



COURSE SYLLABUS
Soc 490.001 Honor Thesis
Fall 2012

Instructor: Melinda D. Schlager, Ph.D.
Office Location: Ferguson 207
Virtual Office Hours: virtual office hours by email
Office Phone: 903-886-5325
Office Fax: 903-886-5330
University Email Address: Melinda.schlager@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Required Reading:

Books, and research articles based on the student's specific research focus and agreed on through consultation with the professor will be the expected and required reading material.

Course Description:

This course is focused on the student developing a well-organized and research project to be present as an Honor Thesis. This course basically allows the student to conduct an original piece of research/project. A professor will direct, supervise, and guide the student as he/she produces a well organized piece of research. The student establishes a research design and conducts the project from beginning to end. The student produces a formal research report based upon primary or secondary data or produces a theoretically grounded piece of original research.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The student will put into actions skills learned in how to conduct a research project.
2. The student will write a research project in a formal manner capable of being presented to an appropriate group or publishable piece of literature.
3. The student will demonstrate a critical analysis of the issue/topic/problem through the end product of a thesis.
4. The student will demonstrate an ability to use appropriate APA (or whichever) citation conventions in the development of the thesis (paper).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods / Activities Assessments

The following assignments and requirements are outlined for the student(s) enrolled thesis:

- (1) The student is expected to read selected and assigned books and research articles. . With frequent discussions and interaction with the professor the student should be able to demonstrate that he/she is most familiar with the subject material for the research project.
- (2) The student is required to develop a thesis (a research project) from the beginning to its end, thus demonstrating his/her research capabilities.
- (3) The student must write a graduate quality thesis (research paper on some aspect of in sociology). The student must share with the professor his/her idea(s) of the focus of the thesis (research) before beginning the project. Specific requirements and expectations of the thesis will be discussed with the student.

The thesis (research project) will be graded according to the following criteria (a more detailed rubric will be shared with the student to guide the research and influence the finished project), but the below areas are important and should be followed:

- The presence, strength and originality of a thesis
- The proper use of the literature search to support the developed thesis
- The degree to which the thesis (research project) achieves the goal originally identified by the student
- There is evidence that the resources employed have been read and understood by the student and appropriately fit into the thesis
- The organization of the research project is logical, progressive and appropriately covers the topic
- The mechanics (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) of the thesis are correct and of graduate quality

Grading

The grading of this research project will be arranged between the professor and the student.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

My primary form of communication with the class will be through Email. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students your official University Email address available to me through MyLeo. It will be your responsibility to check your University Email regularly.

Students who Email me outside of office hours can expect a reply within 24 hours M-F. Students who Email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply by the end of the next regularly scheduled business day.

For assistance with the library: To access the Library databases and Library tutorials you must open a separate browser session. Minimize your eCollege session and open another browser window going to the Library's web site directly: <http://www.tamuc.edu/library> not from within eCollege.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
--

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is defined as:

- Copying another's test or assignment
- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment
- If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

Students should also reference the following link for more detailed information.

<http://web.tamuc-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/sociologyCriminalJustice/frequentlyAskedQuestions/academicHonesty/default.aspx>

APA Citation Format Policy

It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice), we use APA (American Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people's words or when they quote other's words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the following websites:

www.apastyle.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

It is the student's responsibility to understand how to cite properly. If you have questions, feel free to ask.

Drop Course Policy

I do not have a policy on nor do I condone the curving of grades. Your grades in this class will be an accurate reflection of your time, effort, and commitment to the subject matter at hand. Everyone begins this class with an 'A'. What you choose to do with that grade as the term progresses is up to you. You know up front what the requirements of this course are. If you are not willing or able to commit the time and effort to this class, you cannot and should not expect me to 'give you a break'. Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary. I will not do it for you.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*). This includes, but is not limited to, providing an environment where all students feel comfortable to express their viewpoints freely and not being disrespectful to other students or the professor. For more on web-specific conduct, see: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course calendar will be setup in consultation with student.