

# SOC 330 AMERICAN SOCIETY

---

**Instructor** | Daniel Alvord  
**Email** | dalvord@ku.edu  
**Office** | 733 Fraser  
**Hours** | M-F 1:00-2:00pm

**Semester** | Summer 2015  
**Time** | M-F 9:00-11:30am  
**Place** | Fraser 117  
**Course** | #86306

---

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course critically examines how diverse groups and ideologies have helped shaped the development of structures and organizations that underlie contemporary American society.

## COURSE INFORMATION

**Organization of the Course:** This course considers some of the central ideas that have helped to shape the development of American society, with special attention paid to the contested development of the idea of “freedom” from the founding of America to the present. While the idea of freedom is one that many Americans hold dear, what freedom means, and to whom, is the result of cultural, ideological, economic, and historical forces. By studying sociologically the development of a foundational idea to American culture we are in a better position to evaluate contemporary American society.

**Required Text:** The following text is required for this course:

Eric Foner – The Story of American Freedom (W.W. Norton)

**Learning Outcomes:** This course satisfies the following KU Core Goal:

*Goal 4.1 (U.S. Culture and Diversity):* Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to investigate the diversity of human experience within the United States, considering, for example, age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class, and appreciate the contributions of different social groups.

Specifically, this course is going to investigate conceptions of freedom in American society. By the end of this course, you will be able to better understand the diversity of views as it pertains to freedom in American society. Further, you will have an understanding and appreciation of how various social groups and ideologies have contributed and shaped American society.

For more information on the KU Core, and how this course fulfills Core requirements, please visit [kucore.ku.edu](http://kucore.ku.edu).

## **GRADING INFORMATION**

***Attendance and Participation:*** Attendance is important for any class and this class is no exception. Attendance means arriving on time and not leaving early. It also means coming prepared to class having read the material and being ready to discuss. It will be crucial to your success in the class to attend class regularly.

***Assignments:*** For this course you will be expected to complete the following:

*Essay (50%):* You will have one paper for this course. The essay will be 5-6 pages in length (double-spaced). The essay will be worth 100 points and is worth 50% of your final grade. Each essay must be submitted 1) in person and 2) online through Blackboard's SafeAssign function, a plagiarism detecting software. Emailed papers or papers left in my mailbox will not be accepted. Students will be encouraged, but not required, to meet with me prior to the due date so that I can address any questions or concerns.

*Quizzes (40%):* You will have one quiz per day. The quizzes will consist of open-ended questions covering the reading for that day. You will have a total of 14 quizzes, each worth 10 points and are worth 40% of your final grade.

*Attendance (10%):* Attendance is compulsory and consists of being present and engaged in class. Absences may be "excused" only for religious holidays or due to KU athletic participation, each of which requires notification ahead of time. With the exception of university-sanction absences, I do not differentiate between types of absences (illness, funeral, etc.). Instead, you are permitted one free absence during the semester. You will earn a "1" for attending the course and "0" if you are absent. In other words, we have a total of 19 class meetings, but your attendance grade will be calculated out of 18. Attendance above 18 will act as extra credit. Missing any more than one class will lead to a reduction of your attendance grade. If you anticipate missing more than one meeting during the semester due to ongoing circumstances, you must contact me in the first two days of the semester to discuss appropriate arrangements.

**Grade Scale:** Your grade will be determined using the CLAS plus/minus grading system:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
Attendance	10%	100 points	279-300	93-100	A
Quizzes	40%	100 points	270-278	90-92	A-
Essay	50%	100 points	264-269	88-89	B+
	<u>100%</u>	<u>300 points</u>	249-263	83-87	B
			234-248	78-79	C+
			219-233	73-77	C
			210-218	70-72	C-
			204-209	68-69	D+
			189-203	63-67	D
			180-188	60-62	D-
			0-177	0-59	F

The following is a breakdown of the marking system and an indication of the quality of work that roughly corresponds to each grade:

**A:** Displays a thorough understanding of material and expresses original, text-supported opinions; clear, organized and thoughtful writing; consistent and intelligent contributions and insights. Has completed all required assignments and they have been among the best in class.

**B:** Displays a good factual understanding of material; very good preparation for class; ability to communicate ideas logically and clearly. Has completed all required assignments and they have been of good quality.

**C:** Displays an understanding of the basic points of all material, although the presentation may be unclear or disorganized; may also denote sporadic participation in class. Has completed all or most required assignments, which might suffer from small issues, but generally have been free of significant problems.

**D:** Displays incomplete work; slight grasp of basic ideas; disorganized, poorly presented or communicated ideas; little participation in class. Has failed to complete all required assignments and they have often suffered from problems.

**F:** Displays incomplete work; unclear and/or inaccurate presentation of the main themes of the course; poor written communication of ideas; numerous absences, and/or little or participation in class. Has failed to complete required assignments and they have routinely suffered from serious problems.

I do not give you a grade—you *earn* your grade. Thus, except in the case of a possible calculation error, please do not contact me to change the grade that you earned.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

***Classroom Conduct:*** Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner during class. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in this class. Students who behave in any manner that interferes or has the potential to interfere with other students' opportunity to benefit from this course will be subject to the relevant University policies and procedures. Per the Electronic Devices policy, do not explore the Internet or play games on your portable computing device during class. It draws others' attention and is rude.

***Email Conduct:*** Email is a very convenient and useful means of communication. Indeed, it is the best way to get in touch with me. However, its convenience often translates into a lack of formality. There are a few email guidelines that should be adhered to during this course. First, I do not discuss grades over email. Any discussion of grades should be done during office hours. Second, unless otherwise noted, I do not read early drafts of papers or answer substantive questions by email. I am more than happy to read drafts, provide comments, and give clarification for concepts covered in class during office hours, but not by email. Finally, I am not "on call" with my email. Do not email me late at night or the night before a paper or exam is due and expect an immediate reply. I respect that all of you will have many things going on at one time this semester, and that your time is incredibly valuable to you. I ask that you please respect that my own time is valuable as well and that I also have plenty going on in my own schedule.

***Extra Credit:*** There will be no extra credit opportunities in this course.

***Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism:*** Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit. Any form of cheating or academic dishonesty will be actively investigated and punished. The University defines academic misconduct in Section 6 of the University Senate Rules and Regulations: "Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work. . . ." Cheating will possibly result in an F in the course and the filing of academic misconduct charges. As ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for academic misconduct, please consult the KU Student Handbook for further information:

[http://www.writing.ku.edu/~writing/instructors/guides/academic\\_misconduct.shtml](http://www.writing.ku.edu/~writing/instructors/guides/academic_misconduct.shtml)

For more information on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please consult the following KU website: <http://www.writing.ku.edu/~writing/guides/>.

***Make-up Quizzes:*** Make-up quizzes will only be given to students with excused absences. In accord with university policies, students will be allowed to take a make-up quiz if they can document that they were ill or if they had a death in the family. Absences which result from participation on a university athletic team and which are documented by the university athletic office will also be excused. Transportation problems do not qualify as a valid excuse. Students without a valid and documented excuse will receive a 0 on any missed quiz. Students wishing to schedule a make-up exam must contact me by e-mail within 24 hours of the time at which the original exam was scheduled. Students must be prepared to present me with documentation explaining their absence prior to scheduling a make-up exam. Quizzes must be taken within a day of the original quiz date. It is up to students who have missed an quiz to contact me, to provide documentation and to set up a time to make up the quiz.

***Late Assignments:*** Unless otherwise noted, all assignments must be submitted by the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late submissions will be penalized at the rate of 10%, or one letter grade, per day (including weekends).

***Electronic Devices:*** The use of any handheld electronic devices will not be tolerated. Cell phones and other mobile devices are to be silenced and stowed away during all 150 minutes of class. The use of laptop computers will be allowed only in situations where the student can provide documentation from the Academic Achievement and Access Center (<http://www.achievement.ku.edu/>) attesting to their need for the device in class.

***Recording & Auditing:*** As per the Electronic Devices policy, the use of handheld personal recorders will only be allowed in class in situations where the student can provide documentation from the Academic Achievement and Access Center (<http://www.achievement.ku.edu/>) attesting to their need for the device. Any student wishing to record lecture must consult with me before class. Additionally, course attendance is exclusively restricted to members of the class, and you need explicit permission from the instructor to attend any class sessions if you are not formally enrolled in the course.

***Religious Holidays:*** Attendance is required for every class session. If class requirements conflict with religious holidays that you observe, this needs to be discussed with me in advance. Notification after the fact is not acceptable and will count as an unexcused absence.

***Disabilities:*** Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating her/his abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate educational opportunity. To do this you must first be registered with the Disability Resources office (22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620), which coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses. *No special needs will be accommodated without proper documentation and recommendations supplied by this office.* For further information and contact information, please consult the Disability Resources website: <http://www.disability.ku.edu/>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Read</i>	<i>Due</i>
One	Monday	N/A	N/A
	Tuesday	Foner, Chapter 1	Chapter 1 Quiz
	Wednesday	Foner, Chapter 2	Chapter 2 Quiz
	Thursday	Foner, Chapter 3	Chapter 3 Quiz
	Friday	Foner, Chapter 4	Chapter 4 Quiz
Two	Monday	Foner, Chapter 5	Chapter 5 Quiz
	Tuesday	Foner, Chapter 6	Chapter 6 Quiz & Outline
	Wednesday	Foner, Chapter 7	Chapter 7 Quiz
	Thursday	Foner, Chapter 8	Chapter 8 Quiz
	Friday	Foner, Chapter 9	Chapter 9 Quiz
Three	Monday	Foner, Chapter 10	Chapter 10 Quiz
	Tuesday	Foner, Chapter 11	Chapter 11 Quiz
	Wednesday	Foner, Chapter 12	Chapter 12 Quiz
	Thursday	1964 American Experience	N/A (Video) & Draft Peer Edit
	Friday	Foner, Chapter 13	Chapter 13 Quiz
Four	Monday	Neoliberalism / Globalization	N/A
	Tuesday	Tea Party / Occupy Wall-Street	N/A
	Wednesday	New Jim Crow	Final Quiz & Evaluations
	Thursday	N/A	Final Paper

*\*I reserve the right to alter or amend the course syllabus during the semester within reason.*