SOC3620/SOC5620 Written Assignment

Choose **ONE** option below. This written assignment helps you to reflect on what you are doing in the course–to step back from the specific readings/topics and reflect on your responses. You may explore particular interests in more depth, make personal applications, and incorporate outside readings. Your paper should be at least **1,250 words** long for undergraduates [and **2,000 words** long for graduates] with a descriptive title. Your completed paper should be double-spaced, computer-printed, using a 12 point typeface, with 1 inch margins. Your paper should adhere to appropriate standards of organization, spelling, and grammar; that is, it should be formatted in complete sentences and paragraphs. Grading is primarily based on three criteria:

A. Depth of Subject:

▪Demonstrate understanding of major concepts and theories.

▪Adequate support and evidence by examples.

▪Adheres to and fulfills the requirements of the assignment.

B. Organization:

▪Is precise, pertinent, and well supported.

▪Avoids tangential material that detracts from central focus.

▪Provides clear transitions between and within sections of paper.

C. Clarity of Expression:

▪Sentences are clear, concise, and logical.

▪Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc., are correct.

**Option #1: Ethnic Group**

Choose one ethnic group in the United States (i.e., Native Americans, Italian Americans, Jewish Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans) in which you are interested.

(1) Explain the manner in which this ethnic group has entered American society

(2) Describe the key features of demography, including ethnic group size and geographical concentration. Explain the demographic changes over time. Discuss the settlement patterns of this ethnic group and the response of the dominant society to them. Explain the factors that have created and sustained residential segregation.

(3) Discuss the place of the ethnic group in the American class system, discussing specifically income, occupation, and education. In what ways has the collective status of this ethnic group improved over the past decades and in what ways has it stagnated or even regressed?

(4) Discuss the form and degree of prejudice and discrimination experienced by this ethnic group. In what ways is recent prejudice and discrimination based on a different view of this ethnic group than in the past? In what ways has their experience differed from those of other racial-ethnic groups? What stereotypes have been commonly attached to this ethnic group? How might the origin of these stereotypes be explained? Why do ethnic stereotypes remain effective so long?

(5) Explain the extent of cultural assimilation of this ethnic group; do the same with structural assimilation, making note of differences in primary and secondary levels. Discuss the various policies by the U.S. government at different times in trying to assimilate this ethnic group to the dominant culture (or describe the major acts of legislation that barred member of this ethnic group from the United States).

(6) In terms of assimilation and demographic trends, speculate on the future of the ethnic group

**Option #2: Research Paper on a Racial and Ethnic Issue**

This writing assignment has two main goals: (1) to help you think critically and integrate the sociological ideas and concepts with your readings and experiences; and (2) to allow you flexibility to pursue your own interests. Each of you will find different topics to be more interesting and relevant to yourself.

Choose an issue or problem of race and ethnic relations that is most interest to you, frame this topic as a sociological issue for in-depth investigation, and investigate it in light of concepts and theories you have learned. Some of the topics will be covered in class, but you may choose any topic relevant to learning objectives of this class. For example, you may use the topic you presented in class. In this case, you must include materials beyond what you presented in class.

This assignment requires that you do some type of research on your topic and incorporate what you have learned into your paper. In addition, you must demonstrate your thorough knowledge about the readings. Consult with the instructor for help in selecting a topic and for guidance in getting started on your research. Write a research paper describing its significance, your method of research, and what you discovered.