



**SOC 575—ADVANCE RESEARCH METHODS
SECTION 01W-- CRN# 82802
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2023**

Instructor: Dr. Jiaming Sun

Office Location: SS 205

Virtual Office via D2L: 24/7 or by appointment

Office Phone: 903-886-5322

Office Fax: 903-886-5330

Email: Jiaming.sun@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Lectures (Web Based Class): 8/28/2023 through 12/15/2023

This syllabus is intended to help you understand clearly the course goals, expectations, testing methods and topics we are going through so you may maximize your performance. It should also help you to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings that will affect your grade adversely.

Text

- Graduate Research Method (Sociology 575) Required Reading Package). It has an electronic version in D2L.
- W. Lawrence Neuman. *Social Research Method*. 7th Ed. Publisher: Pearson, 2009 ISBN-10: 0205615961; ISBN-13: 978-0205615964. It can be purchased through Amazon for the 7th edition. (optional).
- Jiaming Sun. *Global Connectivity and Local Transformation*. University Press of America. ISBN 0-7618-4008-7 (optional).

Additional reading materials to be distributed online.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Research is the heart of social inquiry. In a Master-granting program, one important goal is to train graduate students to be disciplined, productive researchers. This course fulfills one of the core requirements of the sociology graduate program. It is designed to give students a broad view of the variety of approaches for designing good quality social research. Typically,

graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are required to take a research methods course. The purposes or objectives of the course are:

- To develop and discipline your curiosity and passion for inquiry by converting problems and puzzles into research questions and designs for empirical research;
- To choose appropriately, and describe in detail sufficient to justify to a research design for a specific research project;
- To develop an ability to read with comprehension research reports, especially those found in professional journals. Primarily, the goal is application of information for one's professional pursuit and/or graduate study;
- To learn to write with adequate organization, clarity, and scholarly style: a research proposal, a critique of published research, a graduate paper, and a research report;
- To become familiar with the steps necessary to the writing of your master's thesis. This includes surveys, ethnographic field research, unobtrusive research, and experimental types of investigations.
-

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As per the university rule, students taking one course with three credit-hours are expected to spend six hours weekly online on studying lecture online, watching videos clips, reading chapters, doing assignments, and preparing quizzes and exams.

To meet those learning goals, this course requires you to demonstrate your critical engagement with the readings and issues of research design through questions, presentations and discussions in class, and proposal completion.

You will be required to prepare questions, presentations and discussions online for each unit based on assigned readings. Your final grade will reflect your engagement in question preparation, class presentations (virtual discussions), and research proposal completion. At the final stage of the course, you will be required to submit a professional research proposal for "virtual reviewing by the IRB" (Institutional Review Board).

Attendance and Participation- Graduate study means learning to learn from every possible source -- from your readings, your

peers, your life experience, your professor, and your research practice. Participating in discussions is one of the best ways to learn. You are expected to contribute your questions and insights to the virtual seminar.

The culture of virtual seminars will, I hope, be a congenial one for self-expression. I cannot help you learn if you don't participate in virtual discussions, however. Doing excellent written work is not enough to demonstrate adequate performance in graduate study. Whatever you do, don't suffer "in silence". Say anything (typing and posting) you can defend against reasoned argument. Treat your colleagues' contributions with respect (which means taking them seriously and challenging them as well as extending basic courtesy).

The participation points will not be given to those who are missing (no online activities). Excessive tardiness may result in a further loss of points from your overall performance points. It can mean a difference of a final letter grade. Take it seriously.

Reading Summaries and Exams - Each student must be prepared to virtually discuss all the readings assigned for a virtual meeting unless the instructors explicitly specify otherwise. For selected readings, students must submit a reading summary to a DropBox (linking to TurnItIn).

We encourage students to discuss reading assignments with each other; however, each student must be the sole author of his/her written assignments. If you cannot complete assignments on time due to an emergency, you must let me know before the assignment is due. If you know you are going to be out of town and unable to access a computer, plan ahead. **Late submission will cause a minimum 20% deduction of penalty for the first week, and then 10% each subsequent week later (up to 50 % deduction)**. No late submission will be accepted by the day after taking the exams.

An Initial Research Proposal (IRP) will be required to submit for your midterm exam. The length of IRP will be about 3-4 pages. Your finalized proposal is a **Professional Research Proposal (PRP)** with a length of no more than 16 pages. The proposal has the following elements: specify a problem of sociological significance, convert problem into a series of hypotheses, and specify the assumptions that are implicit and explicit, literature

review, operationalize the concepts, develop a questionnaire, and develop a code manual.

Pre-test and Post-test –At the beginning of the semester, every student must take a pre-test online including about 30 multiple choice questions related to basic knowledge of social research methods for undergraduate study (30 points). An online post-test will take place at the final stage of the course with 30 multiple choice questions randomly selected from the same test bank (30 points).

Grading Policy

Attendance/Online Activity	90
Reading Summaries/outlines	105
Discussions/Participations	85
Pre-test and Post-test	60
Initial Research Proposal (midterm exam)	30
Professional Research Proposal (final exam)	100
Overall performance	30
Total	500

Overall performance points (30 points) based primarily on student performance over the semester, but not just based on a ranking percentile. (See the detail at Stimulative Grading Scheme in D2L).

Final letter grade:

- A: 450-500 (Truly exceptional and outstanding work)
- B: 400-449 (Solid or near acceptable graduate-level work).
- C: 350-399 (Not acceptable level for graduate work).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](#)
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

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
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)
<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#)

document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Email Correspondence

In this course, email is an essential corresponding method and a supplement to lectures. This means that you can expect to hear from the instructor via emails regularly throughout the semester, such as using email for reminders, clarifications, last-minute notifications, etc. Needless to say, students are expected to check email regularly in daily fashion (a couple of times a day). Conversely, you should feel free to contact the instructor via email with questions, requests or problems that might not be addressed clearly in online lessons.

You may access your email account via myLeo - all my emails sent from D2L (and all other the university's emails) will go to this account. Conversely, you are to email me via the D2L email system or your myLeo email since the university spam filters will catch yahoo, hotmail, etc. and usually the emails in spam won't be checked. Email sent to the instructor should be with a subject to "SOC 575".

HOWEVER, in order to avoid duplication of questions and answers, please post all class related questions in the Virtual Office. This will be our Q&A forum. It is likely that your peers will have the same question. Emails of a personal nature or for a bonus point should be sent individually to the instructor's email address via D2L.

If you are having problems in class, please contact the instructor immediately. Please understand that you should not contact the instructor only at the end of the semester being unhappy with your grade, asking for a way to change it.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The course schedule is tentative and somewhat subject to change. Although this course will follow the schedule, it is possible that some adjustments will be made as we progress through the semester.

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings
1	Aug.28-	Brief self-introduction; Organizational "meeting". Pre-test	
2	Sep. 4-	A Methodology for Twenty-First Century Sociology. Joel Smith	Reading with article abstract/outline
3	Sep. 11-	On the Microfoundation of Macrosociology. Randall Collins.	Reading with article abstract/outline
4	Sep. 18-	Manifesto for relational Sociology. Mustafa Emirbayer.	Reading with article abstract/outline
5	Sep. 25-	Theory and Method in Comparative Research: Two Strategies. Charles Ragin, and David Zaret	Reading with article abstract/outline
6	Oct. 2-	Initial Idea of Research Proposal (IIRP)	
7	Oct. 9-	Measurement of World City Network. P.J. Taylor, G. Catalano and D.R.F.Walker.	Reading with article abstract/outline
8	Oct. 16-	Discussion of initial idea of research proposal	
9	Oct. 23-	Find a research report in the literature. Prepare for the Final Research proposal (PRP)	
10	Oct. 30-	Cross-National Research As an Analytic Strategy. Melvin L. Kohn	Reading with article abstract/outline

11	Nov. 6-	Historical Method in Consumer Research Developing Causal Explanations of Change. Ruth Ann Smith, David S. Lux	Reading with article abstract/outline
12	Nov. 13-	Review and post-test.	
13	Nov. 20-	PRP writing.	
14	Nov. 27-	Discussion research proposal online.	
15	Dec. 4-	Practice of IRB (Institutional Review Board) application	
16	Dec. 11-15	***Final Exam***	