

**Welcome**  
Administrative,  
syllabus review,  
motivation

1. Course mechanics  
(requirements, resources, etc.)
2. Course structure  
(syllabus review)

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McGill University is located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. McGill honours, recognizes and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

<https://www.mcgill.ca/fph/welcome/traditional-territory>

*see also:*

Chelsea Vowel. "Beyond Territorial Acknowledgments." *Âpihtawikosisân* (blog), September 23, 2016. <https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>.

## What do land acknowledgements do?

- ∴ What is the intended purpose, generally?
- ∴ What is the intended purpose at an institution like McGill?
- ∴ What are some *unintended* consequences?


## What might do it better??

- ∴ What kinds of practices can we as a university undertake to do a better job of subverting Indigenous erasure?
- ∴ What can we as a McGill sociology class do?

# Course mechanics

## Syllabus is online

- ⋮ Available at <https://soci210.netlify.app>
- ⋮ Contains *schedule, assignments, assessment,* and other important information
- ⋮ Updated with *links to slides and lecture recordings,* and with any schedule changes regularly

Schedule	<u>Introduction and foundations</u>
	<b>Thu, Jan 4</b>
	Administrative, syllabus review, motivation
	<b>Lectures:</b>
	⋮ Introduction: Course mechanics and overview ⋮ ( <a href="#">html</a> ; <a href="#">pdf</a> )
	<b>Supplementary:</b>
	⋮ Chelsea Vowel (2016), <i>Beyond territorial acknowledgments</i>
	<b>Tue, Jan 9</b>
	Making sense of the social world
	<b>Lectures:</b>
	⋮ Thinking sociologically
	<b>Required:</b>
	⋮ Erikson (2017), <i>The View from the Fourteenth Floor</i>
	<b>Thu, Jan 11</b>
	Theoretical anchors
	<b>Lectures:</b>
	⋮ Structuring social inquiry
	⋮ Theoretical perspectives part 1: <i>structural functionalism</i>
	<b>Supplementary:</b>
	⋮ Erikson (2017), <i>Coming to Terms with Social Life</i>
	⋮ Ellis (2018), <i>Marxism!</i> (video)

## **Class period: hybrid of lecture and group work**

- ⋮ Readings and small-group discussions are the foundation of the course
- ⋮ Most classes will begin with ~30 minutes of lecture (streamed and recorded), followed by ~40 minutes of structured, small-group worksheets

## **Small-group discussions**

- ⋮ Groups of 3–4 students, membership fixed starting Sept. 18
- ⋮ Discussions will focus on drafting responses to worksheet prompts
- ⋮ Each of worksheets will cover one week
- ⋮ Instructor and TA will rotate through groups during class
- ⋮ Groups may work outside of class (e.g. online), but you are not expected to spend more than ~1 hour per class period covered

## Attending in person

- ∴ Wearing of masks is not required, but is greatly appreciated while in the classroom
- ∴ If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 you please stay home (this will not affect your grade in this course)
- ∴ It is up to us to make a safe and welcoming learning environment for everyone!



## Perusall for online reading/evaluation

- ∴ Collaborative reading environment
- ∴ **To register for this class's Perusall**, see MyCourses
- ∴ Each reading is automatically scored 0 points or 1 point  
If you did the reading but were not given credit, send me a message on Teams!
- ∴ Scores based on active engagement with the readings and the annotations  
<https://soci210.netlify.app/pages/perusall.html>
- ∴ Can miss 4 readings over the semester without penalty

## Texts

- ∴ (About) 3–4 readings per week
- ∴ **Textbook** (Connerly et al. 2021; Little 2016) for background info and terminology
- ∴ **Articles and chapters** examine a particular case / position / method / topic



## Forming a group

- ∴ Groups will have fixed membership starting January 18
- ∴ Before then, sign up for *one* group on the shared spreadsheet that will be linked from MyCourses (maximum 4 members per team)
- ∴ Use these first couple of weeks to find group members who have similar preferences to your own (online/offline, language, ...)

E.g. "Peter McMahan (strongly prefer English and online meetings)"

	1	2	3	4
<i>Team Vulture</i>				
<i>Team Grouse</i>				
<i>Team Swift</i>				
<i>Team Raven</i>				
<i>Team Ostrich</i>				

Please sign up for just one team by writing your name and any special considerations (e.g. preferences about language or schedule) in one of the available slots. Each team can have a maximum of four students, with a preference for three.  
If you change your team, please delete your name from the previous slot.



## Group worksheets

- ∴ Each week, groups will complete one worksheet, covering material from both class periods.
- ∴ Worksheets will consist of 4 to 6 prompts
- ∴ Responses should be about 300–500 words each

## Individual worksheet

- ∴ At the end of the term, each student will complete an individual worksheet, covering material from the entire semester
- ∴ Students will have the full class period to complete the work



## Peer assessment and feedback

- ∴ Peer assessment will be used to give/get feedback on group discussion worksheets, using FeedbackFruits
- ∴ With peer assessment, multiple other students assess your work.
- ∴ Provides more feedback on your work than would otherwise be possible.

## Instructor assessment and feedback

- ∴ TAs will provide feedback and scores for approximately half of of the worksheets, chosen randomly
- ∴ TAs will provide feedback and scores for the final individual worksheet





## A note on "generative AI"

- ⋮ Large language models (ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.) can generate convincingly fluid text.
- ⋮ **Turning in text written by an LLM as your own work is a violation of McGill's policy on plagiarism.**
- ⋮ LLMs can be a useful tool for generating ideas and structuring arguments **only if the output is regarded with a sharply critical eye**. Generally, I do *not* recommend them for academic work.  
*Never rely on an LLM to provide factually correct information!*
- ⋮ **Keep in mind:** LLMs are inherently exploitative in terms of data acquisition, resource consumption, and labour practices.

# Course structure

## The Archipelago of Sociology



## The Archipelago of Sociology

### Islands of highly specialized topics

- ∴ E.g. *gender in the workplace*
- ∴ E.g. *social movements and language use*

### Hard to describe the "boundary" of sociology

- ∴ Any topic has a sociological aspect

### Hard to slice into distinct pieces

- ∴ There is no obviously correct way to divide sociology into smaller subdisciplines

### Sociology is bound by a *perspective*

- ∴ Sociology is not *what* topics are studied, but *how* those topics are studied

## One way to slice it

a.k.a. *our syllabus*

### ⋮ Foundations

Methods overview

Classical (European) social theory

### ⋮ The individual in society (*bottom-up*)

Ethnicity, race, and nationality

Disability

Gender and sexuality

Class and culture

### ⋮ Populations and publics (*top-down*)

Inequality and stratification

Demography

Politics and economy

Social movements

### ⋮ Social systems (*middle-out*)

Interaction

Institutional change

Organizations and groups

Media and technology

## Making sense of the social world

### Required:

| : Erikson (2017)  
*The View from the Fourteenth Floor*



# Image credit



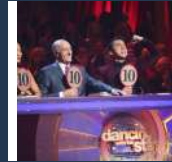
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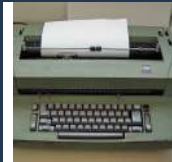


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