

Class Descriptions (English) For Course Catalogue

SOCI 120: Introduction to Sociology

This course provides a fundamental introduction to the discipline of sociology. In the broadest terms, sociology is the study of society. More specifically, sociology explores the interactions between social institutions, cultures, groups and individuals. It examines how unequal power relations organize the social world, and how those unequal power relations shape individual lives. It also focuses upon how individuals navigate and negotiate the different social and economic contexts in which they live. To accomplish this task, sociology relies on a variety of established theories and methods. This course will introduce students to those theories and methods. It will also provide students with a critical perspective on the application of those ideas in the examination of real-world problems. This course includes field-based projects.

Prerequisites: none

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

[Core Curriculum Course]

SOCI 121: Introduction to Anthropology

This course introduces students to the discipline of anthropology. Students will briefly explore the four subfields of anthropology (physical or biological anthropology, linguistic anthropology, archaeology, and sociocultural anthropology). The central focus of this course will be on the last of those subdisciplines. Students will explore the historical development of anthropology, the primary theoretical frameworks it has developed, and the methods anthropologists utilize in the field. Students will also have the opportunity to apply these tools in solving a real-world problem through a field-based project.

Prerequisites: none

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

[Core Curriculum Course]

SOCI 200: Sustainable Development

This course will examine the historical development of the concept of sustainable development, differing interpretations of the concept, empirical indicators of sustainability in environmental sociology, and policy proposals for achieving sustainable development in Qatar within Arab Gulf region. The emphasis of this course is on assessing the political, economic, social and cultural forces that pose a significant challenge to the development of a more sustainable future. There will be field-based projects.

Prerequisites: none

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

[Core Curriculum Course]

SOCI 261: Quantitative Methods

The scientific method is central to much analysis in the social sciences. This course introduces students to the logic of scientific inquiry in the social arena. Students will investigate strategies for research design, sampling populations, measurement, and various structured methods of data collection. Students will also learn basic strategies for analyzing and presenting that data.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: English

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 262: Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods provide a second methodological frontier in the social sciences and a key complement to quantitative research. In this course, students will be trained in quantitative methods, with a strong focus on ethnographic methods. Ethnographic methods, frequently utilized by anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, sociologists, international development specialists, and many other disciplinary practitioners, take a holistic approach to social research. In this course, students will have the opportunity to practice these methods in the field, and to deploy their training in the implementation of an independent research project of their own design. Field-based projects and exercises are central to this course.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall and Spring Semester

SOCI 263: Badawi Society

This course examines Bedouin society, with a strong focus on Bedouin society on the Arabian Peninsula. Students will examine the traditional livelihood of Bedouin nomads, the pastoral mode of production, and the traditional interconnections between these nomads and the villages and towns of the Arabian Peninsula. In the second portion of the course, students will evaluate the the impact of modernization and urbanization upon the Bedouin peoples, changes in the pastoral livelihood, and the intricate relations between Bedouin peoples and the state. This course includes a significant independent research project.

Prerequisites: none

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

[Core Curriculum Course]

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 264: Family and Kinship

The importance of family and kinship is seemingly a universal aspect of human existence. A quick survey of different societies around the world, however, yields a fundamental conclusion: the concept of family and the calculation of kinship is extraordinarily variable over time and over place. In this course, students will investigate the classic approaches to studying family and kinship. They will develop a deep understanding of the variability of family and kinship across time and across cultures, and will grapple with the theories that explain that variability. While the focus will be on Arabian conceptions of family and kinship, students will explore family and kinship in other settings as well.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121
Language and Instruction: Arabic
Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 265: Population and Migration

Demography and populations studies have long been central to the sociological mission. But throughout history--and particularly in the contemporary era--millions of people are on the move. In this course, students will focus on the combination of these two traditions. Students will explore the theories developed to explain and understand population growth and change in human society. With that toolkit, students will also explore the theories that explain the increasing movement of people outside the communities, regions, and nations that are their home.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 267: Urban Studies

This course examines the conceptual foundation and theoretical frameworks through which the social science's understanding of urbanization and urbanism have been developed. Students will explore classic social theory concerned with urbanism and urbanization. Specific attention will be given to what those theorists had to say about the Middle Eastern City, as well as the Arabic literature's own tradition of urban studies. Turning to the contemporary era, students will explore the modern and post-modern city, and grapple with the role of globalization and neoliberalism in shaping the cities around the world, including those located here on the Arabian Peninsula.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 268: Culture, Health and Disease

This course examines the social and cultural dimensions of health, illness and disease in the global arena. As such, the course introduces students to the fields of medical sociology and medical anthropology. Students will examine multiple themes over the course of the semester, including the social construction of health and disease and medical knowledge, the conceptualization and subjectification of the body, as well as the patterns of distribution of disease and mortality in Qatar and around the world. Students will also investigate the organization of the health care system in Qatar and in other parts of the world, the connection between environment and disease, and the cultural articulation of the relationship between doctors and patients.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 360: Sociological Theory

This course is an in-depth survey of the enduring conceptual frameworks utilized in the discipline of sociology. Students will consider the primary and fundamental questions posed by nineteenth and twentieth-century social analysts, and the theories they constructed to answer those questions. The first portion of the semester focuses upon the “classical” theorists, including Marx, Weber and Durkheim. The second half of the semester introduces students to the contemporary perspectives developed over the last five decades.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 361: Human Rights

This course explores human rights as a particular and historically contingent set of ideas that is tied to the project of modernity launched by Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes, and other classic philosophers in the European tradition. These ideas were crystallized in the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, and purveyed to the rest of the world in a colonial, post-colonial, and globalized world. This course critically examines the history and development of this set of ideas, investigates alternative conceptions of human rights (with a particular focus on the Islamic and Arabic tradition), and looks at the application of human rights in Qatar and the other Gulf States. It also explores the vast distance between the idealized conception of human rights and their deployment in practice.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 362: Comparative Ethnography

Ethnography is the craft of Anthropology. In producing ethnographies, scholars seek to capture the entirety of the different social and cultural worlds that continue to characterize our world. In this course, students will utilize the comparative approach to build an understanding of social and cultural difference through the analysis of different social and cultural systems. Students will explore how those cultural differences come about, the factors that either foster or prevent cultural change, and the various theories scholars use to grapple with culture and cultural change.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 363: Ethnicity

Ethnicity is typically defined as common identity based upon a presumed or real common heritage, recognized by both the group in question and others in the world. At the same time, however, the concept of ethnicity has a long and mercurial history, and the use of this concept has shifted dramatically over time. In this course, students will explore the history of the concept of ethnicity, examine the long association of ethnicity with minority status, and evaluate the connections between the concept of ethnicity and the concept of race. While the focus of the course will be global, many case studies will be drawn from Qatar and the other Gulf States.

Prerequisites: none

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

[Core Curriculum Course]

Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 364: Violence

In its many forms, violence seems to be an enduring facet of human society. This course focuses explicitly upon the phenomenon of violence, the theories by which we might explain its ongoing presence in society, and the critical approaches to discerning the sources of that violence. This examination of violence moves across scales: focal points include gender-based violence, terrorism, crime and criminology, human trafficking, and much more. While the focus of this course is global, students will have the opportunity for the practical application of these ideas in analyses of Qatar.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 365: Study of Gender

This course explores and analyzes the profound importance of gender in the organization of social life and in the construction of personal identity, with a strong emphasis on women's experiences. Gender is studied in the context of race, ethnicity, class and the other basic social divisions that characterize human social life. The course focuses intently on how groups divide labor between men and women; how they construct ideologies and social frameworks to maintain and naturalize these social divisions; and how both men and women experience, endure and challenge the gender-based constraints in the contemporary world. While the focus of this class is global, significant segments of the course will focus on women in Arab society, political participation, and human rights issues with a gender dimension.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 366: Language, Communication and Society

We live in a media saturated world. From text messaging to reality TV, the influence of media cannot be overstated. This course will explore the role of the media in the contemporary social, cultural, and political landscape. Our focus, while broad, will devote special attention to Arab media in general, and Qatari media in particular. The course also investigates the overarching issue of globalization and the impact of western media on non-western cultures. This investigation will include analysis of the proliferation of the Internet, the impact of media upon body image, and the cult of celebrity.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 367: Comparative Religion

This course approaches religion as a cultural system which provides a model of reality, a framework for organizing that reality, and the architecture of the individual's relationship to that reality. This course will introduce students to a wide variety of religious perspectives, and uses a comparative approach to assess and evaluate the patterns and differences in these ideological and experiential packages. Students will also critically evaluate the concept of religion itself by grappling with the vastly different sorts of ideas and experiences that are encompassed by this concept in different cultural settings.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 368: Law and Society

This course examines the interaction of law with the various aspects of society in the contemporary world. Students will explore the organization of legal institutions, doctrines, and practices on other social phenomena, and similarly explore the impact of those social phenomena upon the institutions, doctrines and practices. This plan of study also includes a focus on criminology, the social construction of legal issues, and the analysis of the connections between law and social change.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 460: Statistics in the Social Sciences

This course is designed to introduce students to statistics utilized in quantitative analysis in the social sciences. The field of statistics concerns the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data. Students will acquire the toolkit for calculating basic statistical functions and examine the role of quantitative research in analyzing social phenomena. This course will include a significant applied focus on contemporary social issues in Qatar and around the world.

Prerequisites: SOCI 261, 262 and 360

Language of Instruction: English

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 461: Honor's Thesis

This course is intended for advanced students in the social sciences, and is a substitute for SOCI 469. This course will guide students through the preparation of their senior thesis. Working closely with the faculty advisor assigned by the department, students will develop a research plan, conduct that research, analyze the data they collect, and prepare a substantial analytic paper. Students may also be required to present their findings in a formal presentation.

Prerequisites: Departmental Approval

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 462: Change in Contemporary Arab Society

Arab society, and particularly the petroleum-rich states of the Arabian Peninsula, have undergone significant and rapid change over the last decades. This course utilizes the sociological and anthropological toolkit to grapple with the scope and breadth of that change.

Themes explored in this class include, but are not limited to, shifting gender roles and the place of women in Arab society, youth and youth culture, family and kinship in the contemporary era, migration and urbanization in the Gulf States, the impact of globalization on the peoples and cultures of the Arabian Peninsula, and the role of media in Arab cultural change.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121, SOCI 360

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 463: Labor and Class in Petroleum Society

This course explores Khaleeji society through the canonical frameworks of labor, class and social differentiation. From a beginning point grounded in classical social theory, students will use these tools to critically explore the concept of a “Petroleum Society” and ascertain its utility in explaining the social, cultural, political and economic experience of the Gulf societies. This course includes specific focus on the development experiences of the Gulf, the population structure and workforce in the Gulf states, migration and labor, and an exploration of the cultural and social factors shaping work expectations among Gulf locals.

Prerequisites: SOCI 360

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 464: Social Policy and Planning

The social sciences were originally conceived as a tool in the project of modernity, a tool that might help minimize or eradicate social problems or, from another angle, help the state better govern its subjects. In the contemporary era, the social sciences continue to interface with the government, and either assist or criticize the act of governance. This course explores academic perspectives on social policy and planning, with a strong focus on applied social studies of Qatar and nearby nations. Students will explore how social scientists have used the analytical, methodological, and conceptual toolkit they’ve developed over time to address the problems in human society and, more specifically, in Gulf Society.

Prerequisites: SOCI 360

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Offered Fall Semester

SOCI 465: Industrial Organization and Work

This course begins with an exploration of classic and modern theories of work. Students will use these frameworks to explore the social organization of work and emergent forms of work in the contemporary era, and the impact of globalization upon the distribution of work and industry. Students will also familiarize themselves with the international organizations that monitor and

analyze work in the contemporary world. In the second half of the course, students will gain field experience in organizations here in Qatar and will explore new and emergent forms of bureaucracy and management.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 466: Society, Religion and Political Movements

This course expands the focus of political sociology to include an analysis of the social and religious realm. Political sociology traditionally focuses on the role of the political in the unequal distribution of power in human society. After reviewing the classic theories of political sociology, students in this course will use those tools to examine social, religious, and political movements in Arabian society and in other parts of the world. Case studies will focus on the civil rights movement in the United States, the women's rights movements in many parts of the world, the Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt, and the potential for labor movements in the Gulf States.

Prerequisites: SOCI 120 or 121
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Spring Semester

SOCI 467: Globalization

This course examines ways in which globalization constitutes complex economic, social, cultural and political trends around the world. In addition, it provides an overview of the major social scientific theoretical perspectives applicable to understanding the process of globalization and its connection to economic underdevelopment. The theoretical distinctions and the debate between modernization theorists on the one hand, and dependency and world-system theorists on the other are emphasized. Intrinsic to the above is an elucidation of the development of the world capitalist system and its future in a rapidly changing global context.

Prerequisites: none
Language of Instruction: Arabic or English
Offered Fall and Spring Semesters
[Core Curriculum Course]

SOCI 469: Research Project

This course is intended to guide students through the preparation of their senior thesis. Working closely with the faculty advisor assigned by the department, students will develop a research plan, conduct that research, analyze the data they collect, and prepare a substantial analytic paper. Students may also be required to present their findings in a formal presentation.

Prerequisites: SOCI 261, 262, 360 and 460; Departmental Approval
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Fall and Spring Semesters

SOCI 470: Independent Study

An independent study course provides for study under the supervision of a faculty member of a specific topic not covered by existing courses in order to develop a particular interest on the part of the student. The topic must be agreed upon with a faculty member and described in a proposal at the time of registration.

Prerequisites: Departmental Approval
Language of Instruction: Arabic
Offered Occasionally

SOCI 471: Special Topics

This seminar involves an in-depth examination of selected topics in sociology or anthropology. A different topic is selected by faculty each time that it is offered. Relevant theory and current research is examined. Students are typically responsible for research papers and presentations under close faculty supervision. This course may be repeated for credit.

Prerequisites: Departmental Approval
Language of Instruction: Arabic or English
Offered Occasionally