

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop a sociological understanding, and critique, of behavioural conformity and deviance.
2. Develop a conceptual, analytical, and challenging perspective on the theories, politics, and undercurrents of social life that create conforming attitudes and assumptions of deviance.
3. Learn sociological theories of deviance and conformity.
4. Become familiar with ideas of hegemony, 'other', representation, and deconstruction.
5. Apply these ideas critically to Canadian culture and the cultures of other societies.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Understand the 'social construction of reality'.
2. Express this comprehension by deconstructing our perspectives of conformity and deviance, utilizing the ideas of Objective 4.
3. Learn and employ sociological theories that attempt to explain why we deviate, and why we conform.

EVALUATION:

Written assignments for this course emphasize synthesis of ideas from a sociological standpoint, and the best questions you can think of to advance that synthesis. Analysis does not mean just reporting what others have said on a topic. Important as this is, other authors' ideas or conclusions are valuable because they add insight or specific details that help you to ask questions about the topic you have selected. Essays for me are philosophical inquiries that are advanced through your and others' investigations. Deciding what questions are worth raising is an important part of analysis. Conclusions can be valuable but aren't obligatory for any of my assignments.

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A+	4.0	95 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	90 – 94	
A-	3.7	87 – 89	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B+	3.3	83 – 86	
B	3.0	80 – 82	GOOD
B-	2.7	77 – 79	
C+	2.3	73 – 76	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	65 – 72	
C-	1.7	60 – 64	
D+	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

NOTE: On the College’s marking grid there is no D-. Therefore no such final mark will be recorded. However, for the course assignments, I will use D- as an additional non-failing mark.

How your grade is calculated?

Assignment 1: Multiple Choice Exam I Weight: 33.3%
 Assignment 2: Analytical Essay Weight: 33.3%
 Final Exam Assignment Weight: 33.4%
 (Museum Presentation)

Your score on the multiple choice exam will be converted to a letter grade.

Example: *Multiple Choice Exam* - If the exam has 10 questions and you have 8 correct answers, your score is 80%. According to the grid above, 80% becomes a 'B'.

Restated: All assignments will be given a letter grade (A to F) corresponding to a numerical score value (4 to 0) as per the grading criteria table shown above. The final grade for the course will be determined by the average of the scores on the multiple choice exams and the final take-home assignment. The following illustrates the determination of how a final course grade is calculated:

Task	Grade	Score	Final score & Grade	
Multiple Choice Exam	B	3.0	3.0	
Analytical Essay	B-	2.7		
Final Exam Assignment	B+	3.3	3.3	
			$(3.0+3.7+3.3)/3=3.33=B+*$	

***Please note that your final grade will be based on the two exams and the take-home final exam assignment. However, your grade may go up by at least one letter grade beyond the average of these three assignments as a result of participation as outlined later in this document.**

Multiple Choice Exam: Due Date - February 23rd

Based on Chapters 1-3 in the Bereska text.

Analytical Essay: Due Date - March 16th

What we call deviant behaviour is based on the assumption it is the unusual or strange or the unexpected that require explanation or theorizing. This essay requires you to do the opposite. You will discuss an aspect of Canadian society that you interpret through art or articles, books or other materials you have read; films or shows you have watched, social events current in the minds of many, etc. In this essay you will analyze the message(s) of conformity in how this aspect is depicted and explained. Then you will discuss why people might respond un-conformingly to what is portrayed. Rather than discuss how and why we may 'deviate', you will discuss how and why we may conform. Minimum length is 1200 words.

Museum Presentations:

Presentations will be sometime during the official exam period.

These will be group presentations to the class, comprised of 3 - 5 people. The mark will be assigned collectively for group presentations but members of each group will evaluate each other's contribution to presentation based on a brief questionnaire I will hand out to you. These will not be part of my assessment of the presentation, but will be considered by me when thinking of a bonus mark for you.

For this assignment you will consider yourselves curators of a museum exhibition. The topic of the exhibition is entirely your choice, but you should think about its theme and layout presentation to me and to the rest of the class. A minimum of 10 items must be displayed. You will explain to your audience the ideas underlying the theme and layout. After this phase of the presentation is over, the class and I will leave the room and you will rearrange the same 10 items. When we return you will follow the same process, this time with a different explanation.

This course will emphasize the instability and arbitrary characteristics of our beliefs, morality, judgments, and practises. Therefore the significance and meaning(s) of your exhibit from a conformist and/or deviant perspective, and the logic of its display, must be openly addressed. You should not just persuade us of your interpretation.

***Grammar is important to communicating precise meaning. Therefore, while it will not be valued as highly as content, it will be evaluated and therefore can affect your mark.

******ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO LATENESS PENALTIES OF ONE GRADE LEVEL PER CALENDAR DAY BEYOND THE DUE DATE. A PENALTY WILL ALSO BE APPLIED FOR INSUFFICIENT LENGTH AND NOT SENDING WRITTEN WORK TO ME AS EXPLAINED IN THIS OUTLINE:**

******ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SENT BY EMAIL, TO MY COLLEGE ACCOUNT:**

asegal@gprc.ab.ca ALSO, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE WORD 'ASSIGNMENT' IN THE SUBJECT LINE, AND INDICATE WHICH ASSIGNMENT IT IS.

Discussion Bonus mark:

Every person in the course may (but not necessarily will), receive a bonus mark in increase his/her final grade by at least one letter grade based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation. Discussion postings to a Moodle discussion forum also will be considered class participation. You will be eligible for a bonus mark only if you display commitment to the course by reading the books and completing all written assignments. Although attendance is not relevant to

the regular assignments for the course, it is important to your eligibility for a bonus mark. Eligibility for the bonus is nullified if you are absent for more than 3 classes.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

University courses provide the best intellectual and perhaps social experience, when students arrive prepared for the day's work. My classes are heavily discussion -oriented and therefore require commitment from students.

1. Read assignments.
2. Participate in class conversation about the material.
3. Complete all written work.
4. Indicate on submitted material your name; section and course number; and which assignment is being sent to me.
5. All written work must be sent via email to asegal@gprc.ab.ca You MUST use the word 'assignment' in the subject line.
6. *** Electronic Devices: People who must have contact with others during class time may leave their cell phones on 'vibrate', and leave the room if a response is required. Otherwise, texting or use of phones will result in you having to miss that particular class. Please do not put me in a position of having to do this.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

In an academic setting, presenting others' work as your own is a serious violation. However, referencing articles and books and online academic products do not prevent you from building on their ideas and speculations. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Admission Guide at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/**

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week1 *Introduction to SO2240*

Week 2 **TB: Chapter 1 - Determining Deviance; SH: Introduction**

Class Discussion:

What are objective and subjective ideas and theories of deviance (and conformity)?

What do sociologists mean by social processes?

Sociologists sometimes mention deconstructing patterns of behaviour or belief. What are they trying to say?

Consider the validity of concepts of pathology, harm, rights, etc.

Does our society have dominant moral codes? What persuades you they are dominant? Do they prevail in some contexts but not others?

What are Stuart Hall's introductory ideas on language, meaning, culture, and representation? Think of Bereska's introductory remarks, and imagine a conversation she might have with Hall. Would they conclude they have a similar or dissimilar comprehension of social attitudes and behaviour?

Week 3 **SH: Chapter 1 - The Work of Representation: Readings A, B, C, D, and F**

Class Discussion:

Contemplate these readings carefully. This includes the activities used as examples.

What is discourse? Hall devotes a segment of the chapter to the trinity of knowledge, power, and truth. Explain his reason for doing so.

What are signifiers? Why explain them in a chapter on representation?

What theories of representation does Hall address in this section of the book?

Identify for yourself some signifiers of deviance.

What is 'the subject'?

Week 4 **TB: Chapters 2 & 3 - Explaining Deviance: The Act; The Perception, Reaction, and Power**

Class Discussion:

What are the functionalist, learning, and social control theories of deviance?

What differentiates positivist from non-positivist theorizing?

Why distinguish among Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Deviance? Should we use the same categories for conformity?

Week 5 **Lecture on Ian Hacking's Views of Constructing Social Categories of People**

TB: Chapter 5 - 'Deviant' and 'Normal' Sexuality

Class Discussion:

What is a paradigm? How does it apply to culture and norms, and what is its relevance to a discussion of deviance or conformity?

Week 6 **SH: Chapter 2 - Recording Reality; Readings A, B, and C**

Class Discussion:

In the recordings of your own lives, via whatever technologies you use, have you ever imagined them as forms of documentary? Whatever your answer is, how do you explain it? Is reality something unique?

Frances Bonner, who wrote this chapter, refers to non-fiction. What is it, and do you rank it as a significant concept in understanding the reality of your existence? How do you think Bonner might respond to these questions?

Bonner injects into her analysis the idea of *text*. This is important in concepts of discourse, and also of sociology. What does she mean by it, and how would Michel Foucault explain it to you?

Week 7 **SH: Chapter 3 - The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures; Readings B, C, D, E, and F**

Class Discussion:

Are you surprised to see 'poetics' and 'exhibiting' united as tools for analysis? If you met another student who asked you about these two words being brought together, would you say 'damned if I know', or try to justify or criticize their inclusion in the chapter?

Are the earlier discussions we have had about representation relevant to anything written in this section?

Is the understanding of a museum that comes through in these pages like or unlike your assumptions about museums? We use the word singly, but Lidchi says different types flourish around the world. How many types can you think of?

What are connotation and denotation? Is either connected to artefacts?

Week 8 **TB: Chapters 6 & 7 - The Troubling and Troubled World of Youth; Looking Deviant**

Class Discussion:

Do you view youth as troubling or troubled? Does a discourse exist in our society that advocated these viewpoints?

Bereska refers to aversive education, in which dangers of life are instilled in children. Does she overstate this argument?

Week 9 **Chapters 4 & 8 - The Role of the Media; Mental Disorders**

Class Discussion:

What is stigma?

Week 10 **SH: Chapter 4 - The spectacle of the 'Other'; Readings A, B, C, and D**

Class Discussion:

What and who are the 'other'?

Prepare to discuss the varieties of otherness introduced in this chapter.

Does Hall persuade you that being 'other' and being commoditized are related? How are power, fantasy, fetishism, and representation connected?

Week 11 **TB: Chapter 9 - What Do You Believe? Religion and Deviance**

Class Discussion:

You might have been raised to consider religion an important aspect of personal and social life, even if you or your family follow no religion and may not believe in any god. How, then, does a chapter appear that asks you to look at religion as a form of deviance?

Week 12 **TB: Chapter 10 - The 'Deviance Dance' Continues**

Class Discussion:

Explain the Deviance Dance.

Who or what are moral entrepreneurs? Do they establish or counter the Deviance Dance? Is there also a Conformity Dance?