**Unit One  
Introduction to Sociology as a Perspective and a Science**

**Readings:**

Ch. 1 – Sociology and the Sociological Perspective in *Sociology* by Barkan (CO2, CO3, CO5, MO1, MO2, MO3)

**Discussion:**

Respond to at least two of the following discussion topics, and reply to at least two other student responses, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module.

**Topic 1:** Unemployment is a serious problem in our society. How might someone (not a sociologist) using the individualist perspective explain what causes this problem? How might a sociologist explain what causes this problem? In addition, choose one of the theoretical perspectives (functionalism, conflict, or symbolic interactionist), and suggest how the problem might be viewed from that perspective. (CO2, CO3, MO1, MO2)  
  
 **Topic 2**: Do you believe that external social forces are more or less important than individual internal characteristics and motivations in shaping our lives? Explain. Incorporate something you learned from reading the lecture and/or textbook into your answer. (CO2, MO1)  
  
**Topic 3**: Compare and contrast the way in which sociologists gather information about society (using the research process) with the way in which you or people you know ordinarily gather information about people and society. How are the methods similar? How are they different? Propose a topic that you think sociologists might research, and suggest which research method would best address this topic and why. (CO5, MO3)

**Exam:**

Take exam over Unit 1, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module. (CO2, CO3, CO5, MO1,MO2, MO3)