



INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL SCIENCES

General data

Course code:	B19GMA02E
ECTS credits:	7
Type of the course:	Core course
Semester:	Spring, Semester 2
Course restrictions:	-
Course leader (with availabilities):	Éva Somogyiné Komlósi, Dr. B403 room komlosi.eva@tkk.pte.hu
Further lecturer(s) (with availabilities):	-

1. Description and aims

This course is designed to introduce students to the theoretical and empirical foundations of the social forces and processes that shape human personality and behavior, culture, institutions, and society. This module provides a brief introduction to the history of the social sciences in order to understand the development of social thought. Through class discussions, students gain an understanding of both classical and contemporary views of social interaction, social institutions, and social change. In-class activities and exercises allow students to develop their sociological imagination and apply it to new situations. In addition, the module provides an overview of important social issues closely related to work and economic life and introduces students to social patterns that change over time and in different contexts, including the business context. In this way, this module helps students acquire and apply the knowledge needed to solve management problems. By pointing out the social foundations of daily life, which is often distorted by fake news, fraud, and hoaxes, this introductory course also helps develop students' critical thinking skills.

2. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. discover and develop social imagination and apply it to a variety of social issues in daily life, including the business environment (PILO 1),
2. explain, compare and apply basic sociological perspectives and concepts (PILO 1),
3. recognise and evaluate social patterns that influence individual decisions and social interactions (PILO 1),
4. understand how social background and inequalities can alter individual life chances (PILO 8),
5. distinguish different research methods in the social sciences and understand their advantages and limitations (PILO 3),
6. collect, analyse and evaluate data and information as a result of in-class exercises (worksheet, group work, case study) (PILO 3),
7. effectively explain ideas, contrast perspectives, and work in teams as a result of class discussions and assignments (PILO 5).



(The remarks in brackets express each CILO's connection to the Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs).)

3. Content, schedule

1. Introduction to the instructor, course objectives, syllabus.

What is sociology? How can sociology help us in our personal and professional lives? Why do science, government, and business benefit from the study of sociology? Key features of sociological thinking. Basic concepts and modern theoretical approaches.

2. *How do we ask and answer sociological questions? Building blocks of basic social research. Introduction to research approaches.*
3. *Does nature or culture (nurture) influence human behavior more? How easily can culture be changed? The sociological study of culture. Cultural conformity or diversity, group influence. Ethnocentrism and relativism.*
4. *How do we learn the rules of a society? How does socialization affect our lives? The role of socialization over the life course. Nature vs. nurture. Theories and research on socialization.*
5. *Why do humans need social interaction? Social interaction in the age of the Internet. Theories and contemporary research on social interaction.*
6. *How do we interact with each other as individuals or as groups? Different groups in sociology. Theories and contemporary research on groups, networks, and organizations.*
7. *Why do people violate the norms and rules of a society? How is deviance socially constructed? Conformity, deviance, and crime. Sociological theories and research on crime and deviance.*
8. *Why do people have different access to valued resources? Social stratification and the importance of social background. Theories and research on stratification in modern societies.*
9. *How are people treated differently because of their gender, race or ethnicity? Social inequalities. Gender inequality, race, ethnicity, and racism. Understanding global inequality.*
10. *What is a family? What changes in family structures have occurred around the world? Sociological theoretical and historical perspectives on families.*
11. *What are the social functions of schooling? Education, social mobility, and inequality. Major sociological perspectives on the role of schooling. Theory of cultural and social capital.*
12. *Why is work a classic topic of sociological research? Sociological dimensions of work. The (changing) nature of work in modern societies and the major changes affecting economic life today. The future of work.*
13. *What is the trend of urbanization in the world? What are the implications of population growth? Demographic processes, urbanization, global cities, urban problems. Environment and human ecology, theories of population size and control.*

4. Learning and teaching strategy, methodology

Principal teaching methodologies: pre-reading of book chapters, in-class discussion, quizzes, group work, student presentations, lecture.



This module consists of a combination of lectures and seminars. The lectures introduce students to theories, concepts, and debates on the topic at hand. Students in seminars are encouraged to actively participate in the educational process by discussing the actual themes, conducting class activities (group work, assignments), and analyzing offline and online (digital) resources (such as videos, podcasts, articles, worksheets). Student reflection on the material and active participation in class discussions and group work are considered important components of the learning process. This requires that students come to class prepared by reading the assigned chapter of the textbook for the sessions in advance.

5. Assessment

Formative assessment elements: Oral feedback on class activities, discussion of individual and group assignments solved in class, and online quizzes on various core material blocks that students solve at home.

Summative assessment elements:

Individual Assessment	85%	Group Assessment	15%
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Name of the element	Weight	Type	Details	Retake opportunity	Req.*	Related CIOs
Take-home quizzes	10%	individual, written, coursework	Online quiz (open-book Moodle test) with single-choice questions related to the main blocks of the learning material (not every week, 3 quizzes in total). Students solve these quizzes at home.	no	no	CIO 2
Group work presentation	15%	group, written & oral, coursework	Theoretical issues are put into practise through in-class exercises. Students analyse online/offline resources, reading materials in groups and present results.	no (upon special and proven circumstances, illness, etc.).	no	CIO 1-7
Midterm exam	25%	individual, written, exam	A written exam based on topics 1-7, with short answer and essay questions. The questions measure not only students' theoretical	no (upon special and proven circumstances, illness, etc.).	no	CIO 1-5



			knowledge but also their critical thinking skills.			
Final exam	50%	individual, written, exam	A written exam, with short answer and essay questions. The questions measure not only students' theoretical knowledge but also their critical thinking skills.	one retake opportunity	yes	CILO 1-5

* Req.: Completion of the element is required to pass the course, irrespective of the performance in other elements.

6. Learning materials

- Essential
 - Anthony Giddens, Mitchell Duneier, Richard P. Appelbaum, Deborah Carr, (2018): *Introduction into Sociology*, 11th edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, INC. (*core textbook*)
 - Anthony Giddens, Philip W. Sutton (2017): *Sociology*, 8th Edition, Cambridge: Polity Press.
 - Class Slides (PowerPoint slides shown in class can be downloaded from Moodle).
 - Other learning materials might be shared with the students during the semester on MS Teams and/or Moodle.
- Recommended
 - Martin Joseph (1989): *Sociology for Business – A Practical Approach*. Cambridge: Polity
 - C. W. Mills (1959): *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press

7. Further information

<p>International aspects embedded with the course</p> <p>Asking and answering sociological questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suicide rates in Hungary, <i>case example, in-class discussion</i> <p>Culture and society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - components of national identity in different countries (textbook 1, chapter 3, p. 51.), <i>infographic discussion</i> - different subcultures (Wall Street, The Amish, modern-day nomads), popular culture (Hollywood) (short documentary films), <i>case example, in-class discussion</i> - generational differences (international comparison), <i>in-class exercise</i> - cultural orientation by country (online test), <i>case example, in-class discussion</i> - American Values in Print Media, <i>in-class exercise</i> <p>Socialization and the life course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - life course transitions in different countries (textbook 1, chapter 4, p. 83), <i>infographic discussion</i> - The story of „The girl in the window” (reading/video), <i>case example, in-class discussion</i> <p>Social interactions (groups, networks, organizations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - obedience to authority – Milgram research (documentary film, reading), <i>case example, in-class discussion</i> - The U.S. Military Academy (West Point),), <i>case example, in-class discussion</i>
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- internet connectivity, digital divide (international comparison) (textbook 1, chapter 6, p. 137.), *infographic discussion*

Conformity, deviance, crime

- incarceration rate in different countries (textbook 1, chapter 7, p. 161), *infographic discussion*
- Story of Kevin Mitnick and Takafumi Horie (online readings), Heaven's Gate cult (reading, video), China New Surveillance Technologies (video), *in-class discussions*

Social stratifications, inequalities

- income inequalities in different countries (textbook 1, chapter 8, p. 181), *infographic discussion*
- global/ gender inequalities in numbers (textbook 1, chapter 9-10, p. 209, 255), *infographic discussion*

Family

- length of maternity leave in different countries (textbook 1, chapter 15, p. 401), *infographic discussion*

Education

- educational attainment international comparison (textbook 1, chapter 16, p. 435), *infographic discussion*

Population growth, urbanization (:

- urbanization trends international comparison (textbook 1, chapter 19, p. 531), *infographic discussion*

Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability (ERS) aspects embedded with the course

Topic 2. Asking and answering sociological questions (E - Ethics)

How do we ask and answer sociological questions? Building blocks of basic social research. Introduction to research approaches. Ethical dilemmas in research.

- Ethical concerns of social research: Stanford Prison Experiment (docu film), Watson's 'Little Albert' study (docu film), „As nature made him” story of Bruce Reimner (supplementary reading, podcast); *group work / in-class discussion.*

Topic 3, 4. Culture, Socialization process (R – responsibility)

Does nature or culture (nurture) influence human behavior more? How easily can culture be changed? The sociological study of culture. Cultural conformity or diversity, group influence. Ethnocentrism and relativism. How do we learn the rules of a society? How does socialization affect our lives? The role of socialization over the life course. Nature vs. nurture. Theories and research on socialization.

- The Merchants of Cool (docu film, effect of media on the socialization process), The secret case of Genie Wiley (docu film, process of socialization), Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn – McPartland, 1954), Gender Socialization Lab/Fieldtrip (Social Construction of Ideas, Asanet.com, A. Cross), Writing Children's Book (McKinney – Heyl 2009, exercise); *group work / in-class discussion.*
- Effects of Social media on Society and Culture (infographics), Culture Orientation per country (TheCultureTest.com, online test), Inglehart–Welzel Cultural Map (infographics), Short docu films relate to sub-, pop- and counterculture (Wall Street, The Amish and Us, Modern Nomads), TV Media and Reality: An Observation (exercise, Asanet.com, Inge - McGrane 1999); *group work / in-class discussion.*

Topic 9. Social inequalities (E - ethics, R – responsibility)

How are people treated differently because of their gender, race or ethnicity? Social inequalities. Gender inequality, race, ethnicity, and racism. Understanding global inequality, globalization.



- Global-, gender-, racial inequalities (infographics), Life Happens: A Work, Class, and Access to Resources Exercise (Tracy E. Ore, Asanet.com, simulation), Race and Ethnicity Data Exercise (J. Gerdes - C. Persell 2008, Asanet.com, exploring data), *The Divide (docu film)*, *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price (docu film)*, *Michael Moore: Capitalism: A Love Story 2009 (docu film)*; group work / in-class discussion

Topic 10, 11. Social institutions (family, education) (R – responsibility)

What is a family? What changes in family structures have occurred around the world?

Sociological theoretical and historical perspectives on families. What are the social functions of schooling? Education, social mobility, and inequality. Major sociological perspectives on the role of schooling. Theory of cultural and social capital.

- *Babies: the first year (docu film)*, *The Changing Face of Motherhood* (supplementary reading), PISA (OECD data comparison, infographics); group work / in-class discussion

Topic 13. Population growth, urbanization (R - responsibility, S - sustainability):

What is the trend of urbanization in the world? What are the implications of population growth? Demographic processes, urbanization, global cities, urban problems. Environment and human ecology, theories of population size and control.

- *The future of the cities (docu film)*, *Environmental racism (docu film)*, *Draw a map* (exercise, social change, Eileen A. Baumann et al. 1989); group work / in-class discussion

Connections to the world of practice of the course

“Not relevant to this course”.