

**Sociology 120
Social Institutions
UC-Riverside
Winter 2014**

Professor: Professor Stephen Sanderson

Office:

Sociology Department
1221 Watkins Hall, 951-204-9517
E-mail: sksander999@gmail.com

Note: Do not send email messages to my UCR account. I check that account less frequently and I may not see your message. Then you will think me rude for not responding to your message. But I always respond to student email messages as soon as I see them.

Website WWW.STEPHENKSANDERSON.COM

Office Hours: TR, 2:15-3:30

Teaching Assistant:

Jake Apkarian

Reading Materials:

Stephen K. Sanderson, *Modern Societies: A Comparative Perspective* (forthcoming book still in unpublished manuscript form)

Peter L. Berger, *The Capitalist Revolution: Fifty Propositions about Prosperity, Equality and Liberty*. Basic Books, 1986.

Both of these books are available only in PDF files on iLearn.

You need to bring a copy (printed or electronic) of the relevant chapter of my book to class every day. This is because the chapters contain tables that we will examine together. If you do not have a copy with you, then you will be at a disadvantage in following the discussion.

Exams

There will be four exams, the final included. These will consist of multiple-choice and true-false questions. Each exam counts 100 points, for a total of 400 points.

On the day of the final exam, I will also give a bonus exam for extra points if you choose to take it. It will contain about 30 questions worth one point each. These questions will be drawn from Chapters 5, 6, 10, and 11 of *Modern Societies*, which will not be covered in class. (Chapters 5 and 6 are on race and gender, which are not social institutions, but we will do it anyway. Chapters 10 and 11 deal with aspects of economic institutions.) Obviously the bonus test is optional.

Note that the bonus test cannot lower your grade should you choose to take it. This has caused a lot of confusion in previous classes. Here is how it works. With the 4 exams and the term paper (see below) there are 500 possible points. Say you earn 410 points in total. That gives you an 82%, or B+. But if you take the bonus test and earn just 20 points, then your grand total is now 430 points. That gives you 86%, or an A-.

Note that after calculating your final point total, I still divide by 500 to get your final percentage—not by 530 points. If I divided by 530 points, then your final percentage in the example above would be 81.1%, which would then lower your grade from B+ to B. But remember, I still divide by 500, so it is impossible for your grade to be lowered even if you get 0 on the bonus exam (no one ever has). You have nothing to lose by taking the bonus exam. Most students choose to take it.

Critical Paper

The Berger book is to be used for a critical paper. Your paper is to be 3,000 words in length. Spend about half of your time summarizing the main ideas in the book, and then the other half providing your own reaction to it. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why or why not? You can't just give personal opinions; you have to back them up with evidence and argument. It doesn't matter whether you agree or disagree with Berger.

Your paper will be graded by my teaching assistant. He will judge your paper on how well it develops the relevant ideas, not on the point of view you take. Whether he agrees or disagrees with your point of view, this will not affect your grade.

I regret to say that last year several students plagiarized their papers and I caught them. One student lifted her paper word for word from several sources she found online. That was an automatic 0 on the paper. Plagiarism means taking someone else's ideas or actual words and claiming them as your own. It's about the worst offense you can commit as a student. Occasionally a student gets thrown out of the university if the plagiarism is bad enough.

However, on this paper I will ask you to bring in two other sources that are commentaries on Berger. Go online and you can find book reviews and similar commentaries. One source should criticize the book, the other praise it. And you must cite these sources and attach a bibliography at the end.

Believe me, I can spot plagiarism when I see it. You want your paper to be good, but not too good!!! If your writing has the quality of a highly advanced writer, and if your paper contains information you could not possibly have known, then suspicions arise.

Grading

Your grade is based on 400 points for the 4 exams and 100 points for the critical paper, for a total of 500 points. At the end of the quarter I total up your points, determine your final percentage, and assign your grade based on the following scale:

A+ = 95% and above
A = 88-94.9
A- = 85-87.9
B+ = 82-84.9
B = 78-81.9
B- = 75-77.9
C+ = 72-74.9
C = 68-71.9
C- = 65-67.9
D+ = 62-64.9
D = 54-61.9
D- = 50-53.9
F = 49.9 and below

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Class 1/ Course introduction/ What are institutions?

Class 2/ Rich Democracies, I (Sanderson, chapter 1)

Class 3/ Rich Democracies, I (cont'd)

Class 4/ Rich Democracies, II (Sanderson, chapter 2)

Class 5/ Rich Democracies, II (cont'd)

Class 6/ Exam #1

Class 7/ State Socialist Societies (Sanderson, chapter 3)

Class 8/ State Socialist Societies (cont'd)

Class 9/ Less-developed Societies (Sanderson, chapter 4)

Class 10/ Less-developed Societies (cont'd)

Class 11/ Less-developed Societies (cont'd)

Class 12/ Exam #2

Class 13/ Marriage and Families (Sanderson, chapter 7)

Class 14/ Marriage and Families (cont'd)

Class 15/ Modern Mass Education (Sanderson, chapter 8)

Class 16/ Modern Mass Education (cont'd)

Class 17/ Exam #3

Class 18/ Religion (Sanderson, chapter 9)

Class 19/ Religion (cont'd)

Class 20/ Religion (cont'd)

Final exam and optional bonus exam during finals week.