

Introductory Sociology (for non-sociology majors)

Fall 2025 – National Taiwan University

Instructor:	Lake Lui
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Office:	Xinsheng Lecture Building 303
Time:	Monday 14:20–17:20
Office Hours:	By appointment

Course Description

How is our behavior affected by groups? Why are there poverty, social inequalities, and market failures? What does it mean by thinking sociologically? This introductory course critically and scientifically examines the social forces and processes that shape individuals, institutions, culture, and society. We will draw on major concepts, theories, and research in various areas. We will start by introducing different lenses of sociology, then use them to examine institutions such as education, work, family, and law. We will also expand our understanding beyond national boundaries. Throughout, students are encouraged to use what C. Wright Mills calls the “sociological imagination” to grasp the interplay of biography and history, and to distinguish between personal troubles and public issues.

Course Objectives

- Introduce foundational sociological concepts, theories, and methods.
- Apply sociological perspectives to understand institutions and everyday life.
- Encourage critical thinking about the interplay of individuals and broader social forces.

Course Requirements

- Complete assigned readings before class.
- Active class participation and debates.
- Submit one essay (1200–1500 words) analyzing a social phenomenon in Taiwan using sociological perspectives.
- Final exam covering all course materials.
- Students must attend at least 2 of 3 worksheet/activity sessions.

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic / Reading
1	Sociological Imagination – Sociology Experiment, 'Introduction'
2	Research in Social Sciences – Sociology Experiment, 'Research Methods'
3	Structure and Agencies – Sociology Experiment, 'Social Structure and the Individual'
4	Social Class, Inequality and Poverty – Sociology Experiment, 'Social Class, Inequality and Poverty'
5	Holiday (Teacher's Day)
6	Holiday (Mid-Autumn Festival)
7	Gender – Sociology Experiment, 'Gender and Sexuality'
8	Sociology of Education – Sociology Experiment, 'Sociology of Education'
9	Sociology of Work – Sociology Experiment, 'Economic Sociology'; Lui (2022)
10	Media and Society – DiMaggio et al. (2001)
11	Sociology of Family – Sociology Experiment, Ch. 8
12	Political Sociology [Debate]
13	Globalization & Development – Chow (2002)

Week	Topic / Reading
14	Transnationalism & Migration – Vertovec (2001)
15	Exam Review (TA-led)
16	Final Exam

Assessment

Item	Percentage	Explanation
Participation & Debate	30%	Engagement in class, weekly tasks, and debate performance
Individual Essay	20%	1200–1500 words; sociological analysis of a Taiwan issue
Final Exam	50%	MCQs, short answers, and one essay question

References

Sharp, Shamus Khan, Patrick Sharkey, G. *A Sociology Experiment: Fourth Edition*. Available at: <https://sociologyexperiment.com/>

Additional supplementary readings will be provided during the semester.