



Introduction to Sociology 1 | SOU11011/3

Year	Junior Freshman
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	22
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Prof Richard Layte
Contact Email	LAYTER@tcd.ie

Module Outline:

Sociology enables us to understand and critically explore the social world in which we live. The module introduces students to the distinctive questions that sociologists ask about human society and the theories, concepts and analytical tools used in the search for answers. Students are encouraged to develop a 'sociological imagination' in order to understand the inter-relationships and dependencies between the individual, society and wider global processes.

The module explores why we need a sociological approach to the explanation of human behaviour and the historical emergence of sociology as a way of understanding key issues in social life. It then examines core sociological processes such as how social norms shape behaviour, the structure of social networks and the roles of social capital, social conformism, and group identity. The module also examines issues of social stratification and inequality.

Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Explain the role of social context in shaping human behaviour and group processes.
- Know the different types of social structures, their characteristics and the social processes associated with each.
- Have a knowledge of the main contribution of some of the classical sociological thinkers.
- Be able to compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to key issues.
- Identify and apply sociological theories to real world social phenomena and the evidence that is available to support them (or not).



Assessment:

- One PowerPoint presentation during the semester (30%)
- 40-questions, 1-hour multiple choice exam (70%)
- Supplementary assessment will be by 1500-word essay.

Recommended Reading List:

- Christakis, N. and Fowler, J. (2011) *Connected: The Amazing Power of Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*, Harper Press, London.
- Haidt, J. (2012) *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Penguin Books, London.
- Gelfand, M (2018) *Rule Makers, Rule Breakers*, Robinson, London.
- Norenzayan, A. (2010) *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.