

HSB4U: Challenge and Change in Society – Syllabus

Redeemer Christian High School

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Semester 2

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Introduction:

Welcome to our senior level course on the study of the social sciences. We will look at the theories and methodologies used in anthropology, psychology and sociology to investigate and explain the shifts in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour that occur in societies and the impacts of these shifts as well. We also explore the changes, trends and challenges in modern society, particularly in Canada.

In this course, we also evaluate our own worldview and come to understand that all social scientists have their own worldview. As we learn different theories about human behaviour, and review different published studies, we are called as Christians to analyze them through the lens of Christianity. We become aware of and wrestle with the social forces that are active in our time. Throughout the course, we take a discerning look to understand the truth claims of social scientists.

In all of this, we will learn to appreciate and respect each other's views, and of course, have fun!

Colossians 2:8:

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceptions, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

UNIT TITLE AND DESCRIPTION
Introduction to Course <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is a worldview and what is mine, in particular? What are the sources of our beliefs? What is a society and why should one bother studying it? How do I do so as a Christian?
1. Introduction to the Social Sciences – <i>What are they?</i> <p>We will study the nature and purpose of three major social sciences: anthropology, psychology and sociology;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• define the methods used, and major differences of opinion within and between those three disciplines;• define and correctly use some of the basic terminology used by anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists;• research some famous social scientists.
2. Social Change – <i>How and why do things change?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• examine causes of change in our society using the methods and theories of anth/psych/soc;• analyze the forces that influence social change, including conformity/alienation, poverty/affluence, and values;• examine how Christians understand and deal with social change;• analyze patterns, impact and means of coping with technological change.
3. Social Trends – <i>How did we get where we are? Where are we going?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify key factors in Canada's demography and the development of it through time;• appraise the differences and similarities in the approaches taken by anth/psych/soc to the study of trends relating to the baby boom/echo boom, fertility and fecundity, and the life cycle;• understand and assess the importance of demography as a tool for studying social trends;• understand the social forces that influence and shape trends.
4. Social Challenges – <i>What's wrong with our society locally as well as globally?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify some of the social challenges of modern society and investigate their importance (including health, discrimination, and globalization);• appraise the differences and similarities in the approaches taken anth/psych/soc to the study of social challenges pertaining to health, social injustice, and global concerns from the perspective of Canadians and Christians;• demonstrate an understanding of the social forces that shape such challenges.

Expectations for the Classroom:

- **Most Importantly:** Students are expected to treat the classroom community with respect and to learn from one another. Realize that others, even within a Christian community, have different perspectives on how we are called to live out God's calling to each of us and our society. In this class, do not put down other's ideas. You may put forth your own but do so with humility and kindness.
- Treat your peers with respect. Come to class on time and prepared to learn. Smile at each other – it helps. Participate in discussions and listen to one another. Your participation will help your own retention of the material we are covering.
- If you are late, get a late slip and enter class without interrupting what is happening in class and place late slip on Ms. Visser's desk. Extra handouts for classes missed or late entrances can be found in the bucket. Class ends when you are dismissed, not simply at the bell.
- It is important to complete your homework neatly and on time. It will be checked often, and you will be assigned to study hall at lunch to catch up and also to be given extra help, if needed.

Guidelines for evaluations and tests/exams:

- **Quizzes** will be based on homework questions, or course material that covers a major theme or topic of study. Some quizzes will be announced the day before, and some will be unannounced. If you do your homework consistently and thoughtfully, quizzes will be an easy way to assess your own learning. These will not count for marks but will aid substantially in test preparation.
- **Tests** missed for a legitimate reason will be written on the day you return to school. If you are late for class on the day of a test, you will not be given extra time to complete it, unless there is a valid reason for your lateness. Please respect test and presentation dates and schedule appointments around those dates other than in emergencies.
- **Late assignments:** Redeemer has adopted a clear late policy that requires all work to be submitted on time.
 - Parents will be contacted when assignments are late.
 - There will be a 10% mark reduction per day and the assignment will receive a zero after 5 days or at the end of the marking period (whichever comes first).
 - As with homework, students will attend study hall until all assignments are complete, regardless of whether a mark will be given.
 - Administration may also be notified about incomplete work and further steps may be necessary.
 - Students will be responsible to make requests **in advance** for special consideration because of extenuating circumstances
- **Plagiarism / cheating:** Redeemer has also adopted a strict policy regarding these serious issues. All cheating results in a ZERO. Plagiarism offences will result in redoing the assignments and/or docked marks from 20-100% and/or further disciplinary measures by administration. The full policy will be available online.

Technology:

- Turnitin – ClassID = 23712062, Enrollment Key = society
- Edmodo – class code = hwr8gr

Unit Assignments:

Unit assignments will consist of different activities, including presentations, opinion papers and smaller research activities. They will be different in size and nature and will incorporate a level of choice where possible. These will be announced and described throughout the course. Assignment descriptions, expectations and rubrics will be handed out at that time.

Socio-Journal & Seminars

The journal:

Each student will maintain an ongoing journal throughout the course. 1-3 times a week a given question or topic will be assigned for the journal, to be completed in class. This journal will be handed in regularly and will function as an ongoing conversation between each student and the teacher. It also serves as a great place to ask additional questions or make comments regarding the class that might not fit into class discussions. The journal will be assessed and sometimes evaluated for: Thought/Inquiry, Application of Skills and Methods, Quality of Written Communication. At the end of the course the journal will be evaluated for completeness.

The seminars:

Regular small group seminars will take place throughout the course to discuss different readings and topics; the Socio-Journal will sometimes respond to these seminars (*What happened in the seminar? What did people say? What did you think? etc*) and the seminars will sometimes be a discussion of our Socio-Journals (*Share what you've written, discuss questions you've journaled about, etc*). Each individual's participation in these seminars will also be assessed and evaluated for marks.

Major Project – There will be a major project that we will work on throughout the course that will consist of a research paper. This will hold the weight of an entire unit, so do not fall behind! There will be dates for the completion of different steps. We will share our findings with one another at the end of the course. More information and rubrics will follow.

Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement:

Assessments: Daily homework and in-class work will be assessed to assist everyone in learning the material, practising skills, and preparing for evaluations.

Evaluations are assignments or tests that determine the level to which each student's knowledge and skills have progressed. They determine the actual grade a student receives.

Evaluation	Mark Value (%)	Approx. category breakdown (%)			
		KU	TI	App	Comm
Unit Assignments, Presentations, Opinion Papers	20	20	30	20	30
Socio-Journal (written & seminar components)	10	0	20	40	40
Tests	25	30	30	20	20
Major Project	15	20	25	25	30
Final Exam	30	30	30	20	20
Total (approx.)	100	23	28	23	26

Textbook: Everyone will receive a copy of *Transitions in Society: The Challenge of Change*

Rules for Classroom Discussions¹

Ground rules:

Ephesians 4:29, 31 (see below)

Romans 12:10, 18, 21 (see below)

We are all made in the image of God and have equal value as people created and belonging to God:

- So, we must avoid hating/dehumanizing any individual or group. No exceptions. Let's be kind, especially when others are not.
- If you perceive hatred/anger in yourself toward another person or group, or become aware of a desire to dehumanize or harm (verbally or otherwise) seek help to find the root of those emotions in order to get healing.

Principles:

- Disagreement does not equal dislike or disrespect.
 - We need to be able to disagree with each other respectfully. This is good training for university discussions as well as life in general.
- Stay Engaged.
 - It's important that you try to stay present in the room. Pay attention to when you are shutting down. Discomfort and anxiety are normal parts of important and honest conversations.
- Speak Your Perspective.
 - We often avoid speaking our perspective for fear of what others might say. It's important that we create a safe environment where everyone is free to speak openly.
 - Keep in mind that people are in different places with any issue. In order for us to grow, it's important that people are able to share their thoughts in a way that's comfortable for them. When we share our thoughts, it often creates an emotional reaction from others. Being able to speak your perspective does not mean that people will not respond emotionally. Be prepared to experience the discomfort that tough conversations bring.
 - Speaking our perspective does not mean stomping on others' heads. Before speaking, think about what it is that you want others to know. How can they best hear you?
 - Remember that everyone does not communicate in the same way that you do. If someone gets loud in the room, it doesn't mean they are angry. If they are angry, it doesn't necessarily mean they are angry with you. If they are angry at something you said, it doesn't mean that that person no longer has a relationship with you. Often times these conversations bring up a lot of emotions from past and present experiences. Try and allow others to experience their emotions without your shutting down.
- Experience Discomfort.
 - One way to think about this is, "Be comfortable with being uncomfortable". In other words, discomfort is to be expected.
 - If you are not feeling any sense of discomfort in the dialogue, ask yourself, Are you fully engaged? Are you giving of yourself fully and taking risks?

¹ This list has been significantly adapted from principles created by Micah Elson as well as G. Singleton. See:

Singleton, G. and Curtis Linton. *Courageous Conversations About Race*. Corwin Press, Inc., 2005.

"Norms for Facilitating Courageous Conversations." *Cultures Connecting: Addressing Race Relations in the Twenty-First Century*.
<http://www.culturesconnecting.com/docs/Norms.pdf>.

- Expect and Accept Non-closure.
 - We often want to feel some sense of closure, regardless of the issue. Engaging in significant, honest conversations means there will be times of no closure. This is on-going work that does not necessarily leave one walking away feeling like everything turned out the way you hoped. Be willing to take risks and accept that much of this is about changing yourself, not others.
- Listen for Understanding.
 - Try and understand where another person is coming from as best you can.
 - Be careful not to compare your experiences with another person's. This often invalidates or minimizes a person's experiences.
 - Listen without thinking about how you are going to respond.
 - Stay present in their pain and your discomfort as you listen.
 - If someone is pointing out how what you said left them feeling, try not to explain or rationalize what you said or why you said it. For example, sometimes it's necessary to just say, "I didn't realize what I said was inappropriate...or hurt you in that way, I'm sorry," etc.
 - Think about your comments before saying them. Resist the need to explain. Sometimes positive intent is not enough (intent vs. impact).
 - Be careful not to lose the opportunity to just listen by putting the focus back on you.

Ask myself these questions when speaking to myself and others:

Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk
Come out of your mouths,
But only what is helpful for building others up
According to their needs,
That it may benefit those who listen

1. Is it wholesome?
2. Does it build the person up?
 - a. Based on their needs
3. Would someone else also benefit from hearing this conversation?

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another,
Forgiving each other,
Just as in Christ
God forgave you.

4. Is it kind?
5. Is it compassionate?
6. Does it offer the opportunity of forgiveness/reconciliation?

Romans 12:10, 17a, 18, 21

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.
Do not repay anyone evil for evil.
If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.