

SO101—Introduction to Sociology I

Study Guide - Week 1

Hi there!

Every week, you will find a study guide like this one that should help to make your life a little easier as you progress through this course. Contained within the study guides are tips on completing the discussions and written assignments, links to helpful websites relevant to that week's material, and notes from the readings. We hope that you find these study guides worthwhile and helpful!

Week 1 Objectives:

During Week One, you will learn some general background information about the field of sociology, including the who, what, where, when, and why aspects of this discipline. You will also explore the role of the scientific method within sociology's research as well as the four main perspectives within sociology.

Upon successful completion of this Lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Describe and appreciate social diversity, within our own culture and across cultures and societies.**
- **Examine race and ethnic relations in the context of minority/majority relationships.**

Please be sure to utilize the "My Notes" section to organize your thoughts with regard to what is the most important information within the lecture that is being imparted. Focus on factual information relevant to each discussion topic.

Reading Assignment and Lecture Key Points:

For a more complete review of the readings/lectures this week, please go under "Lessons," go to Week One, and click on the reading/lecture links for the week.

Sociology is the systematic study of social interaction at a variety of levels. Social interaction is the process by which we act toward and react to people around us. Sociology often is contrary to common sense assumptions about society. Sociology is one of the **social sciences**. They include sociology, psychology, economics, social work, history, and anthropology.

There are several **founding theorists** and **researchers to sociologists**:

1. French thinker **Auguste Comte** is considered the **father of sociology**. Comte believed that the study of society must be empirical.

2. **Harriet Martineau** was a prolific **feminist writer** who produced works addressing social problems related to exploitation, particularly around slavery, women, and children.

3. **Emile Durkheim** believed sociologists could find **social facts**. He sought to find social facts—aspects of social life, external to the individual, that can be measured. He described society as characterized by unity and cohesion because its members are bound together by common interests and attitudes.

4. **Capitalism** was the main focus for **Karl Marx**. He saw the most important social changes to society reflected the development of capitalism, an economic system in which the ownership of the means of production—like land, factories, large sums of money, and machines—are in private hands.

5. For **Max Weber**, **social organization** was more important than economic factors. While economic factors were important, ideas, religious values, ideologies, and charismatic leaders were just as crucial in shaping and changing societies. A complete understanding of society, according to Weber, must analyze the social organization and interrelationships between economic, political, and cultural institutions.

6. **Jane Addams** applied the ideas of **sociology to solve everyday problems**. A member of the University of Chicago department of sociology, Addams was an early influence on American sociology and symbolic interactionism. She was an important social reformer and activist.

7. **W.E.B Du Bois** was the **first African American** to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard, and applied sociological concepts to study the experience of African Americans in the United States.

When is sociology useful?

First, sociology can help people and organizations **make informed decisions**.

Second, it can help us understand **diversity**.

Third, we have an alternate way to look at and evaluate **social and public policies**.

Fourth, sociology should encourage us to **think critically**.

Finally, it can **expand your career opportunities**.

W1 Discussion "How Can Sociology Be Beneficial to You"

Hello Class! For this discussion you can choose which question you respond to. Feel free to respond to both; however, only one is required. Please respond to **ONE** of the following questions:

Question A

Tell us about yourself so you can meet and greet other fellow Grantham University students within your course. Include what you believe to be your current knowledge level of this course topic and what you hope to learn before the course is over.

Question B

Chapter 1 gives an overview of sociology. It has been said by critics and skeptics that sociology is simply common sense and not a subject to be studied as a science. After reading about what sociology is and the original theorists, explain how the study of society and its culture may be beneficial to you.

Consider the following:

You might be new to using discussion forums if this is one of your first Grantham courses. If you are, please see the helpful guide below:

Q: How do I post to the Discussion Forum?

1. Click the "New Post" button
2. Type in your post
3. Click "Save"

Q: When do I post?

You are expected to post a response to a discussion question every week. Well, that's not entirely true. Most weeks have one Discussion Assignment. Some weeks have more than one. Respond to all Discussion Assignments.

Q: What if the instructions say "Answer one discussion question"?

Some Discussion Assignments have more than one question, and you get to pick one to answer. Frequently, this happens in Week 1.

Keep in mind that you and your classmates must respond to two other posts. If everyone waited until late Tuesday to post, no one would have time to respond!

Long story short: it's best to post to the Discussion Forum early in the week.

Q: What do I post?

You are expected to respond “substantively” – it’s part of Grantham University’s “Substantive Interaction” policy. Here’s a link to the policy:

[Participation and Substantive Interaction Policy](#)

A substantive post...

- is typically 75 – 150 words.
- contributes to the discussion in a meaningful way.

Q: Are there any rules?

1. Use correct grammar – you will be graded on complete sentences and correct spelling.
2. Do not text your posts. (IOW, HTH. CUL8R)
3. If you are in the military, do not include your rank.

Q: How do I reply to another student’s post?

1. Click the post title
2. Click “Reply”
3. Type in your reply
4. Click “Submit”

Q: What do I reply to another student’s post?

The response must also be “substantive” – it must also contribute to the discussion in a meaningful way. Picture the class being held in a classroom, sitting in a circle. The instructor has asked a discussion question, and you are responding to a comment.

When replying:

- Use the other student’s first name.
- Explain why you agree or disagree; add some examples to support your position.
- Feel free to relate personal, work or military experiences.
- Your post may ask a question, for example, ask to clarify something, or ask a “What if...” question.
- Remember netiquette – be polite.
- If you like, refer to this week’s reading.
- Replies are typically half as long as the original post.

Q: Could you give me an example of a reply?

Here's an example of an acceptable reply:

- "David, I respectfully disagree with your ideas on this topic. I think No Child Left Behind is a good concept. It holds schools responsible for educating their students. And the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) requires schools to get better at helping students meet performance numbers. So schools are required to improve, just like their students! Hey, fair is fair!"

Here are a few unacceptable replies:

- "I agree."
- "I disagree."
- "That's not what the reading says."
- "Yeah, they should make a movie about it."
- "You are one ignorant fool. Here's my advice to you, Sparky: Get in your car, drive to the bank, take out a loan and buy a clue."

If you choose to respond to Question A for your first discussion, after you've told your classmates a bit about yourself, then you can use the following template to cover the second part of the question ("Include what you believe to be your current knowledge level of this course topic and what you hope to learn before the course is over."):

Use the template below, writing your own personal perspective in the highlighted areas.

In name course , I am most familiar with
choose from the bulleted list of course objectives above.

I have some knowledge of these because

What in your life has made this so? Your job? What you watch on TV? Your family history? Your culture? How so? BE SPECIFIC

In general, I would say I have an overall chose one knowledge of the concepts.

Out of the other objectives for this course, I am interested in learning most about

List a few others that you do not have in depth knowledge of.

Before this course is over, I hope to

Add in how this course may relate to your degree program, life's goals, dreams, interests, work, etc

Following this template should make responding to Question A fairly simple for you.

If you choose to respond to **Question B**, then you will first want to read Chapter One, which is listed under this week's reading. Pay particular attention to section 1-1b on page 2: *Isn't Sociology Just Common Sense?* Another relevant section for Question B is on pages 4 through 5: 1-3—*Why Study Sociology?* The rest of the chapter mainly delves into the contributions of various researchers to the field of sociology as well as the four main perspectives within sociology, which will give you a clearer idea of just what sociology entails. As you do your reading, ask yourself, *How does knowing this information help me in my life?*

W1 Assignment "Sociological Imagination"

Sociological Imagination



[Sam Richards: A radical experiment in empathy](#)

After watching the TED video and reading the section about the Sociological Imagination, **take the viewpoint of an outside observer to examine your life.**

First, **pick one personal experience** that was meaningful to you.

Second, **pick a viewpoint different from your own.** It can be another gender, race, nationality, or maybe someone from a different subculture. Finally, write about the three points listed below.

Write a 1000 word paper discussing each assignment point listed below.

- 1) Describe the personal experience as an outsider might describe it. (hint: depending on what you choose and the perspective you choose, this may require a little research)
- 2) Describe how that experience was influenced by society structures (e.g. historical events, religion, or traditions)
- 3) Finally review the four main perspectives and theorists related to those perspectives. What theory most applies to the personal experience you described and why do you think this theory applies?

Your paper must include a title sheet and at least 2 outside references. You may use one reference from the internet but the 2nd reference must be from the Grantham University online library. Only the body of the paper will count in your word requirement.

To help you begin your first paper, I have given you an example of a personal experience, the structure that helped to shape this event, and the theory that I would apply to it. Although what is listed below is an outline, I would like you to write in paragraph form.

Example:

Personal experience: wedding

Viewpoint: perspective of a person from the subcontinent India

- 1) Description: Wedding itself was short, crowd was small, took place outside of hometown, and the bride wore white
- 2) Social Structure: institution of marriage, marriage laws, and religious traditions
- 3) What theory: functionalism Why this theory: functionalism supports social structure that is functional for society and marriage is functional for families and households

Please attempt to cite your sources using APA formatting.

Consider the following:

This assignment gives you your first glimpse into one of the main goals of sociology: empathy, otherwise thought of as the ability to see things from others' perspectives or to put oneself in someone else's shoes. To get more familiar with this concept, your first step is to view the video *Sam Richards: A radical experiment in empathy*. Next, page 2 in Chapter One of the textbook discusses what the term "sociological imagination" means, which is helpful to know for this assignment, as well.

The next step is to pick an event from your own life that was significant—this could be a wedding, the birth of a child, enrolling in college, fighting in a war, etc.

Once you've chosen an event, the next step is to come up with a person from another nationality, race, gender, socioeconomic class, etc. who will be looking in on this event in your life. Choose this person carefully because your paper will be centered on what this person's perspective is and how it is shaped.

Now that you have laid the groundwork, you need to answer the following three questions:

- 1) Describe the personal experience as an outsider might describe it. (hint: depending on what you choose and the perspective you choose, this may require a little research)
- 2) Describe how that experience was influenced by society structures (e.g. historical events, religion, or traditions)
- 3) Finally review the four main perspectives and theorists related to those perspectives. What theory most applies to the personal experience you described and why do you think this theory applies?

Please note that the four perspectives are discussed on pages 12 through 19 in Chapter One of your textbook. The four perspectives are functionalist, conflict, feminist, and symbolic interactionist.

Your teacher expects for your paper to have a title page. To see what a title page should look like, please click on this link:

<http://psychology.about.com/od/apastyle/ig/APA-Format-Examples/title-page.htm>

You also need to use at least one source from the library (two sources total, but one can simply be an Internet source). To find the library, go to Grantham's home page, click on the yellow box that says "Resources," then click on "Online Library Resources," then click on the blue EBSCOhost box, and then click on "Academic Search Complete," Once you've done this, you should have a search box in front of you, in which you should type in whatever subject you are seeking.

Your teacher also asked that you try to do APA formatting for your paper. For APA formatting, you will need a title page (see above), a reference page, a 12-point Times New Roman font, double spacing, in-text citations, a running head, numbered pages, etc. Grantham has great information on APA formatting. To find it, click on your "Courses" button, click on the Writing Center, and then scroll down on that first page until you see "GU APA Guide" and "GU APA Template." Click on those links to find the information on APA formatting and to see what your paper should look like.

Please don't forget that only the body of the essay counts towards the 1000-word count requirement. This means that neither the title page nor the reference page should be included in your word count.

APA Formatting:

[https://content.grantham.edu/at/SALC/APA_Guide_with_glossary_\(Grantham_University_2012\).pdf](https://content.grantham.edu/at/SALC/APA_Guide_with_glossary_(Grantham_University_2012).pdf)

Sites with general overviews of sociology:

<http://whatissociology.com/>

<http://www.sociology.org/what-is-sociology>

Sites that cover famous sociologists:

<http://www.biography.com/people/groups/academics/sociologists>

<http://www.asanet.org/students/famous.cfm>

Sites with information on the four sociological perspectives:

<http://dmc122011.delmar.edu/socsci/rlong/race/far-04.htm>

http://wps.prenhall.com/ca_ph_macionis_sociology_5/23/6029/1543510.cw/index.html