. Analyze the Role of Socialization Agents:** Students will examine the various agents of socialization, such as family, peers, schools, media, and religion, and assess their impact on individual development and identity formation. They will explore how each agent influences behavior, beliefs, and social roles, and discuss the interactions among these agents in shaping individuals' social experiences and perspectives.

**3. Evaluate the Effects of Socialization on Identity and Social Roles:** Students will analyze how socialization contributes to the formation of personal and social identity, including aspects such as gender, ethnicity, and social class. They will evaluate how socialization affects the adoption and performance of social roles and how it influences individuals' interactions with others. Students will also discuss the potential for socialization to both reinforce and challenge existing social norms and structures.

## Unit 6:

### Learning Objectives:

**1. Understand the Concepts and Measures of Income Inequality:** Students will be able to define income inequality and distinguish between different measures of inequality, such as the Gini coefficient, income quintiles, and poverty rates. They will analyze how income inequality is quantified and reported, and explore the factors contributing to disparities in income distribution within societies.

**2. Analyze the Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality:** Students will examine the social, economic, and political factors that contribute to income inequality, including education, employment, globalization, and governmental policies. They will evaluate the impact of income inequality on various aspects of society, such as social mobility, health outcomes, and access to resources. Students will also discuss how income inequality affects different social groups and contributes to broader societal issues.

**3. Evaluate Strategies and Policies to Address Income Inequality:** Students will explore various strategies and policies designed to reduce income inequality, including progressive taxation, social welfare programs, minimum wage laws, and educational reforms. They will assess the effectiveness of these approaches in addressing income disparities and promoting economic equity. Students will also discuss potential challenges and debates related to implementing and evaluating policies aimed at reducing income inequality.

Textbook

Sociology: A Down to Earth Approach. James Henslin. Pearson.

**Primary Resources**