

SOCI 2301: Principles of Sociology (3 credit hours)
Sam Houston State University: Sociology Department
Spring 2018, Online

Instructor: April Plemons
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Office Hrs: T/Th 11:30-12:20

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is an introductory level course that provides a general overview of the discipline of sociology. The course begins with a historical summary of the development of sociology and then moves on to cover the substantive areas such as theory/methods, culture, socialization, social interaction, groups, and deviance. The middle section of the course deals with issues of inequality related to social class, race, ethnicity, and gender. The last portion of the course focuses on the societal institutions of marriage and the family, religion, education, politics and the economy, as well as population and social change.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, students will:

- have a working knowledge of basic sociological concepts.
- be able to perform minimal operations related to the empirical and scientific methods and theories of Sociology that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human.
- be able to explore behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events.
- be able to examine the impact of these behaviors and interactions on individuals, society and culture.
- be able to think critically about their lives and social events.

Toward the end of the semester, a multiple choice, anonymous, questionnaire will be distributed in class. All students in all SOCI 1301 courses will be asked to participate in the activity. This is a tool the Sociology Department will use to monitor progress on student learning objectives.

SKILL OBJECTIVES:

- Critical Thinking Skills: Students will develop skills to apply different theories and methods to critically analyze social situations.
- Communication Skills: Students will develop skills to develop, interpret and express sociological concepts and ideas in written and oral formats.
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills: Students will develop skills to manipulate and analyze numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
- Social Responsibility: Students will develop skills to enhance their intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and engagement in regional, national, and global communities.

REQUIRED TEXT: *William J. Chambliss and Daina S. Eglitis, **Discover Sociology**. (3rd edition)*
Link to on electronic version of the book is available in our Blackboard course .

GRADE REQUIREMENTS:

FINAL EXAM

- In this course, you have ONE FINAL EXAM, worth 30% your overall grade.
 - Exam will be comprehensive, so I highly encourage you to print out all your weekly quizzes to have on hand, along with your book, the day of the final.
 - **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN.** You may take the exam any time starting Monday morning, but it must be completed by Wednesday at 5pm. There is the possibility that you may encounter technical issues, so I strongly encourage you to take the exam before Wednesday so we may address the problem. You do not want to wait until the last minute to take the test, as there will be no exceptions to this rule.

WEEKLY QUIZZES

- In this course, you have FOURTEEN WEEKLY QUIZZES, worth 50% of your overall grade.
 - Quizzes will come directly from your text and will include either all multiple choice or true/false, or a combination of the two.
 - All quizzed must be completed by Sunday night at midnight. Anything after that will be deducted at a 10% late penalty per day for up to 7 days, after which, it will not be accepted— **no exceptions**. There is the possibility that you may encounter technical issues, so I strongly encourage you to take the quizzes before Sunday night so we may address the problem.

DISCUSSION POSTS

- In this course, you will have weekly discussion posts, worth 20% of your overall grade.
 - Posts must be entered in the threads by Sunday at midnight each week. Please see the “Discussion Rules” later in the syllabus regarding explicit requirements that must be met in the threads in order to earn all the points. Topics will vary week to week, and no late work is accepted—**no exceptions**. See the discussion rules as to my reasoning regarding lateness.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

- I will offer multiple ways to earn extra credit in this course, such as volunteering your time in the community, helping secure supplies for a nonprofit, or watching documentaries/films and writing a paper on them. Those details will provided for you at a later date and instructions will be posted in Blackboard.

THREADED DISCUSSION STANDARDS: Weekly discussion posts and participation are weighed as 20% of your overall grade. Each week, a discussion section will open in which I post a general topic. You are required to post an initial post as well as a response to another

student's post. In these, you will discuss, analyze, or critique the topic or information presented in a using a sociological framework. Meaning, while opinions are fine to include in your responses, the main content must use a sociological base, analysis, or paradigm. Initial posts must be a minimum of 7 sentences in length and present well- reasoned and thoughtful analyses of the information and questions presented for that week. Your required response posts must be a minimum of 5 sentences in length and **MUST** add value to the discussion. Don't simply say "I agree with so-and-so" or "good point" and expect that to suffice. I look for well-reasoned and thoughtful comments; I will not penalize you for opinions with which I disagree. You are encouraged to be actively involved in the discussion, so long as it is within the required time constraints.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION RULES: I expect all discussion posts to reflect professional-level writing. That means correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. "Text speak" is not acceptable. Your fonts must be uniform across all posts, so the best way to ensure this is to leave it set on the default font. In addition, writing all or a portion of your posts in all-capital letters comes across as shouting and is not acceptable. We will be discussing patterns of human social behavior and various groups of people, and I expect that you, as adults, act accordingly and treat others with respect.

Prof. Plemons's Rules for Threaded Discussions

1. CIVILITY 101 : I am a firm believer in free speech and your right to your opinion. However, I also believe that, in polite society and in effective educational conversations, we must agree to disagree respectfully. Therefore, I will not tolerate comments that are personal attacks, that contain profanity, or that are inflammatory. This also means that, as stated in the syllabus, **HATE SPEECH WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. Exaggerations, personal attacks, and spiteful remarks about a particular race, class, gender/sex/sexuality, nationality, etc will absolutely not be permissible. In sociology, we will be studying these groups in detail, so I expect your comments to be thoughtful, critical of the content, analytical, just to list a few examples. As an oversimplified rule of thumb, imagine you are sitting at a dinner party with your classmates. Do not say anything in print that you wouldn't say to someone's face. As your Professor, I have the authority and obligation to use my discretion to delete or edit a student's entry when I feel it crosses the line.

2. DON'T BRING US DOWN: I urge you to use discussion boards for comments relating to the material from the week, rather than comments about how much work is required of you for this course. This is a college level course that involves a great deal of reading (humanities courses usually do) and at least a quiz or an assignment every week. I guarantee that you will work hard in this course. I also guarantee that when you have finished your labors you will have 1) a grade that you have truly earned and of which you can be proud, and 2) a much greater appreciation sociology and the study of human social behaviors. Posts that are full of complaining/whining, "yelling" or posts consisting of all capital letters, or negative comments not pertaining to the material tend to bring everyone else down (including me) and to pull down the value of the discussions. Comments of this sort will not count toward your required participation on the discussion boards.

3. WRONG VS. WRITE: Every post in the discussion board should be written in proper

English. That means that, before you submit your post, check it for accurate spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation. Pretend you are writing to your boss and want to impress him or her with your command of the English language.

4. THINK FOR YOURSELF : All of your comments must be original. Any entries that are plagiarized will receive a zero.

5. TIMELINESS IS A VIRTUE: Have you ever thrown a party and nobody came until the next day? That is what it is like if you submit your comment late to a threaded discussion. A discussion only works if there are people to discuss things with at the same time. Therefore, late submissions to discussion boards are not accepted, since there essentially means there will be a lack of "discussion".

6. KEEPING UP APPEARANCES: We have the ability to change fonts and font color for discussion posts. However, excessive use of these tools could make the Discussions look sloppy and make them distracting to read. Therefore I am implementing the following guidelines for discussion posts in all discussions, except for the Class Introductions. Posts that deviate from these guidelines will lose points.

PERSONAL COMMENTS This course will cover social facts and phenomena that may be somewhat controversial in nature. As adult college students, I expect you be open-minded and able to have substantive discussions regarding these matters. If you are unable or feel uncomfortable doing so, you might consider dropping the course. HATE SPEECH WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN THIS COURSE.

Visitors in the classroom: View SHSU's policy at <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/7ff819c3-39f3-491d-b688-db5a330ced92.pdf>

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic

experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see Dean of Student's Office.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: </dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/861001.pdf>

CONTACTING ME

In the event you need to alert me of late work, technical issues (for which I may or may not be able to help you), or simply want to ask a question, you should first email me at amp058@shsu.edu.



Tentative Schedule Outline (subject to change)

Date	Assignment
WEEK ONE:	Syllabus overview, Introduction discussion post due by Sunday at midnight
WEEK TWO:	Chapter 1: Quiz One and Discussion One due by Sunday midnight
WEEK THREE:	Chapter 2: Quiz Two and Discussion Two due by Sunday midnight
WEEK FOUR:	Chapter 3: Quiz Three and Discussion Three due by Sunday midnight

WEEK FIVE:	Chapter 4: Quiz Four and Discussion Four due by Sunday midnight
WEEK SIX:	Chapter 6: Quiz Five and Discussion Five due by Sunday midnight
WEEK SEVEN:	Chapter 5: Quiz Six and Discussion Six due by Sunday midnight
WEEK EIGHT:	Chapter 14: Quiz Seven and Discussion Seve due by Sunday midnight
WEEK NINE:	SPRING BREAK
WEEK TEN:	Chapter 13: Quiz Eight and Discussion Eight due by Sunday midnight
WEEK ELEVEN:	Chapter 9: Quiz Nine and Discussion Nine due by Sunday midnight
WEEK TWELVE:	Chapter 10: Quiz Ten and Discussion Ten due by Sunday midnight
WEEK THIRTEEN:	Chapter 11: Quiz Eleven and Discussion Eleven due by Sunday midnight
WEEK FOURTEEN:	Chapter 7: Quiz Twelve and Discussion Twelve due by Sunday midnight
WEEK FIFTEEN:	Chapter 16: Quiz Thirteen and Discussion Fourteen due by Sunday midnight
WEEK SIXTEEN:	Chapter 18: Quiz Fourteen and Discussion Fourteen due by Sunday midnight
WEEK SEVENTEEN:	Final exam opens May 7th and is due May 9th at 5:30 pm. NO EXCEPTIONS.

HAVE A FABULOUS SUMMER!

