Orientation Letter for Online Sociology Classes
Taught by Hernan Ramirez

Hello! My name is Hernan Ramirez, and I’d like to welcome you to my online sociology class. Please take a moment to read this orientation letter carefully in order to determine if this is the right class for you. After reading the letter, you may reach me at hernan.ramirez@canyons.edu with any questions you may have, and I will reply to you as quickly as possible. When emailing me, please include your full name, the class, and the section number in your message. Please do NOT email me to ask, “May I add your class?”

Students often sign up for online classes because they think that they will require less work than traditional face-to-face classes. However, you should know that online classes have strict assignment deadlines and require just as much – if not more – time and effort as traditional classes. If you are not serious about meeting deadlines and spending 8-10 hours a week on work for this class, you should not take it. If, on the other hand, you are self-disciplined and serious about learning, you should find this class to be a rewarding experience. Of course, in order to get the most out of this class you must be a diligent student but you must also have access to a dependable computer and reliable access to the Internet.

Waitlist Information – If you are on my waitlist, I will contact you at your COC email address. IF there is an open space, I will only add from the waitlist and in the order listed on the waitlist. You do not need to contact me unless I offer you a space in the class. If I do offer you a space, you will need to contact me within 24 hours to accept.

About Canvas – Starting on the first scheduled day of the class, and throughout the rest of the semester, you will be accessing the class online via Canvas at http://cv.canyons.edu. Follow the login instructions at the bottom of the screen to log in. Canvas is where you will be completing all course requirements, including discussion boards, timed quizzes, and other course activities, so it is crucial that you become
familiar with it. If you decide you want to take this class, you should log in as soon as possible to check out the course syllabus and calendar so that you will have an idea of the workload and due dates and times.

The content of this course is the same as when I teach this class in a traditional format, with the exception that you will not be attending lectures. Canvas allows for class discussions that everyone is expected to participate in, and you will still take exams. Although these exams will be open-book, open-note exams, they will be rigidly timed and you will not have the time to look up more than a couple of items so it is imperative that you study the material thoroughly. As with all of my courses, this class will require you to complete reading and writing assignments.

If you are new to online courses, I strongly suggest that you spend time early in the semester exploring the user guides inside Canvas, which are filled with helpful tips for navigating and using Canvas. For any Canvas related questions, please call the Canvas Student Support line at (661) 362-3344 during college business hours, or (877) 889-9052 for 24/7 support.

**First Week “Attendance”** – Please note that in order to remain enrolled in the course, you are required to log in to the Canvas course site during the first scheduled week of classes and complete the Introduction Quiz no later than Tuesday at 10:00 am. If you do not do this, you may be DROPPED from the class in order to make space for other students who would like to enroll. I realize this is a tight deadline, but there is high demand for space in online courses, and I need to know that you are serious about remaining in the class.

**Textbook Information** – Please check the course syllabus for this information. Some of my online classes require the use of OER textbooks, which are available to students at no cost; these free resources are available in Canvas for you to view and/or print out. However, other classes require students to purchase textbooks. In order to save some cash, you may purchase used books through online resellers or consider renting through the bookstore.

**Additional Resources**

**Distance Learning** – Check out COC’s [Distance Learning website](http://www.coc.edu) for more information on a variety of topics that can help you become a successful online student, such as learning styles, computer skills, and tips for student success. If this is your first online course, I suggest you take COC’s [online learning readiness assessment](http://www.coc.edu) in order to assess your skills.
The Learning Center (TLC) – The TLC provides FREE tutoring resources to COC students, including face-to-face & ONLINE tutoring and computers with over 300 software programs. For more information, visit the TLC Website.

Disabled Students Program & Services (DSPS) – College of the Canyons DSPS provides educational services and access for eligible students with documented disabilities who intend to pursue coursework at COC. A variety of programs and services are available which afford eligible students with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of the college programs and activities through appropriate and reasonable accommodations. For more information on their services visit the Disabled Students Program & Services website.

Online Counseling – The Counseling Department offers appointments online. You can schedule an appointment by visiting the Online Counseling website. Counselors can help you map out a plan to reach your educational goals as well as advise you on course selection and registration.

If you have any doubt about your ability to do well in this class, please drop the class now to make room for other students. If, after reflecting upon the nature of the class and its requirements, you decide that it is the right fit for you, I certainly look forward to having you in my class this semester! Once again, feel free to email me at any time at hernan.ramirez@canyons.edu. My office hours are (TBD).

Sincerely,

Hernan Ramirez
Hernan Ramirez, Ph.D.
Sociology Instructor
College of the Canyons