

# ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE [AUTONOMOUS], KOLKATA

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

### **Syllabus**

In terms of the curriculum the syllabus is divided into 16 modules and each module is headed by a particular teacher who also has a tutor or teaching assistant. The students are given some basic and essential readings or texts. From the very beginning, the habit of textual reading is inculcated so that the students are able to imbibe the language of social science and start exploring new readings on their own. Such a method also helps in the development of critical ways of thinking. This habit of textual reading is abetted by regular tutorials where discussions take place and clarifications are made. Feedback taken time to time from students on (a) the relevance of the contents taught (b) the method of teaching and (c) the readings given have been very encouraging. Students are also given assignments such as writing term papers and book reviews and are encouraged to make presentations on contemporary themes of their choice.

The Department from its inception has been organising a three-day village trip for each batch. It is a village exposure programme where the students stay and interact with the villagers to know more about village social, political and economic life. After the trip the students are expected to submit a substantial report on their experiences. This programme has helped students enormously in developing fieldwork strategies and skills and also with the course on dissertations.

Under the new syllabus students are required to do a 50-mark full-fledged dissertation as an independent module. Our past experience is that since we allow students to take up dissertation topics of their choice, they enjoy doing it. Moreover, with proper guidance they develop the skill of independent project work – a skill that has great employment potential for students. Further, each student makes a 15-minute presentation on her dissertation which is followed by a short discussion. Some of the best dissertation themes include gender, sexualities, body, feminist movements, child sexual abuse, identities and identity politics, youth politics, euthanasia, parent-child relationships, children and reality shows, adda, durga puja, T-shirts, trust, courtesy, friendship, music, dance, FM radio.

Additionally the Department has also been organising seminars, talks and interactive sessions and screening movies and documentaries pertaining to topics taught in the class. Some of the eminent speakers have been Prof. Andre Beteille, Prof. Virginius Xaxa, Dr. Deepak Mehta, Dr. Manisha Dasgupta, Ms Valerie Mason John. Some of the movies and documentaries screened include Hidden Half, The Circle, Ram Ke Naam, Father Son and Holy War, Roshomon.

As new comers to the autonomous mode, with a lot of apprehension and trepidation we have made this humble beginning.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

With the opportunity to frame the syllabus that came in the wake of autonomy, a study was undertaken of some of the major Sociology syllabi of different universities, both national and international, including the model UGC syllabus. Priority, of course, was given to the syllabus of Calcutta University, our parent University. In drafting the syllabus, therefore, an attempt was made to provide a comprehensive overview of the discipline of Sociology. Contextualising the discipline against the historical space of Renaissance and Enlightenment, in short, in terms of modernity, the disciplinary ideas and concepts were mapped out through the writings and theories of the pioneering luminaries of the discipline. In laying out the parameters, then, the interactional, relational and institutional dimensions of these modern, developmental and contemporary disciplinary discourses were spelt out. To create awareness of the applicability of these ideas in practical terms, the attempt was made to provide the students with tools and skills of research. The purpose has been to inculcate among the students the spirit of enquiry that is so important for the analysis of everyday social life systems.

**Translated in terms of modules, the above ideas have been developed in the following way:**

Module 1: Introducing Sociology

Module 2: Introducing India

Module 3: Classical Sociological Thinkers I

Module 4: Social Interaction and Social Relationships

Module 5: Classical Sociological Thinkers II

Module 6: Body, Culture and Cultural Contestations

Module 7: Social Institutions I

Module 8: Social Theory I

Module 9: Social Institutions II

Module 10: Social Theory II

Module 11: Research Method I

Module 12: Social Stratification

Module 13: Research Method II

Module 14: Social Challenges and Movements

Module 15: Change, Development, Globalisation

Module 16: Dissertation.