SOCIOLOGY TOPICS COURSES
(from Fall 1998 to present)

SOC 311B Topic: American Dream and Popular Culture in Film and Fiction. Critically examines the portrayal of social class in two important forms of popular culture, films and works of fiction, from a sociological vantage point. Encourages students to utilize the sociological perspective to analyze specific films and works of fiction that address issues of ideology, social class, social inequality, and social mobility. Considers such issues as power, privilege, social justice, legal justice, and other pertinent issues relating to social class inequities.

SOC 311C Topic: Social Movements. An examination of sociological approaches to social change, social movements and collective action, covering such topics as: movement formation, strategies and effectiveness, collective identities, counter-cultures, the media, and social control. Utilizes empirical research on several U.S. social movements including the civil rights, feminist, GLBT, and labor movements. Students will also complete independent research on a current social movement of their choice.

SOC 311D Topic: Gender and Society. An advanced analysis of gender in Western Society. Emphasizes the construction of femininity and masculinity in the context of major social institutions. Begins with a review of various approaches to the study of gender that include elements of symbolic interactionism, constructionism, post-modernism, conflict theory, and feminist theory. Turns to specific institutional contexts of the construction and management of gender, including science, schools, family, the economy, and sport.

SOC 311G Topic: Ideology, the Mass Culture Industry, and Legitimation. Critically examines the mass culture industry as a dominant player in the legitimation process. Specific components of the dominant ideology such as individualism, meritocracy, and the American Dream will be analyzed from a sociological perspective.

SOC 311H Topic: Social Problems in Film and Fiction. Encourages students to utilize the sociological perspective as they analyze specific films and works of fiction that address the human condition, specifically those aspects of the human condition that create or result in "social problems." The central focus will be to assist students in their understanding of the manner in which specific components of popular culture influence public perceptions of social problems and the concomitant social policy debates.