

# School District of Springfield Township

## Springfield Township High School Course Overview

### **Course Name: Sociology**

#### Course Description

Sociology introduces students to the sociological perspective and methods of investigation. Students also examine several major approaches to understanding how society functions and how individuals and groups interact, compete, and cooperate with each other. Students then apply these skills and this knowledge as they go on to examine key sociological issues, including deviance, crime, violence, social class, gender, race, and death and dying.

#### Unit Titles

- Unit 1: The Sociological Perspective
- Unit 2: Sociological Investigation
- Unit 3: Culture
- Unit 4: Society
- Unit 5: Socialization
- Unit 6: Deviance and Crime
- Unit 7: Social Class in the United States
- Unit 8: Race and Ethnicity
- Unit 9: Gender
- Unit 10: Violence
- Unit 11: Aging

#### Essential Questions

1. What is the sociological perspective?
2. What are three major paradigms applied to understanding societies?
3. What is the value of a global perspective?
4. What methods do sociologists use to study culture and society?
5. What is culture?
6. What values are central to the American culture?
7. What causes cultures to change?
8. What are five types of societies characterized by levels of technology?
9. What is involved in the socialization process?
10. What are the key agents of socialization?
11. What causes people to deviate from the norm?
12. What are index crimes and why are they characterized as such by the FBI?
13. What factors have been cited as causes of crime?
14. What defenses are available to people accused of a crime?
15. What is “due process”?
16. In what ways does social inequality affect the way people live in American society?
17. What are the factors that determine social class in the United States?
18. What is the extent and impact of poverty in the United States?

19. What factors contribute to gender stratification in the United States?
20. What is the social meaning of race and ethnicity?
21. What are some of the theories that explain prejudice?
22. What are the likely consequences of the “graying of America?”
23. Why is the United States such a violence-oriented society?

### **Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings**

#### Unit 1: The Sociological Perspective

- The sociological perspective shows the power of society to shape our individual lives
- Emile Durkheim’s research on suicide shows that society affects even our most personal decisions
- Global awareness is part of the sociological perspective
- A theory weaves observations into insight and understanding
- The structural-functional paradigm focuses on how patterns of behavior contribute to the operation of society
- The social-conflict paradigm emphasizes inequality, conflict, and change
- The symbolic-interaction paradigm focuses on face-to-face interaction in specific settings
- Sociological thinking combines all three paradigms and involves generalizations

#### Unit 2: Sociological Investigation

- Scientific sociology studies society by systematically observing social behavior
- Sociology seeks to discover how social variables are related, to identify cause-and-effect relationships, and to predict
- The logic of any science, including sociology, is most clearly expressed in the experimental method
- Participant observation is a method by which a researcher directly observes a social setting while participating in it for an extended period of time
- Theory and research are linked through deductive and inductive logical thought

#### Unit 3: Culture

- Culture is a way of life shared by members of a society
- Culture relies on symbols, most especially language, by which one generation transmits culture to the next
- Values are culturally defined standards of what ought to be, while beliefs are statements that people who share a culture hold to be true
- The United States stands among the most culturally diverse societies in the world
- Ethnocentrism involves judging others by the standards of one’s own culture
- The concept of cultural conflict refers to political debate (culture wars) on the direction of cultural change

#### Unit 4: Society

- Sociocultural evolution explores the effects of technological advances on societies
- Marx’s materialist analysis points up conflict between social classes
- Weber’s idealist approach argues that ideas have a powerful influence on society
- Durkheim explained that society has an objective existence apart from individuals

#### Unit 5: Socialization

- Socialization is the way individuals develop their humanity and particular identities
- Social experience is essential to human development
- Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg, Mead, Cooley, and Erikson have each contributed theories on the development of the human personality
- The family has the greatest influence on a child's attitudes and behavior
- Peer groups free children from adult supervision and take on great significance during adolescence
- The mass media have a considerable impact on the socialization process
- Each stage of the life cycle is socially constructed in ways that vary from society to society
- Socialization shows the power of society to shape our thoughts, feelings, and actions

#### Unit 6: Deviance and Crime

- Deviance refers to norm violations ranging from mild breaches of etiquette to serious violence
- Psychological study links deviance to abnormal personality resulting from either biological or environmental causes
- The structural-functional paradigm explains that deviance serves to affirm norms and values, clarify moral boundaries, and promote social unity
- Labeling theory holds that deviance lies in people's reactions to a person's behavior, not in the behavior itself
- Social-conflict theory suggests that laws and other norms reflect the interests of powerful segments of society
- Uniform Crime Report statistics indicate that arrest rates peak in late adolescence, then drop steadily with advancing age
- There are probably as many causes of crime as there are criminals
- "Due Process" is described in and guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States

#### Unit 7: Social Class in the United States

- Social stratification in the United States involves inequality of many kinds, including wealth, income, and power
- From birth, family ancestry, race and ethnicity, gender, and religion all affect a person's social position
- Social class shapes our lives in many ways, including health, attitudes, and patterns of spending
- While some social mobility is common in the U.S., only small changes typically occur from generation to generation
- Our cultural emphasis on individual responsibility helps explain why public assistance for the poor has long been controversial

#### Unit 8: Race and Ethnicity

- Races are socially constructed categories that set people apart according to various physical traits
- Prejudice is a rigid and biased generalization about a category of people
- Racism is a destructive type of prejudice that asserts that one race is innately superior or inferior to another

- Discrimination is a pattern of action by which a person treats various categories of people unequally
- Pluralism means that racial and ethnic categories, although distinct, have equal social standing
- Assimilation is a process by which minorities gradually adopt the patterns of the dominant culture
- Immigration has increased in recent years, primarily from Latin America and Asia

#### Unit 9: Gender

- Gender refers to the meaning a culture attaches to being male or female and is an important dimension of stratification
- Through the socialization process, people incorporate gender into their personalities and actions (gender roles)
- Gender stratification shapes the workplace
- Violence against women is a widespread problem in the United States
- Feminism endorses the social equality of the sexes and opposes patriarchy and sexism

#### Unit 10: Violence

- America has a history of violence dating back to the origins of our society
- Most family violence victimizes women and children and is far more common than official records indicate
- The American Medical Association has declared that violence in the mass media, especially television, films, and video games has reached levels that are a hazard to this country's people
- The glorification of violence in American society is reflected on the sports field as well as in the stands
- In recent years, violence has claimed the lives of students and teachers alike in our nation's schools
- Sexual violence, which ranges from verbal abuse to rape and assault, is widespread in the United States
- Victims of hate-motivated violence are especially likely to be people who contend with multiple stigmas

#### Unit 11: Aging

- The proportion of elderly people in the U.S. population will reach 20% by 2050
- Most younger people exaggerate the extent of disability among the elderly
- Psychological research confirms that growing old does not result in overall loss of intelligence or radical changes in personality
- As people age, they face social isolation brought on by retirement, physical disability, and the loss of loved ones
- An increasing elderly population raises the demand for caregiving
- Disengagement theory provides for the orderly transfer of status and roles from the older to the younger generation
- Modern society has set death apart from everyday life, prompting a cultural denial of human mortality
- The financial and legal aspects of death and dying have spawned major industries in our society

- Deciding if and when death is better than life has become a major moral issue in American society

### Key Competencies/Skills/Procedures

#### Unit 1: The Sociological Perspective

- Apply the sociological perspective to the study of society and culture
- Identify the benefits to using the sociological perspective
- Outline the historical changes that gave rise to the science of sociology
- Identify and analyze sociology's three major theoretical paradigms
- Apply the theoretical paradigms to gain insights into everyday life

#### Unit 2: Sociological Investigation

- Operationalize concepts and ensure that measurement is both valid and reliable
- Understand how variables are related through correlation and/or cause-and-effect
- Suspend personal values and biases to achieve objectivity
- Identify the ethical guidelines that govern sociologists
- Investigate sociological methods of research, such as experiments, surveys and questionnaires, participant-observation, secondary analysis, and case studies
- Use deductive and inductive reasoning to link theory and research
- Examine how statistical manipulation can mislead with statistics

#### Unit 3: Culture

- Define culture in its broadest sense
- Distinguish between the terms “culture,” “nation,” and “society”
- Identify the five common components of all cultures: symbols, language, values and beliefs, norms, and material culture and technology
- Explain how the language of a people shapes their reality
- Distinguish between values and beliefs
- Identify ten values that are central to our way of life in the United States
- Distinguish between norms, mores, and folkways and identifying typical examples of each in American society
- Define multiculturalism and investigating its pros and cons
- Analyze the impact that ethnocentric attitudes have on intercultural relations
- Identify and analyze the causes of cultural change
- Investigate the divisive issues that characterize the “culture wars” that have recently dominated American society

#### Unit 4: Society

- Explore the effects of technological advances on societies
- Describe the four types of societies identified by the Lenskis according to their “sociocultural evolution” theory
- Investigate and evaluate Marx's materialist analysis, which emphasizes conflict between social classes
- Investigate and evaluate Weber's idealist approach, which argues that ideas have a powerful influence on society

- Investigate and evaluate Durkheim’s contention that society has an objective existence apart from individuals

#### Unit 5: Socialization

- Analyze the developmental theories of such contributors as Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erikson
- Investigate and analyze other theories related to the socialization process, including the ideas of George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley
- Compare and contrast the roles various social institutions, such as family, schools, peer groups, and the mass media play in the socialization of children

#### Unit 6: Deviance and Crime

- Identify and synthesize the proposed causes of deviance
- Compare and contrast how each of the three major paradigms explain deviance
- Interpret the arrest data provided by the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report in order to better assess who commits what types of crime
- Identify and define the many different types of crime
- Distinguish the relative severity of various degrees of homicide
- Conduct an in-depth examination of the crime of rape, with an emphasis on the personal and social dynamics surrounding acquaintance (date) rape
- Investigate and evaluate the many factors that have been cited as causes of crime
- Define and conduct a critical analysis of “due process,” and apply its tenets to specific cases
- Identify various defenses that are available to persons accused of a crime
- Conduct a critical analysis of two controversial defenses: self-defense and the insanity plea

#### Unit 7: Social Class in the United States

- Identify the various dimensions of social class in the United States
- Distinguish between ascribed versus achieved status
- Describe the four general social classes that define American society
- Assess the impact that class has on nearly every dimension of life in the U.S. (i.e., health, values, politics, family, and gender)
- Compare myth with reality regarding social mobility in the United States
- Examine and assess the extent poverty in the United States
- Compare and contrast two opposing views on explaining poverty in the U.S. (blaming the poor v. blaming society)
- Describe and debate the controversy surrounding public assistance programs (the welfare dilemma)

#### Unit 8: Race and Ethnicity

- Define the social meaning of race and ethnicity
- Identify the major characteristics of the term “minority”
- Investigate, compare, and contrast the various theories of prejudice
- Distinguish between pluralism and assimilation

## Unit 9: Gender

- Examine traditional gender identity and roles in the United States and assessing the impact that the women's liberation movement has had on them
- Analyze the impact that the mass media has had on shaping gender identity
- Investigate the various aspects of gender stratification in the U.S. (i.e., occupations, income, wealth, education, and politics)
- Identify basic ideas of the feminist movement

## Unit 10: Violence

- Examine the history of violence in the United States
- Identify characteristics of American society that promote violence in the home, in schools, and in sports
- Analyze the role that the mass media (especially television, video games, and movies) plays in glorifying and promoting violence
- Investigate the causes and nature of hate crimes in the United States

## Unit 11: Aging

- Assess/predict the impact that America's "graying" population will have on society
- Summarize the physical, psychological, and social effects of the aging process
- Identify the unique demands exacted on the family and on society regarding caregiving for an increasing elderly population
- Identify and explain Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' stages involved in confronting death
- Examine the legal and financial aspects of death and dying (i.e., wills, funeral arrangements)
- Examine and debate ethical issues surrounding death and dying (i.e., euthanasia, living wills, assisted suicide)

## Core Vocabulary

### Unit 1 : The Sociological Perspective

*sociology*

*global perspective*

*theoretical paradigm*

*structural-functional paradigm*

*manifest functions*

*latent functions*

*social-conflict paradigm*

*macro-level orientation*

*micro-level orientation*

*symbolic-interaction paradigm*

*stereotype*

### Unit 2: Sociological Investigation

*concept*

*variable*

*reliability*

*validity*

*cause and effect*

*spurious correlation*

*objectivity*

*replication*

*experimental procedure*

*Hawthorne effect*

*survey*

*participant observation*

*secondary analysis*

*inductive logical thought*

*deductive logical thought*

### Unit 3: Culture

*culture*  
*culture shock*  
*symbols*  
*Sapir-Whorf thesis*  
*values*  
*norms*  
*mores*  
*folkways*  
*high culture*

*popular culture*  
*subculture*  
*multiculturalism*  
*Eurocentrism*  
*Afrocentrism*  
*counterculture*  
*ethnocentrism*  
*cultural relativism*  
*cultural universals*

### Unit 4: Society

*society*  
*sociocultural evolution*  
*hunting and gathering*  
*horticulture*  
*pastoralism*  
*industrialism*  
*postindustrialism*  
*social conflict*  
*capitalism*  
*social institution*  
*false consciousness*  
*class conflict*

*class consciousness*  
*alienation*  
*tradition*  
*rationality*  
*rationalization of society*  
*anomie*  
*mechanical solidarity*  
*organic solidarity*  
*division of labor*

### Unit 5: Socialization

*socialization*  
*personality*  
*id*  
*ego*  
*superego*  
*sensorimotor stage*  
*preoperational stage*  
*concrete operational stage*  
*formal operational stage*

*self*  
*looking-glass self*  
*generalized other*  
*peer group*  
*anticipatory socialization*  
*mass media*  
*total institution*  
*resocialization*

### Unit 6: Deviance and Crime

*deviance*  
*crime*  
*criminal justice system*  
*labeling theory*  
*stigma*  
*medicalization of deviance*  
*white-collar crime*  
*corporate crime*  
*organized crime*  
*hate crime*  
*Uniform Crime Report*

*battery*  
*embezzlement*  
*larceny*  
*burglary*  
*robbery*  
*forcible rape*  
*statutory rape*  
*victimless crimes*  
*rohypnol*  
*self-defense*  
*insanity*



*index crimes*  
*felony*  
*misdemeanor*  
*manslaughter*  
*murder*  
*assault*

*entrapment*  
*procedural due process*  
*substantive due process*  
*Miranda decision*  
*Gideon v. Wainwright*  
*bail v. own recognizance*

#### Unit 7: Social Class in the United States

*income*  
*wealth*  
*intragenerational social mobility*  
*intergenerational social mobility*  
*upper class*  
*middle class*

*working class*  
*lower class*  
*relative poverty*  
*absolute poverty*  
*feminization of poverty*

#### Unit 8: Race and Ethnicity

*race*  
*ethnicity*  
*minority*  
*prejudice*  
*stereotype*  
*racism*  
*scapegoat*

*discrimination*  
*pluralism*  
*assimilation*  
*miscegenation*  
*segregation*  
*genocide*

#### Unit 9: Gender

*gender*  
*gender stratification*  
*patriarchy*  
*matriarchy*  
*sexism*

*gender roles*  
*sexual harassment*  
*glass ceiling*  
*feminism*  
*female genital mutilation*

#### Unit 10: Violence

*violence in mass media*  
*marital rape*  
*sexual violence*  
*terrorism*  
*pornography*  
*glorification of violence*

#### Unit 11: Aging

*gerontology*  
*age stratification*  
*caregiving*  
*ageism*  
*disengagement theory*  
*activity theory*  
*bereavement*  
*Elizabeth Kubler-Ross*

*euthanasia*  
*will/living will*  
*stages of dying*  
*grief*  
*assisted suicide*  
*hospice*

**Core Resources**

Sociology, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed., Macionis, Prentice Hall, 2001

**Pennsylvania State Standards and/or Anchor Standards Guiding Course**

There are no state or national standards for high school Sociology.

Prepared—October 2010—BW  
Approved--chr