

## REFLECTION ESSAY ASSIGNMENT #1

For the first reflective essay, write a 1000 word essay (roughly 3.5 to 4 pages, double-spaced) related to the course topics listed below. Your goal in this assignment should be to demonstrate: a) your strong understanding of sociological concepts, b) your ability to apply them to an area of social life that you know and care about, and c) your reflections upon that application.

Your essay should include:

1. 2-4 sentences explaining the experience, event, or issue you want to explore
2. a discussion of how at least 4 of the concepts/ideas (chosen from the below list) help you make sense of this experience, event, or issue; **include in this discussion a brief definition (derived from course materials such as the text and lectures but putting the definition into your own words) of each of the 4 concepts you use.** You must choose 4 concepts from the list below
3. a discussion of how these concepts are related to one another as applied here
4. a discussion of how and/or whether these concepts or ideas have altered your perception of these things
5. where relevant, include information on how one of the D2L readings is relevant to your discussion

Each essay must be typed, double-spaced, and STAPLED, with 12 point font and 1 inch margins. Your essay should include a **title page** that includes the title of your essay, your name, discussion section number and date on it. We will use a blind grading system so **your name should appear ONLY on this title page** and NOT anywhere else on the document. These assignments are to be turned in at the **beginning** of class on the date they are due. No e-mailed papers will be accepted unless you have both notified me (your teaching assistant) of your emergency and e-mailed the paper prior to class time.

### REFLECTION ESSAY #1:

- Due in discussion the week of February 9, 2015
- Readings covered: chapters 1 and 2, plus D2L readings: "The Sociological Imagination", "Telling the Truth About Damned Lies and Statistics", "Americans aren't the rugged individuals we think they are", "For Austrians, Ho-Ho-Is No Laughing Matter"
- List of concepts:

❖ patterns of social relations	❖ Marxist theory	❖ dependent/independent variables
❖ sociological imagination	❖ rational choice theory	❖ culture
❖ personal trouble vs. public or structural issue	❖ feminist theory	❖ subculture
❖ the individual-society question	❖ symbolic interactionist theory	❖ nature vs. nurture
❖ the question of order	❖ functionalist theory	❖ cultural universal
	❖ correlation	❖ cultural relativism
		❖ ethnocentrism
		❖ multiculturalism
		❖ assimilation

**A NOTE ON PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism involves more than copying an entire essay from another source. Plagiarism also occurs when phrases and sentences are patched together to create an essay. Of course, you will be using in your essays a few words or concepts that come from the assigned readings. That is legitimate. What is not legitimate is copying phrases and sentences from sources (whether assigned or not) and using them as if they represented your own writing. You can avoid this by honestly quoting and citing your sources. A rough rule of thumb is that plagiarism occurs if the writing in question could not have been constructed without copying directly (however sporadically) from another source, including other students and internet websites. The University's policies on plagiarism are severe; any student who plagiarizes could receive an F for the course and have a letter of reprimand attached to the student's permanent academic record.

**WRITING RUBRIC: SOCIOLOGY 101 REFLECTION ESSAY**

	4	3	2	1
<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>A-RANGE</b>	<b>B-RANGE</b>	<b>C-RANGE</b>	<b>D AND F RANGE</b>
1) DISCUSSION OF EXPERIENCE, EVENT OR ISSUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is clearly stated, singular (is one item, not a list), creative/shows thought, is succinct, and plausibly relevant to the range of concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is missing one or two of the characteristics of an A paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is missing multiple characteristics of an A paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is hard to understand, make sense of, is implausible as a basis for the essay concepts, wanders across multiple (rather than a singular item)</li> </ul>
2) APPLICATION (understanding of the concepts, ability and creativity to apply them to a new setting, use of evidence from example to further application)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chosen 4 concepts are clearly evident</li> <li>Demonstrates clear knowledge and understanding of all 4 concepts</li> <li>Shows creative ability to apply those concepts in a clear way to 1) (above)</li> <li>Application doesn't just assert but shows (with evidence) a connection of concept to 1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses all 4 concepts</li> <li>Knowledge/understanding of 4 solid but not deep or perhaps a bit fuzzy in spots</li> <li>Applies concepts but with less creativity</li> <li>Uses evidence in applying but could be more convincing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be hard to figure out which 4 concepts are or is missing one</li> <li>Knowledge is fuzzy across a couple of concepts</li> <li>Application is flawed in some ways</li> <li>Evidence is there but not fully marshaled clearly, coherently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concepts aren't clearly evident and 1 or more are missing</li> <li>Knowledge/understanding of concepts is wrong in some cases</li> <li>Applications are problematic</li> <li>Little use of evidence on how 1) is connected to the concept</li> </ul>
3) STRUCTURE (connections between concepts to show overall understanding of how pieces fit together, organization, coherence, transitions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writer clearly connects each applied concept to the other in a clear and coherent way to demonstrate overarching understanding of interconnections</li> <li>Essay is clearly organized with introduction, body and conclusion</li> <li>Good transitions between sentences, paragraphs, ideas, etc.</li> <li>Good sequencing of ideas and applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some weaknesses in connecting concepts to one another</li> <li>Essay is organized in traditional way but pieces could be clearer</li> <li>Makes solid use of transitions but not always</li> <li>Generally good order/sequence to ideas but could be better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effort to make connections between concepts but some flaws or absences in those</li> <li>Organization is there but falls apart in a few spots</li> <li>Transitions are there in spots but not consistent</li> <li>Needs some re-organization of points to make a stronger argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concepts poorly or not at all connected</li> <li>Organizational problems throughout</li> <li>Absence of transitions</li> <li>Needs a thorough reorganization</li> </ul>
4) REFLECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a strong ability to see how sociological concepts may add new insights, ways of seeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does reflect on how this changes her/his view but not deep discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflective piece is uninspired, short, and/or not very convincing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is no reflection or half-hearted</li> </ul>
5) WRITING (use of appropriate language, grammar, punctuation, style, spelling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good command of language and appropriate word use</li> <li>No significant sentence structure problems</li> <li>Few or no grammar, punctuation, spelling errors, typos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sporadic writing problems involving word use, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, typos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional writing problems involving word use, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, typos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing problems throughout that get in the way of understanding the student's ideas</li> </ul>
Grade equivalents for point scores	A 46.5-50	B+ 43.5-44.5	C+ 38.5-39.5	D+ 33.5-34.5
	A- 45-46	B 41.5-43	C 36.5-38	D 31.5-33
		B- 40-41	C- 35-36	D- 30-31 F<30