Sociology of Science

SOCI 168E

Spring 2025
MWF 1:00 - 1:50 PM
Pepper Canyon Hall 120

THIS COURSE
PROMOTES
EQUITY AND
CELEBRATES
DIVERSITY.

Welcome to our course!

I'm thrilled to be spending the quarter learning and growing with you! Please read this document to get a sense of what our time together will be like.

Instructor Contact Information and Office Hours

Instructor: Dr. Christine Crofts (she/her/hers) #FIRSTGEN

Email: Canvas Inbox (preferred method of contact) or ccrofts@ucsd.edu
Text: 619-356-1951 (work mobile)
Zoom Room: https://ucsd.zoom.us/my/christinecrofts
Office Hours/Location: Fridays 10 AM - 12 PM - On campus in SSB 473 or via Zoom

Teaching Assistant: TBD!

Communication, Office Hours, and Response Time

- In addition to our three weekly class meetings and announcements in Canvas, you'll receive feedback messages in the Submission Comments section of written work you turn in. You can write back (or send an audio/video message) to us there, too!
- **Office hours:** See above for times and locations! You can visit my office in person or connect via Zoom. If you want to chat but the scheduled office hours don't work for you, we can arrange another time to meet via Zoom.
- **Questions outside of office hours:** I'm happy to take questions outside of my office hours, and I'll typically respond to your email or text message within 24 hours, seven days a week. If you don't get a response after 24 hours, please resend!

Course Location & Technical Support

- Our course takes place in Pepper Canyon Hall 120 and will meet between 1 and 1:50 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Course materials and assignments will be located online within Canvas.

- Please contact me if you have any difficulties with accessing or logging into Canvas. This Get started in Canvas resource is helpful, too!

Course Information

Catalog Description

A survey of theoretical and empirical studies concerning the workings of the scientific community and its relations with the wider society. Special attention will be given to the institutionalization of the scientific role and to the social constitution of scientific knowledge.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

1. identify key concepts, theories, and areas of sociological study of the relationship between science and the social world
2. analyze the historical development and ongoing application of major theoretical contributions to the sociology of science
3. evaluate the contributions of sociology to increasing understanding of the construction and distribution of scientific knowledge
4. assess how social structures influence which people/groups participate in science and how that affects the knowledge that is produced
5. connect theories and research about the social aspects of science to their own identity, experiences, and/or observations.

Course Format

For most weeks, our schedule will look like this:

1. Use the home page link to go to the new week's module. Use the "Next" button at the bottom of each page to progress through the module.

2. Start engaging with the content in the Canvas module, which may include readings, videos, and other activities.

3. Attend class on Monday, when we will typically focus on lecture, large group discussion, and/or other instructional activities.

4. Submit your journal assignment (if you have one) **by the end of the day on Tuesday**.

5. Attend class on Wednesday, when we will typically focus on small group discussion and in-class work.

6. Attend class on Friday, when we will typically have large group discussion, share thoughts/resources/questions, and additional lecture/instruction.

7. Submit your (group or individual, depending on the week) discussion post or project (if you have one) **by the end of the day on Sunday**.

Content Warning and Class Climate

Our course content and class discussions will often focus on mature, charged, and potentially challenging topics. In the study of sociology, course topics are often political and personal (e.g., racism, gender identity, religion, sexuality). Course materials and discussions might trigger strong feelings – anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, nervous laughter – you get the idea. The use of precise words to describe social phenomena and/or events is part of the content of this college course. Some of us will have emotional responses to the course content; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the content; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree), and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

Required Materials

- All course assignments, readings, videos, and other materials will be available in our Canvas course! No textbook or other materials purchase required! 🙂
- Reliable, high-speed Internet access on a desktop or laptop computer for homework
- [VPN access](#) for library materials (if off campus)
- Google Docs, Microsoft Word, or other software to save documents
- Paper and pen(cil) or note-taking app to jot down thoughts or complete activities during class meetings
- Optional but helpful: your phone/tablet/laptop for in-class work/activities/polls.

Expectations

Community Agreements/Course Values

TBD! We'll work on these together during Week 1.

Attendance and Participation

Regular attendance and class participation are important parts of the learning experience and can impact student success. And this isn't just an assumption! [Research](#) suggests that regular class attendance positively affects course grades/GPA and in fact is the strongest predictor of GPA (more than study skills, work ethic, SAT scores, and more!).
So attendance is good! But mandatory attendance can feel forced and unsupportive of student autonomy. At the same time, no points for attendance can make it hard to motivate yourself to come to class.
For these reasons, our course will have an **optional mandatory attendance** policy.
What does that mean? It means **YOU** get to choose whether you want attendance to be part of your grade or not. See the *Evaluation and Grading* section below for more details, but here's

the bottom line:
- If you **opt in** to mandatory attendance, you will earn 10% toward your final grade if you miss no more than seven class meetings. If you miss more than seven class meetings, you will not earn that 10% (i.e., you'll receive a score of zero for that portion) of your final grade. (This is an all-or-nothing sort of thing; you either earn the full 10% or you don't.*)
- If you **opt out** of mandatory attendance, your attendance is not recorded and will have no impact on your final grade.

*If you are sick, please don't attend! Rest and return to class when you've recovered. Absences for illness or other hardships are excusable! Just let me know.

Instructor Communication
Each week, we'll typically meet during our scheduled class times. In addition, we'll communicate throughout the week via Canvas. I'll post periodic announcements, share lecture content during our class meetings, join you in class activities to help you understand course concepts, and provide feedback on written assignments you submit via Canvas. I'll also be available to answer questions via Canvas Inbox, email, or text (usually responding within 24 hours). You'll have many opportunities to communicate with your classmates via weekly large- and small-group discussions and class activities.
Please contact me if you need help or have questions or concerns of any kind!

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty of any type by a student provides grounds for disciplinary action by the instructor or college. In written work, no material may be copied from another without proper quotation marks, footnotes, or appropriate documentation.
By enrolling in a course that uses Canvas, you agree that you are the person accessing and completing the work for this course and will not share your username and password with others.
Plagiarism is the act of using another person's words or ideas as if they were your own. Sources of quotations, paraphrases, and summaries must be properly documented according to MLA format. This applies to all writing, including discussions. Plagiarism is considered academic theft because it is stealing someone else's words or ideas, but the plagiarizer robs himself or herself as well. This course will provide you with the opportunity to improve your reading, thinking, and writing skills - don't rob yourself of that chance!

Please read UC San Diego's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and take the integrity pledge!

Satisfactory Academic Progress
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) refers to the academic standards students must maintain to remain eligible for federal, state, and institutional financial aid. If you are receiving financial aid, please ensure you review the SAP requirements and the appeals process.

Resources for Support and Learning

There are a variety of resources available to students at UC San Diego, which are designed to address needs and enhance the student experience. In this section, the course is connected to the broader university community by services and programs for students. If there are resources specific to the course, school, department and/or topic, be sure to include those here.

Learning and Academic Support

Ask a Librarian: Library Support
Chat or make an appointment with a librarian to focus on your research needs

Course Reserves, Connecting from Off-Campus and Research Support
Find supplemental course materials

First Gen Student Success Coaching Program
Peer mentor program that provides students with information, resources, and support in meeting their goals

Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS)
Intellectual and personal development support

Writing Hub Services in the Teaching + Learning Commons
One-on-one online writing tutoring and workshops on key writing topics

Supplemental Instruction
Peer-assisted study sessions through the Academic Achievement Hub to improve success in historically challenging courses

Tutoring – Content
Drop-in and online tutoring through the Academic Achievement Hub

Tutoring – Learning Strategies
Address learning challenges with a metacognitive approach

Support for Well-being and Inclusion

Food Support for Students

If you are skipping and stretching meals, or having difficulties affording or accessing food, you may be eligible for CalFresh, California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, that can provide up to $292 a month in free money on a debit card to buy food. Students can apply at benefitscal.com/r/ucsandiegocalfresh

Basic Needs at UCSD

Community and Resource Centers
Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
As part of the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion the campus community centers provide programs and resources for students and contribute toward the evolution of a socially just campus
(858).822-.3542 | diversity@ucsd.edu

Get Involved
Student organizations, clubs, service opportunities, and many other ways to connect with others on campus

Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live is encouraged to contact: foodpantry@.ucsd.edu | basicneeds@ucsd.edu | (858) 246-2632 **Counseling and Psychological Services** *Confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric service and mental health programming* **Triton Concern Line** *Report students of concern:* (858) 246-1111 **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)** *Supports students with disabilities and accessibility across campus*	**Undocumented Student Services** *Programs and services are designed to help students overcome obstacles that arise from their immigration status and support them through personal and academic excellence*

Assignments

- **Canvas Module Content** – Assigned readings, supplemental videos, podcasts, activities, and other learning materials.
- **Student Information Survey** – An opportunity for you to share a bit about yourself!
- **Journal Assignments** – Some weeks you'll respond to a few questions or reflect briefly on an assigned topic in a journal assignment. These assignments will provide an opportunity to engage with the week's topics and/or relate them to personal experiences and/or observations about society. These journals will also serve as preparation for the week's in-class discussion.
- **Discussions** – Some weeks you'll post (individually or with a small group) to a discussion board in response to a question or prompt related to the week's topics.
- **Social Media Project** – You'll work **EITHER**
  - on your own

    OR
  - with an assigned small group

  to create an educational and/or influence campaign that would be suitable for social media. (You won't be required to post it to social media, but you're welcome to do so if you'd like!)
- **Pop Culture Analysis** – A short paper for which you'll select a piece of pop culture and relate it to what we've studied in class.
- **Take-Home Final** – You'll demonstrate your engagement with/understanding of the quarter's topics by responding to several essay prompts.

Course Schedule

Week	Subjects	Assignments
Week 1 – 3/31 - 4/6	What is the Sociology of Science?	Student Information Survey
Week 2 – 4/7 - 4/13	Origins of the Sociology of Science	Week 2 Discussion
Week 3 – 4/14 - 4/20	Scientific Paradigms and Revolutions	Week 3 Journal
Week 4 – 4/21 - 4/27	The Social Construction of Scientific Knowledge	Week 4 Discussion
Week 5 – 4/28 - 5/4	The Scientific Role	Week 5 Journal
Week 6 – 5/5 - 5/11	Actor-Network Theory	Pop Culture Analysis
Week 7 – 5/12 - 5/18	Studying Scientists in Action	Week 7 Discussion
Week 8 – 5/19 - 5/25	Communicating Science to the Public	Social Media Project
*Week 9 – 5/27 - 6/1	Science, Gender, and Diversity	Week 9 Journal
Week 10 – 6/2 - 6/6	Science, Policy, and Social Change	Week 10 Journal Week 10 Discussion
Finals Week – 6/7 - 6/13	- - -	Take-Home Final Due 6/12

*Week with a Monday holiday. Due dates may be adjusted.

Readings

These readings and additional required and optional learning materials (articles, videos, podcasts, etc.) will be included in each week's Canvas module.

Week 1	Rubio, Fernando Domínguez, and Juan Pablo Pardo Guerra. "At the Crossroads of Sociology and STS." *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 66, no. 5, 2023, pp. 844–52.
Week 2	Hosseini, Mohammad, et al. "Messing with Merton: The Intersection between Open Science Practices and Mertonian Values." *Accountability in Research*, vol. 31, no. 5, 2024, pp. 428–5.
Week 3	Restivo, Sal. "Paradigms and Programmes." *Inventions in Sociology*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, pp. 1–14.
Week 4	Shaffer, Jonathan D. "Knowledge, Boundaries, and Bodies: Social Construction between Medical Sociology and Science and Technology Studies." *Sociology Compass*, vol. 15, no. 10, 2021, e12924.
Week 5	Mieg, Harald A and Julia Evetts. "Professionalism, Science, and Expert Roles: A Social Perspective." *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 127–48.
Week 6	Sayes, Edwin. "Actor-Network Theory and Methodology: Just What Does It Mean to Say That Nonhumans Have Agency?" *Social Studies of Science*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2014, pp. 134–49.
Week 7	Scoville, Caleb, and Andrew McCumber. "Climate Silence in Sociology? How Elite American Sociology, Environmental Sociology, and Science and Technology Studies Treat Climate Change." *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 66, no. 5, 2023, pp. 888–913.
Week 8	Joubert, Marina, et al. "'Pandem-Icons' - Exploring the Characteristics of Highly Visible Scientists during the Covid-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Science Communication*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1-24.
Week 9	Love, Hannah B., et al. "The Impact of Gender Diversity on Scientific Research Teams: A Need to Broaden and Accelerate Future Research." *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1–12.
Week 10	Gauchat, Gordon W. "The Legitimacy of Science." *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2023, pp. 263–79.

Evaluation and Grading

In this course, EVERYONE can – and I believe will – learn, grow, and succeed! This can include earning an A grade, if that's a priority for you.

When it comes to evaluating your written work, our teaching assistant or I will give you personalized feedback in the Submissions Comments section of Canvas. We'll note some ways in which you're demonstrating your knowledge and learning, and we'll let you know if we see areas for growth. You can comment back to us right there if you'd like to keep the conversation going!

Regarding points and grading:
- Each assignment has instructions on how to complete it successfully, as well as a rubric, which is a table that shows how you'll earn points for that assignment.
- If you successfully complete most or all of our assignments, you'll earn an A.
  - Missing a lot of our course assignments means you're missing out on opportunities to engage with our course concepts and may affect your grade.
  - If you have ANY barriers to completing our assignments, just let me know! We can figure out a plan for your success.
  - If part or all of a particular assignment is problematic for you, we can work together to modify the assignment.
- You are welcome to revise and resubmit most written assignments if you're not proud of your work (and can improve your point total by doing so).
- I do NOT take off points for grammar, punctuation, word choice, etc.
- I do accept late work! (See below.)
- Grades aren't everything! But if your goal is to earn an A in this course, you can easily do so by engaging with our materials and activities and completing our assignments.

Attendance Opt-In

Type of Assignment	Number	Points Each	Total Points	% of Grade
Student Information Survey	1	25	25	5%
Journal Assignments	4	25	100	20%
Discussions	4	35	140	28%
Pop Culture Analysis	1	50	50	10%
Social Media Project	1	60	60	12%
Take-Home Final	1	75	75	15%
Attendance	1	50	50	10%
			500	100%

Attendance Opt-Out

Type of Assignment	Number	Points Each	Total Points	% of Grade (approx.)
Student Information Survey	1	25	25	5.5%
Journal Assignments	4	25	100	22%
Discussions	4	35	140	31%
Pop Culture Analysis	1	50	50	11%
Social Media Project	1	60	60	13%
Take-Home Final	1	75	75	17%
			450	100%

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points (Attendance Opt-In)	Points (Attendance Opt-Out)
A+	99+	494+	445+
A	92 - 98	460 - 493	414 - 444
A-	90 - 91	450 - 459	405 - 413
B+	88 - 89	440 - 449	396 - 404
B	82 - 87	410 - 439	369 - 395
B-	80 - 81	400 - 409	360 - 368
C+	78 - 79	390 - 399	351 - 359
C	72 - 77	360 - 389	324 - 350
C-	70 - 71	350 - 359	315 - 323
D	60 - 69	300 - 349	270 - 314
F	59 or below	≤ 299	≤ 269

Late Work

Assignments for this course should be completed on time so that we are all moving through the class together. Sometimes, though, life gets in the way of learning. In unexpected situations leading to late work, please contact me to discuss a plan for success. I do accept late work, and for full credit/no point deductions. But I don't want you to become too overwhelmed by incomplete assignments or miss out on the chance to engage with our course community around important topics, so I'll reach out if I see you're missing a lot of work. **The last day I can accept late/missing work is Thursday, June 12th.**

Tips for Respectful Class Conduct and Netiquette

I would like our class to be a supportive learning environment that values and builds on the richly diverse identities, perspectives, and experiences of our group. Please help me develop this environment by honoring the diverse identities of your classmates and letting your instructor know (via anonymous surveys or email, for example) if an assignment, comment, etc. makes you feel uncomfortable.

Both in the readings and in discussions, you will likely encounter cultures, ideas, and values that differ from your own. These are valuable opportunities to learn more about different perspectives and where they intersect with yours. We all see the world from a point of view informed by our experiences and backgrounds, and what we read and discuss can open new windows through which to understand both our texts and the world around us. You are encouraged to contribute your ideas about our readings freely, but please remember to demonstrate respect for the works as well as your classmates and instructors. We all have unconscious biases that stem from our experiences; recognizing and discussing them can lead to unexpected insights.

Conversely, disrespectful or threatening responses tend to shut down conversation, so these kinds of comments will be promptly addressed by your instructional team. To keep our interactions safe and productive, please know that anyone who repeatedly engages in disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be locked out of the discussion for the week and/or face student misconduct charges. Please join me in creating a comfortable and productive learning environment for us all.

Netiquette is etiquette for the internet – in other words, it's a set of guidelines for respectful behavior in an online environment. Knowing these social rules can help you have a more rewarding quarter. The netiquette guidelines here are ones that are especially important in the online aspects of our course (like discussion boards).

1.   **Participate.** Hearing the ideas of others is helpful for you, but you must also do your part to be helpful for the group. Share your thoughts to strengthen our discussion, and don't wait until the last minute to contribute. Encourage others to participate by responding to their ideas. Be involved, but do not dominate a discussion with too many posts.

2.   **Remember the human.** This common online mantra means that even though we may not be face-to-face, there is a real person behind each discussion post. Don't write something that you wouldn't feel comfortable saying in an in-person classroom setting. Discuss ideas, not people. In other words, don't attack a classmate for expressing his or her opinion; instead, discuss your position on the ideas that have been presented. Be kind and understanding with your classmates to keep our environment positive and productive.

3.   **Help others.** We'll be working together all quarter, so let's try to be a good team. If you can help a classmate with a question, please do! Your efforts will be appreciated by both students and the instructor.

4.   **Respect people's time.** Your posts should be focused, organized, and clear so that your classmates can quickly see your point and evidence. Another way to respect people's time is to look for answers before asking for help. For example, if you can't find something or you don't remember when an assignment is due, first look through the syllabus and other course documents for the answer. Try to ask for help only when you truly need it.

5.   **Edit and proofread before posting.** We have lots of posts to read, so yours needs to be as clear as they can be. They should be organized and written in standard English. Unfamiliar abbreviations or easily fixed misspellings may tell your readers that you don't value their time.

6.   **No flaming.** "Flaming" is an angry message, often directed at another person. When another person responds in anger, we have a "flame war" taking over the discussion. Personal attacks are unacceptable in the classroom, whether in-person or online. If you see a conflict developing, try to calm things down if you feel comfortable doing so. If you feel attacked, contact your instructor rather than responding to the flaming student. We all have biases, and sometimes we are not aware of how what we say may be viewed by others, so let's all try to be generous and kind in our responses to one another. Everything we do in Canvas is permanent, so please think very carefully about your tone before submitting a post.

You made it to the end! Congratulate yourself for reading this important document, and please return to it whenever you have questions about the details and logistics of our course.