**Part 1: Course Information**

Instructor:  Scott Furuta  
Office Hours:  BE 4150, Monday and Thursday, 4:10 to 5:00 p.m.  
E-mail:  sfuruta@sccd.ctc.edu  
Class Location:  BE 4136  
Class Hours:  Monday through Thursday, 2:40 to 4:10 p.m.

**Part 2: Required Reading...**

Title:  *Mix It Up: Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society*  
Author:  David Grazian  
Publisher:  W. W. Norton & Company  

Professor Grazian’s textbook will provide the basic conceptual framework for our course, but the substance of our course will come from other sources as well, including films, lecture material, and student research.

**Part 3: Scott’s Introduction to the Study of American Culture...**

The goal of this class is to give us an idea of the usefulness of sociology in understanding ourselves and our relationship to others. Important to that understanding is an investigation of culture—the wealth of ideas and knowledge that a society has collected. In this case, we will focus on American culture, which is a topic especially useful for students who may be somewhat new to the United States.

Sociology examines the assumptions we make in our views of the world. Where do our ideas come from, how much are they a product of us as individuals, and how much are they shared with the people around us? What forces shape our development and the choices that are available to us at the individual level? How and why do we cooperate with each other and how is it possible for large numbers of people to cooperate and achieve the incredibly complicated task of maintaining social order? Sociology addresses these questions and many others.

As an introduction to the study of American culture, this class will aim to help you develop your learning skills as well as present you with a sociological context for examining culture. It will assist you in: outlining some of the big areas of interest in sociology; building your vocabulary; improving your writing skills; helping you to develop critical skills so that you are able to move beyond your own experiences and assumptions in your understanding of the social world; sharpening your ability to process spoken lectures; increasing your confidence within the classroom environment; strengthening your sense of social responsibility; and, hopefully, meeting some nice people (that would be your classmates... I myself am not a nice person).

It is my hope to demonstrate the usefulness of sociology not just as a science but also as a reference for you to use in your day-to-day life. When we understand the construction of society’s ideas better and take less for granted, we make ourselves more self-sufficient—and more effective—travelers in our journeys through the social world.
Part 4: On Asking for Assistance (and Managing Special Needs)...
There is a positive relationship between asking questions, or seeking advice, and academic success (despite what American children sometimes learn from their peers in grade school, this is not the same thing as ‘sucking up to the teacher’). Please feel free to use e-mail to ask questions about the assignments, readings, or other class materials (and keep in mind that it may take up to 24 hours to receive a response to an e-mail query). Students who struggle sometimes wait too long to let me know, and sometimes to the point where it is too late to salvage a satisfactory result. Please do not let that happen to you.

The ADA is designed to ensure that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to access academic programs and successfully complete their studies. Students with documented disabilities who need course accommodations should contact the instructor within the first week of class. For further consideration, contact Disability Support Services at (206) 587-4183.

The next page of this syllabus details the way in which your learning will be assessed. In the meantime, here is the grading scale used for this course. You may use it as a guide to judge your progress as the course moves along.

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<tr>
<th>GPA Range</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Achievement by Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>95 – 100% (950-1000 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5 - 3.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>90 – 94 (900-949)</td>
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<td>3.2 - 3.4</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>87 – 89 (870-899)</td>
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<td>80 – 83 (800-839)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Below 60% (less than 600)</td>
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Part 5: On Academic Integrity...
In this day and age, it is unfortunate that the topic of academic integrity is something that we must specifically address. Be sure to understand the following...

- **Any work presented for grading in this class must be a result of your own study and writing; it is unacceptable to submit work that is copied from other students or from outside sources (such as the Internet).** All cited material must be clearly identified and its source appropriately cited.
- **Should the quality of your submission fail to fit the pattern of your overall work, you will be obliged to demonstrate, in detail and in person, that the work is your own.** Save drafts and take care to document the process you have undertaken to complete your assignments should you be asked to verify your ownership of the ideas contained in your work.
- **If it is discovered that a student has cheated or plagiarized, the result will be a zero for the assignment and, potentially, a failing grade for the course.** Presenting another person’s work as your own (or allowing someone else to present your work as their own) is grounds for a referral to the Vice-President for Student Services.
Part 6: Course Requirements...
How your achievement will be appraised... read carefully.

Everyone begins with 1000 points. In other words, you all have a 4.0 right now. In order to help students track their progress, we will work backwards. What this means: whenever something is returned to you, you may subtract the credit not received from the maximum credit possible in order to estimate your current grade level. See items 1 through 5 below.

1. **Attendance:** at Seattle Central, we do not grade on attendance as such. However, part of your participation grade involves a subjective assessment of your contribution. Your attendance is a strong indicator of your overall effort. Therefore, at the end of the quarter, adjustments to the class participation scores are made in preparation for submitting the final grades. During this process, a student’s record of attendance and promptness is reviewed. At this time, it is possible for a student with a strong record of participation and effort to be rewarded with a slight upward adjustment in which some minor penalties are forgiven. For instance, a student who has missed no classes and been late once has a much stronger chance of having that late penalty erased during the participation review than a student who has missed class three times and been consistently late over the course of the quarter. (In fact, the latter student would have no chance of any penalties being forgiven.)

2. **Participation in class projects [250 points]** [Absent for a class project: -10 points; Late for a class project: -5 points]: because the summer quarter is very short and time is especially precious, it is exceptionally important that students be present to participate in class projects. In addition, it is important that students arrive to class on time, because late arrivals interrupt class and interfere with the learning process. **Note:** attendance is required for you to receive credit for in-class work; it cannot be made up outside of class time.

3. **Homework [250 points]:** there will be several short homework assignments related to the assigned reading and associated topics. Each assignment will be worth 25 points, and the average score for all assignments will determine the credit received.

4. **Reading test [200 points]:** there will be one test on the assigned reading in the textbook; the test will be on Monday, August 1. The test must be taken on the assigned date... so plan ahead. It will be difficult.

5. **Cultural comparison essay [100 points] and group presentations [200 points]:** you will write an essay which will demonstrate what you have learned in this class about a particular topic (details will be provided as the course goes along); at the end of the quarter, students will present, as a group, the results of their investigation to the class (again, details will be provided as the course progresses).
Part 7: Grading Policies
Read this one carefully, too...

- **All assignments must be completed in order to receive a grade other than 0.0 in this class.** What this means: even if you do not have an assignment completed at the time it is due, you will have to complete it satisfactorily in order to pass Sociology 102. It should be clear that this is a strong incentive to submit your homework on time.

- There will be no make-up work for missed in-class activities (such as in-class writing or group projects). If you are absent from class, you will not receive credit for that day’s discussion activities.

- Keep all of your work (copies of assignments, returned graded work, and so forth) until the quarter has ended. It is also wise to back up your work by saving it in multiple places.

- The following penalties will be automatically assessed for late homework assignments: 1) A 5 point penalty will be deducted from the graded score; and 2) No instructor comments will be provided for late work.

- It is sometimes possible to ask for an extension on homework assignments if the request is made ahead of time. This request must specify the circumstances under which the request is being made, as well as propose a revised submission schedule (these circumstances must also be documented). However, approval is not automatic, and aside from rare family and health emergencies, there is no such thing as a legitimate excuse for submitting late work. (In other words, “I’m going out with my friend this weekend and won’t have time” is not going to get a student an extension.)

- At the end of the quarter, grades of ‘I’ or ‘NC’ may be possible if the process is initiated by the student and the student is in good standing in the course (meaning: the student has attended regularly and has completed all of the assigned work up to that point)... so ask, if you feel like this may be a course of action that benefits you. However, taking grades of Incomplete or No Credit is not recommended. (if you decide to pursue the ‘I’ option, you must sign—before the last day of instruction for the quarter—a contract specifying the details for the completion of the course).
Part 8: On Classroom Behavior...
Okay, so hardly anybody is polite anymore (we will actually talk a little about this later in the context of norms and consensus). But... class is a place where, by definition, information is being shared. In order for that to happen, we would like to treat the classroom environment and each other with an appropriate measure of respect, yes? This is important not just because Scott is dismayed at the lack of consideration people in our society often show to others or because he is easily annoyed (although both of those things are true). It is important because class is a communal activity in which we are all trying to help each other learn and not get in each other’s way. So...

- **We must respectfully listen to each other, even if we don’t agree with what we’re hearing—especially when we don’t agree with what we’re hearing.** When we do this, we learn from each other’s perspective... and in a way, that is what sociology is fundamentally about.
- **We certainly are already aware that things like loudly chewing and popping gum and letting our mobile phone ringtones disrupt class are bad (and certainly we do not want to actually answer a phone call in the middle of class... because then our class participation grade would start to run toward negative numbers)**
- **We must not eat things in class—especially crunchy things and things in wrappers or bags that make noise over and over again.** (Also, students sometimes interpret film viewings as good opportunities to eat stuff... which is not a good interpretation.) There is also, of course, time before and after class for you to eat Fritos or bamboo shoots or whatever it is young people eat these days. (This isn’t just me asking, by the way... Facilities sends us periodic notes asking us to instruct you not to eat things in the classrooms.)
- **Do not engage in text messaging or roaming of the Internet during class.** If you do so, you will be asked to leave until the next class meeting, and 10 points will be deducted from your class participation grade.
- **Scott is always happy to answer questions about assignments and the class, but before you ask them, make sure that you are not asking a question that is already answered in the syllabus.**

Part 9: Important dates to remember for this quarter...
June 27: Summer Quarter Begins
June 30: Last day to withdraw with 100% refund (less processing fee)
July 7: Last day to add/register – instructor permission required. Last day to change audit/credit status without instructor permission. Last day to withdraw without a ”W” appearing on transcript and without instructor permission.
July 12: Last day to withdraw with 50% refund – instructor permission required only at Central.
August 5: Last day to change audit/credit status – instructor permission required. Last day to withdraw (no refund) – instructor permission required only at Central.
August 25: Grades available online
Part 10: Weekly schedule and reading...
(Note: The reading schedule that follows is likely to be somewhat flexible depending upon how quickly we move, and events sometimes necessitate the shifting of timeframes. However—barring some sort of rare event—test and presentation deadlines will not change... so plan ahead and arrange your schedule now.)

Week 1 (class meets June 27 through June 30)
Topics:
Culture and Society... and Sociology
Reading:
Chapter 1 (‘The Straight Story’) from Mix It Up

Week 2 (class meets July 5 through July 7)
Topics:
The Functionalist Approach to Popular Culture
Reading:
Chapter 2 (‘Friday Night Lights’) from Mix It Up

Week 3 (class meets July 11 through July 14)
Topics:
A Critical Approach to Popular Culture
Reading:
Chapter 3 (‘Monsters, Inc.’) from Mix It Up

Week 4 (class meets July 18 through July 21)
Topics:
An Interaction Approach to Popular Culture
Reading:
Chapter 4 (‘Something to Talk About’) from Mix It Up

Week 5 (class meets July 25 through July 28)
Topics:
Cultural Consumption and Social Class in America
Reading:
Chapter 7 (‘The Rules of the Game’) from Mix It Up
Week 6 (class meets August 1 through August 4)
*Exam Week: Reading Test on Monday, August 1 (this is the only class activity for August 1)
Topics:
Cultural Consumption and Style in Everyday Life
Reading:
Chapter 9 ('Scenes From a Mall') in Mix It Up

Week 7 (class meets August 8 through 11)
Topics:
Popular Culture and Mass Media in the Digital Age
Reading:
Chapter 10 ('Strange Days') in Mix It Up

Week 8 (class meets August 15 and 16 at the regular time; class also meets August 17 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.)
*Presentation Week
Presentations take place on Monday and Tuesday, August 15 and 16
Class meets on August 17 between 1:00 and 3:00 for wrap-up, review, and a celebration of the most successful presentations.