



## **Sociology 1301.003: Introduction to Sociology Spring 2013**

**Professor:** Kerry Hendricks  
**Class Times:** 9:30 – 10:45am TR  
**Office:** SS 206  
**Office Hours:** 8:00-9:30am TR  
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### **COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **Required Textbooks:**

- 1) Thompson, William & Joseph Hickey. 2012. Society in Focus (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Pearson. ISBN: 9780205181018
- 2) Reserve readings (which will be posted on eCollege)

#### **Course Description:**

This course is designed to help students better understand the social world in which they live as well as provide a foundation for other courses in sociology. It provides an overview of major concepts and principles of sociology, including culture, socialization, social order, social control, social stratification, sex and gender, race and ethnicity, social deviance, social institutions and social change.

#### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- 1) Students will demonstrate their understanding of the “sociological imagination” as a unique social science perspective through examination.
- 2) Students will demonstrate understanding of sociological concepts and theories through applied coursework.
- 3) Students will describe and synthesis how a sociological insight informs their own viewpoints, experiences and understandings of the real world around them.

#### **Course Format:**

The textbook and required readings on ecollege used in this course are designed to provide material that stimulate discussion about sociological concepts and ideas introduced in class lecture. Thus, students are expected to get into the habit of taking detailed notes about lectures and readings, as well as encouraged to become active participants during class by offering questions, insights or engaging in discussion with others.

Because of the structure of this course, I would highly recommend that students take notes on all reading assignments. This will help prepare you for class discussion and also help keep the material we cover separate in your mind. Assignments listed in the course outline of this syllabus should be read prior to its discussion in class. I suggest using the following questions as a guide when reading each article.

- What is the main idea, point or argument of the reading?
- List three important facts or sources of evidence to support the main idea.
- What concepts or ideas from class lecture are also discussed in this reading?
- List any new terms or concepts introduced in the article with a brief definition
- Are there any problems or points I disagree with in the main point of the reading? That is, are there alternate explanations or theories that could also explain these phenomena?

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **I. Instructional Methods**

Grades in our course will be structured around four types of assignments: in-class exams; final video project; and attendance/participation. Details about these assignments follows:

#### **A. Exams:**

This assignment is linked to the following student learning outcomes:

- 1) Students will demonstrate their understanding of the “sociological imagination” as a unique social science perspective through examination.
- 2) Students will demonstrate understanding of sociological concepts and theories through applied coursework.

There will be a total of **FOUR** tests during the semester. The format for all the tests will consist of objective measures, such as multiple choice and true-false questions, and also will consist of short answer or essay questions. There will be extra credit questions on each test given. A more detailed breakdown of the test format will be given to students in class several days before the exams, and a study guide will also be posted on eCollege to assist in preparing for each test.

ALL tests count toward your grade in this course. There will NOT be an opportunity to drop a test grade so be sure to do your best on all examinations and assignments in the class—everything counts.

Grades for individual tests and your final grade for the course will be assigned according to the following scale:

<u>Individual Tests</u>	
A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 – 79%
D	60 – 60%
F	59 and below

### **Makeup Exams:**

Notice of exams are given tentatively in this syllabus, and will be confirmed in class. Makeup exams will not be given unless a genuine emergency or crisis occurred (you will have to provide documentation), and you will be excused from the exam on the test day ONLY if prior notification has been given. Makeup exams may be given in an alternative format from the rest of the class (i.e. essay exams) and at an alternate time set up for the professor's (not the student's) convenience. Makeup exams must be completed within two weeks of the original exam date.

Students with legitimate reasons for missing exams will be allowed a makeup exam ONCE during the semester. If a student has been habitually absent, sick or dealing with some other concern to the extent that they have missed more than one exam, then a meeting with the professor is warranted to discuss whether finishing the requirements of the course is possible from the student's current effort and situation.

### **B. Final Video Project/Paper:**

This assignment has been designed to meet the following student learning outcomes:

- 1) Students will demonstrate understanding of sociological concepts and theories through applied coursework.
- 2) Students will describe and synthesis how a sociological insight informs their own viewpoints, experiences and understandings of the real world around them.

Over the course of the semester, students will take an active part of the class by applying the class lectures to the real world, their own experiences, and/or media sources. Specific instructions will be given in class. There will be a final project in which student assigned to groups will be required to work AS A TEAM to make a **10 min. minimum/15 min. maximum** video presentation. Each project requires the student to summarize the relevant sociological concept and theories, and then compare the extent to which it occurs in a real life phenomenon they have observed for the course.

**All video projects will be presented during finals week.** The grading applied to the video projects will be made up of the professor's evaluation of the video project, as well as a separate evaluation of your fellow group members. This is to ensure that all students participate in the final assignment to fulfill the requirements of the course.

### 3) Attendance & Participation

Regular class attendance is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the material covered during the semester. Therefore, attendance will be taken and recorded regularly. If you know you are going to be absent, please notify me beforehand, if at all possible. It is your responsibility to have an understanding of course material whether you were present in class or not.

Occasions may arise which make it necessary for a student to miss class, but absences on test dates will not be excused without significant extraneous circumstances. Because attendance is so important to this course, as well as your participation in class discussions, it will figure into the calculation of your final grade. **Attendance & participation will constitute 25 points of your final grade.**

## II. Grading Procedures

### Grading:

A total of 500 points are attainable in this course. The breakdown of points is as follows:

Four Tests @ 100 points each	= 400 points
Final Video Project @ 100 points each	= 100 points
<u>Attendance</u>	<u>= 25 points</u>
	<b>525 points</b>

This translates into the approximate point totals for each final grade:

A	473-525 points
B	420-472 points
C	368-419 points
D	315 – 367 points
F	314 and fewer points

### Grades of Incomplete:

**I do not assign grades of incomplete in this course.** All coursework must be handed in to me by the last day of class. Your grade will be assigned based on the points you have earned from all completed work at that time. It is your responsibility to finish assignments prior to their due dates, or to make alternate arrangements for their completion. Do not assume I can or will extend due dates or course requirements for your individual needs or preferences.

**I do not drop students from my courses.** If you feel Sociology 1301 is not the course for you, please take the necessary steps to remove yourself from the class. Simply not attending in hopes that I will remedy the situation for you will not happen. You are responsible for the consequences stemming from either coming to class, or not coming to class.

### A Note about final grades:

Final grades are assigned on the 90, 80, 70% scale noted above. These percentages and their corresponding grades are firm. That is, if your final average is a 68% you have earned a “D.” Let me spare you the conversation that inevitably follows: No, I cannot and will not round your grade up to a 70% or a “C.” Students often protest this act, saying they were “only 2 points shy of a passing grade.” This is not exactly correct. In truth, they were 2 percentage points away from the next grade, amounting to being 10.5 raw points off. This is the equivalent of an entire grade difference on a major test. Percentage points and raw points are two very different things. In short, I do NOT round up to determine your final grade.

### **Extra Credit and Curving**

From this syllabus it is very clear as to the number of assignments and the possible points to be attained in the course. From day one, you begin earning a grade in this class, so remember that when you decide to skip class, choose not to do the readings, or fail to take detailed lecture notes. Do not rely on a friend to take notes for you, or for your instructor to explain what the readings are about, as it is your responsibility to read, listen and comprehend the material presented. If you do not understand a concept or issue, please ask me to clarify, or stay after class for further elaboration. The exams will reflect a balance of in-class lecture and discussion, as well as outside readings. So, it is important for you to be consistently diligent in your efforts throughout the semester.

I have never and will never curve the grades of a class to conform to an artificial bell curve or other objective or subjective standard, so requests to do so will fall on deaf ears. That means that it is the students’ responsibility to prepare for the exams, to make sure that they have acquired all information possible through attending lectures and doing the readings, and that they perform to the best of their abilities on the exams. I will assist the class by means of lectures, discussions, study guides and reviews, but I do not intend to manipulate your test score, drop a test score, or inflate your test score so that it will be more to your liking. An improvement of grades will come from *your* studying efforts and not from your instructor’s generous grading, so please do not expect or ask for more, or extra points in the course.

<b>COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES</b>
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## **I. University Policies**

### ***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](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

## **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*).

## II. Course-specific policies

### **Attendance:**

Habitual tardiness or premature exit from the class will constitute an unexcused absence. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance sheet. Do not bother trying to sign in a friend as if they were present when they were not—I check signatures for consistency and there will be serious repercussions if I discover this practice occurring.

### **Statement on Student Behavior:**

All cellular telephones and electronic devices should be turned off or set on silent mode before entering the classroom. Laptop computers should be brought to the classroom only if they will be used for note taking. If you are tempted to surf the internet or Facebook during class time, please do not bring the computer with you. **Students will not be allowed to use their cell phones, or check them in the course of taking an exam. Students will not be allowed to leave and then re-enter the classroom during an examination.** Please be sure to sharpen pencils, have notebook paper, tissues and restroom necessities taken care of prior to the beginning of class.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must work to provide an environment in which each student has the opportunity to be evaluated fairly on the basis of his/her own performance. University regulations regarding academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. At a minimum, any student found to be in violation of university rules will receive a failing grade on the exam or assignment involved. ALL instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head, who may decide punishment independent of this professor's actions. In short, cheating, plagiarizing and engaging in unethical student behavior carries a high price for such short term rewards—don't do it!!

<b>TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS</b>
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Our course is primarily a face to face class and will utilize a traditional lecture-mode of delivery. For the purposes of written project assignments, and utilizing the eCollege system to check grades and/or obtain course assignments, the following is a list of technology requirements for the class:

- *Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)*
- *Video camera – can be acquired through media services at the library*

<b>ACCESS AND NAVIGATION</b>
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***eCollege Access and Log in Information***

*This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.*

*You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc-commerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc-commerce.edu).*

<b>COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT</b>
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Email ([khendricks@leomail.tamuc.edu](mailto:khendricks@leomail.tamuc.edu)) is the preferred means of communication with the instructor. You can expect to receive a reply to any inquiry within 24 hours. It is advisable to include the course number and your full name in any electronic correspondence with me.

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
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Test dates and assignments are scheduled tentatively at this time. They may be changed but advanced notice will be given in class. You are expected to read the assigned material prior to its discussion in class.