



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

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# **SOCIOLOGY I**

**2024: TERM 1**

## **INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

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Welcome to the Department of Sociology & Industrial Sociology and to this introductory module to sociology!

Before entering university, most students are largely unaware of the academic discipline of sociology. However, sociology is a well-established discipline throughout the world. This introductory module in sociology will introduce you to the sociological way of looking at the world known as the 'sociological perspective'. You will discover that sociology is the scientific study of human social interactions in society and the social forces that shape much of human behaviour. Put differently, it is about understanding why people do or think what they do.

The sociological perspective requires one to develop a *sociological imagination* (as C. Wright Mills called it), which seeks to connect events in our daily lives to broader social processes. Therefore, it will become clear that sociology is not simply a discipline concerned with social phenomena, but a way of thinking about the world that sociologists call the sociological imagination. It provides a unique lens for seeing and understanding the world, which we do not naturally possess.

The purpose of this introductory module is to give you a broad understanding of sociology and what sociologists study and how they do it. Sociology has developed numerous concepts and theories that act as 'lenses' to view the social world. This module will introduce you to some of these sociological concepts and theories. Ultimately, it should provide you with an essential framework to situate your life and surroundings, which can be very enlightening and empowering.

## **MODULE STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT**

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### **Lectures and Tutorials**

There will be four face-to-face lectures per week (Monday – Thursday).

There will also be four tutorials (in weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). Tutorials will be conducted in-person and attendance is *compulsory*. There will be no hand-in assignment for the first tutorial. However, you will be required to prepare and hand in a tutorial assignment for the rest of the tutorials. These will be marked and returned to you. *These tutorials assignments will count 5% towards your module mark* and will also prepare you for the test and exams. You are therefore advised to take tutorial submissions seriously.

### **Assessments**

You will be assessed on what you are taught and what you have read. The assessment methods used for this module will be a test, tutorial assignments and an examination. Please read the *Sociology Handbook*, which will be sent to all students, to familiarise yourselves with the departmental guidelines. Your assessments will be marked in line with the criteria (for tests,

assignments and examinations) contained in the Handbook. Prior to undertaking any assessment, the lecturer will go through the criteria with you during lectures. The University has invested in software, known as Turnitin, which is designed to detect plagiarism. You may therefore be required to submit your work electronically so that it may be tested.

- **Test**

A one-hour test will be written in week five of the module in evening of *1 March 2024*. The test will count *25% of the mark* for the module.

- **Tutorials**

Four of the five tutorial (weeks 3, 4, 5, 6) submissions for this module will count *5%* towards your module mark. The test and the tutorial marks combined will *count 30% towards* the module mark.

If you fail to write a test or submit the tutorials without a Leave of Absence (LOA) certificate, you will put your Duly Performed (DP) certificate in jeopardy. LOA forms are available in the department (email Mrs Noluvuyo Sakata at [Noluvuyo.Sakata@ru.ac.za](mailto:Noluvuyo.Sakata@ru.ac.za)), and must be submitted with the relevant supporting documentation (a doctor's certificate, letter from a warden, letter from a psychologist, etc.). You must establish whether it was approved, as the granting of an LOA by the Head of Department is not automatic (see the *Sociology Handbook* for details).

- **One weekly quiz on RUconnected**

There will be a weekly in-class quiz on Thursdays. The quiz will assess students on the content taught during the week. While the quiz will not count for marks, it will help students prepare for the test and exam.

- **Examination**

You will write an examination in June/July, which accounts for *70%* of the module mark.

## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR THIS MODULE**

A lecture structure is provided below. Each lecture or set of lectures has a title and accompanying readings. You are advised to read the prescribed readings and watch the accompanying videos prior to each lecture to facilitate an understanding of what will be discussed in the lectures. It is useful to note questions you would like to ask the lecturer, or alternatively, to look out for answers during the lectures. After each lecture, you may want to go over the readings to clarify any remaining areas of confusion.

In addition to the prescribed readings, you are strongly encouraged to read “introduction to sociology” books in the library and academic electronic resources. Not only is reading prior to a lecture an important means of preparation, but it also allows you to focus on what the lecturer

is saying, and less on taking notes. In addition, it will enable you to only jot down important points, such as examples of key concepts.

You are encouraged to participate in the lectures as much as possible – not only through asking questions, but by critically thinking about what is being said and jotting down areas that interest or confuse you. You can then do further reading around these sections of the work. Lectures are based on a variety of perspectives; as such, no single reading is able to capture a lecture in its entirety. That is why you are given a number of readings for each topic. For the tests, tutorials and examination, you are expected to know what has been covered in lectures, but you also need to provide evidence of reading the relevant material (listed below). You will be rewarded for evidence of reading, especially independent reading of material not recommended in the module outline. Just make sure that the readings you consult are from a reliable and scholarly source such as a published book, a sociology department website or a refereed journal article (see the *Sociology Handbook* for more details).

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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The module is designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- understand the history of sociology as a scientific discipline, and how sociological knowledge is produced (through social research);
- be able to offer an account of the sociological imagination, including the importance of debunking widely-held or common-sense views about human society;
- have a critical understanding of the relationship between the individual and society (how we are affected by our social world);
- be able to apply key sociological concepts in your tutorial assignments, test and exam questions, and to social problems in your everyday life; and
- understand key sociological theories and how they are used to explain society.

## **READING MATERIAL**

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While all the reading material prescribed in this module will be uploaded on the RUconnected page for this module, you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with the library where you can borrow the books.

## **MODULE EVALUATIONS**

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As a department, we are committed to reflecting on our teaching practices and content to strengthen our modules and courses. Towards the end of the term, you will be asked to participate in a course evaluation process. Please take this seriously and evaluate the module honestly. Your input will be highly appreciated.

## **CONSULTATION TIMES**

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I will be available for consultation on *Tuesday and Wednesday from 11:30 until 13:00*. Should these times be in conflict with your academic schedule, please send me an email to arrange for a suitable time.

## **Week 1 & 2: Introduction to Sociology as the Study of Society**

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All fields of social scientific study draw influence from the social settings and bear the mark of the conditions of the time from which they emerge. In this section, you will be introduced to the origins of sociology and the basic concepts used in the discipline. We will also examine the most prominent social and political conditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that influenced the development of sociology as a discipline. We will also explore the emergence of sociology in South Africa. By the end of this section, you should be able to:

- Discuss factors that led to the emergence of sociology as a discipline
- Discuss the history and the factors that led to the establishment of sociology in South Africa
- Define and discuss sociology as a discipline, and a lens through the debunking motifs and the sociological imagination

### **1. Introduction to the module**

- *No reading.*

#### **NB: Compulsory viewing before Lecture 2:**

- Video 1: Sociologists on Sociology  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqbFRa3UyQQ>
- Video 2: The Wisdom of Sociology: Sam Richards at TEDxLacador  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWD6g9CV\\_sc&t=74s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWD6g9CV_sc&t=74s)

### **2. What is Sociology?**

- *Define sociology and state its main focus.*

#### **Readings:**

Giddens, A. (2006). *Sociology* (fifth edition). Cambridge: Polity. [pp. 4-7; 26-27].

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Introductory chapter]

### **3. Sociology as science versus common sense**

- *Distinguish sociology from common sense.*

**Readings:**

Schaefer, R.T. (2008). *Sociology matters*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [Pages 5-6]

Tischler, H.L. (1993). *Introduction to sociology* (fifth edition). Fort Worth: The Harcourt Press. [Pages 8-9]

**4. Sociology as imaginative understanding: The Sociological Imagination**

- *What is the sociological imagination?*
- *The individual versus society*
- *Private troubles versus social issues*

**Readings:**

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Pages xvi-xix]

Graaff, J. (2001). *What is Sociology?* Cape Town: Oxford University Press. [Chapter 1].

**5. Sociology as a form of consciousness**

- *Sociological definitions of society, social, and the problem.*
- *Identify and explain the 4 motifs/dimensions of sociological consciousness.*

**Reading:**

Berger, P. (1963). *An invitation to sociology*. London: Penguin. [Chapter 2].

**6. Historical emergence of the discipline of Sociology**

- *Identify and explain the political, social, and intellectual factors*

**Reading:**

Ritzer, G. (1992). *Classical sociological theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [Chapter 1]

**7. Key Figures**

- *Identify and explain the contributions of key figures in the discipline of sociology: Auguste Comte, Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, W.E.B DuBois*

**Reading:**

Tischler, H.L. (1993). *Introduction to sociology* (fifth edition). Fort Worth: The Harcourt Press. [Pages 11-18]

**8. Sociology in South Africa**

- *Trace the emergence and development of sociology in South Africa*
- *Key events and factors in the emergence of sociology in South Africa*

**Readings:**

- Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Chapter 23]
- Jubber, K. (2007). Sociology in South Africa: A brief historical review of research and publishing. *International Sociology*, Vol. 22(5), pp.527-546.

**Week 4 & 5: Theory & Society: Introduction to Social Theory**

In this section, you will be introduced to sociological theory, and the role of theories in sociology. We will cover the three dominant perspectives in sociology and the founding figures: the *functionalist* perspective (Emile Durkheim), the *conflict* perspective (Karl Marx) and the *symbolic interactionist* perspective (Max Weber). These foundational theories are crucial to understanding the discipline of sociology. By the end of this section, you should be able to :

- Define and discuss theory and its uses in sociology
- Distinguish between three dominant perspectives in sociology and their founding scholars

**1. What is Theory?**

- *Define theory and its uses in sociology*

**Reading:**

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [pp. 1-9]

**2. Three dominant theories and the founding figures:**

- *Describe and contrast functionalism, conflict theory, and the interactionist perspective*

**Readings:**

- Schaefer, R.T. (2008). *Sociology matters*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [Pages 13-17]
- Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Chapter 1, pp.12]
- Tischler, H.L. (1993). *Introduction to sociology* (fifth edition). Fort Worth: The Harcourt Press. [Pages 20-22]

## Week 6: The Individual in Society

This section will examine the relationship between the individual and society. Human life and society always go together. Individuals live and act within society, but society cannot exist without individuals. It is in the society that an individual is surrounded and encompassed by race, gender, class, culture, etc., and is socialised into the prevailing norms. The relation between the two depends upon the fact that the individual and the society are mutually dependent, one grows with the help of the other. By the end of this section, you should be familiar with:

- The process of socialization and its functions
- The acquisition of the social self, according to George Mead, Irving Goffman, and Charles Horton Cooley
- The distinction between sex, gender and sexual orientation
- The binary and the social constructions of gender
- The impact of culture on the individual

### **1. Socialization and the acquisition of social self**

- *What is socialization*
- *Agents of socialization*
- *The functions of socialization*

*NB: Compulsory viewing: Genie Wiley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjZolHCrC8E>*

#### **Readings:**

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Chapter 6]

Ferrante, J. (2014). *Seeing sociology: An introduction* (second edition). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning. [Chapter 3]

### **2. The self and socialization**

- *Discuss the theories of George Mead, Erving Goffman, and Charles Cooley about the development of the self*

#### **Readings:**

Schaefer, R.T. (2008). *Sociology matters*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [Pages 50-53]

Ferrante, J. (2014). *Seeing sociology: An introduction* (second edition). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning. [Chapter 3]

### **3. Gender, sex, and sexuality**

- *Distinguish between gender, sex, and sexuality*
- *Discuss the social constructionist view of gender*

*NB: Compulsory viewing: Moving beyond the binary of sex and gender <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NHV4Az-EzY>*



**Readings:**

Giddens, A. (2006). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press. [Chapter 12]

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Chapter 7]

**4. Culture**

- *What is culture?*
- *Elements of culture.*

**Readings:**

Stewart, P. & Zaaiman, J. (eds.) (2014). *Sociology: A South African introduction*. Cape Town: Juta & Company. [Chapter 5]

Schaefer, R.T. (2008). *Sociology matters*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [Pages 33-42]

**Week 7: How Do We Do Sociology? Basic Perspectives and Research**

Sociologists investigate social life by following particular methodologies, employing research instruments and posing distinct questions in order to uncover the phenomena at hand. In this section, we examine some of the steps in the research processes through which sociologists seek answers. In this week, we will also do a brief revision of the earlier sections of the module.

**1. Social Research, Methodology, & Methods**

- *Define social research*
- *Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies*
- *Know the appropriate research instruments for each of the above methodologies*

**Readings:**

▪ Giddens, A. (2006). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press. [Chapter 3].

▪ Ferrante, J. (2014). *Seeing sociology: An introduction* (second edition).  
Wadsworth: Cengage Learning. [Chapters 1, 3]

▪ Fulcher, J. & Scott, J. (2007). *Sociology* (third edition). New York: Oxford  
University Press. [Chapter 3]

**TUTORIALS**

**NB:** You will be allocated to tutorial groups in the first week of term. *It is your duty to check your allocated group, venue, tutor, and the time-slot for your tutorial. It is also your duty to promptly report any identified clashes of your allocated time-slot to Mrs. Juanita Fuller, the departmental administrator.* Missing a tutorial because you either did not check your allocated group or report clashes in advance will not be a valid reason.

### **You must reference all your tutorial submissions**

Please consult the *Sociology Handbook* for an outline of the University's policy on plagiarism, guidelines on the formatting and writing of assignments, the departmental rules regarding citations and references, and the criteria for assessing written work. A copy of the Assignment Cover Sheet, which must accompany all assignments submitted to the Department, is also available in the *Handbook*.

### **Tutorial 1 – Week 2**

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There is no written assignment for this week's tutorial, and the tutor will facilitate discussions on:

- The purpose of weekly tutorials and the resident tutor system
- How to read sociology texts
- How to write an academic essay
- How to cite and reference (in-text and bibliography)
- Format and submission of assignments
- Assessment of tests and assignments
- LOAs and DPs

### **Tutorial 2 – Week 3 [Total: 20 marks]**

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**NB: To be submitted to your tutors during the tutorial**

#### **Section A (2 marks)**

In no more than two (2) paragraphs discuss the following:

- what is plagiarism?
- Why is it important to reference?

#### **Section B**

*Compile a reference list for each of the following sources in the Harvard style, as outlined in Sociology Handbook. (4 marks)*

1. A book with the title 'First year sociology students', published in Cape Town in 2016 by Lovedale Press, with author Rachel Langa. This is the second edition of this book.
2. A journal article by T.D. Preez and S. Suma, entitled 'Finding partnership in university', published on pages 31 to 38 in the 'Journal of Black Joy', volume 35, number/issue 5, in 2021.

3. A chapter written by Tulisa Mondliwa, entitled ‘Grooving in Makhanda: Fetching your life on the dance stage’, published on pages 30- 40, in a book edited by Hlumela Mzili and Ncomeka Boqwana, called ‘We are family: Forming and finding communities in unexpected places’, Published in 2019 in New York by Palgrave Macmillan.
4. An edited collected by L. Diner and R. Buso, entitled ‘Mama, where is daddy?’, published in Durban in 2006 by Harcourt Press.

### **Section B**

*The following references contain mistakes. Correct them. Highlight your corrections. (6 marks).*

1. Hughes, B. (2009). Disability activism: Social model stalwarts and biological citizens. *Disability & Society*, 24(6), 677-688.
2. M. Hunter, 2010. *Love in the time of AIDS: inequality, gender, and rights in South Africa*. Indiana. Indiana University Press.
3. Michael Akpen, Slyvia Rhodes, Dawie Kroutz. (2010). *The missing students*. London: Sky books.

### **Section C**

*Copy the following extract and reference it correctly (In-text) and also create a reference list for it. (2 marks)*

“Butch lesbians and transgender men transgress gender norms and are hence both visible and vulnerable. Their masculine gender expressions signals their sexual orientation and they seldom need to ‘come out’ and tell people that they are lesbians or transgender”.

Source: Human Rights Watch.

Page :19.

Year: 2011.

Site: <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/southafrica1211.pdf>

Title: “We’ll Show You You’re a Woman”: Violence and Discrimination against Black Lesbians and Transgender Men in South Africa.

## **Section D**

*Rewrite the following extract and insert references where necessary using the information about sources as provided below. You must also draw up a reference list for this section. (6 marks)*

Ratele said scholars from the South should study men from the perspective of “dominance without hegemony.” Morrell concurred with this proposal but added that scholars should always be aware that “different men from different contexts will construct masculinities differently.” Dery summed up their arguments with his observation that “a wholesale application of western gender frameworks in Africa is useless.”

### **Source 1 : Journal article**

Author: Robert Morrell

Year: 1998

Title: Of boys and men: Masculinity and gender in southern African studies.

Journal: Journal of Southern African Studies

Volume: 24

Page of quote: 615

Pages: 605–30.

### **Source 2: Book**

Author: Kopano Ratele

Year: 2016

Title: Liberating Masculinities'

Publisher: HSRC Press

City: Cape Town

Page of quote: 34

### **Source 3: Unpublished PhD Thesis**

Author: Isaac Dery

Year: 2017

Title of Thesis: Ghanaian men and the performance of masculinity: negotiating gender-based violence in postcolonial Ghana.

University: University of Cape Town

City: Cape Town

Page of quote: 55.

### **Tutorial 3 – Week 4**

**[ Total: 20 marks]**

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**NB: To be submitted to your tutors during the tutorial**

1. What do you understand by the term ‘sociology’? (2 marks)
2. Discuss the growth of science and the Enlightenment as forces that led to the emergence of sociology. (4 marks)
3. Define the sociological imagination. (5 marks)
4. Describe and contrast functionalism, conflict theory, and the interactionist perspectives. For each perspective, identify the scope of analysis, the point of view, and the focus of analysis. (9 marks)

### **Tutorial 4 – Week 5**

**[Total: 20 marks]**

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**NB: To be submitted to your tutors during the tutorial**

1. Compare and contrast the three symbolic interactionist understandings of the self in relation to the socialization process. (10 marks)
2. Discuss the social constructionist view of gender. (6 marks)
3. What is heteronormative binary thinking in terms of gender and sex? (4 marks)

### **Tutorial 5 – Week 6**

**[Total: 20 marks]**

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**NB: To be submitted to your tutors during the tutorial**

1. Using the cases of Genie Wiley and Saturday Mthiyane, explain four functions of socialization. (8 marks)
2. Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methodologies and mention one method for each. (8 marks)
3. Discuss four elements of culture. (4 marks)