



**SOC 331—INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL RESEARCH  
SECTION 01E-- CRN# 82537  
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2024**

**Instructor: Dr. Jiaming Sun**

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**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Lectures (Web Based Class):** 8/26/2024 through 12/13/2024

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

**Text**

W. Lawrence Neuman. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. Publisher: Pearson, ISBN-13: 9780135719732 (required). It can be purchased through Amazon for the 8<sup>th</sup> edition. 7<sup>th</sup> is acceptable.

Jiaming Sun. *Global Connectivity and Local Transformation*. University Press of America. ISBN 0-7618-4008-7 (optional).

Additional materials will be posted on the course website.

**Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives**

This course provides an introduction to research methods and focuses particularly on the application of social research, developing fundamental, conceptual and empirical research skills in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The course will provide students with tools to be able to apply in their own research and to understand scholarly work produced by others. The main goals of the course are (upon successful completion of the course the student will):

- Understand the relationship between theory and research as they apply to social science as well as to public policy;
- Demonstrate a wide variety of research techniques and design issues that are utilized in social science research;
- Describe survey instrumentation and be able to develop a quality survey questionnaire;
- Enable to use appropriate techniques to answer research questions;
- Identify the components of and be able to construct a research proposal;
- Identify as well as evaluate a variety of reference materials, including journals and valid internet sites that are used in social science research endeavors.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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

**Online Activity** This is an online class therefore attendance is flexible! You are required to access D2L while you participate various activities. Your regular participation activities, login times, visit time spent will be checked regularly. You are strongly encouraged to log into the course several times a unit. Excessive "absence" in online activities may result in loss of points (including in your overall performance points).

**Writing and Presentation of a Research Proposal**- As part of the course work students must complete a research proposal. It is based on your cumulative knowledge and skill in social research learned in this course. Students will be arranged online to discuss your proposal with the professor and to group presentation of students' research proposals before the end of the semester. The instructor will provide online assistance via Zoom and, if necessary, additional appointments can be set up for any question related to writing a research proposal.

**Assignments and Quizzes** – Assignments will include reading chapters, writing a reading summary, doing chapter exercises, etc. Doing these exercises helps understand

class material and prepare for the exams. Assignments are due on specific dates, as assigned. You will have plenty of notifications sent by email. 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 late (up to 50 % deduction). No late submission will be accepted by the day and after taking the exams.

Online quizzes will be given to evaluate what have been covered in previous lectures. In order to do well on your quizzes and tests, be sure to bring your textbook to class, take notes, read chapters, and highlight important materials in the text and alternate reading materials. The style of quizzes will be multiple choices, true/false. Questions in your quizzes could be questions in your exams also. There is 1 more Attempt after the due date of the quiz is over will be allowed. However, your final score on this quiz will be the score of the "average of your attempts".

Open questions with page numbers will be given to students looking for answers for extra reading. Those questions will be included in quizzes and exams also.

**Exams**- There will be two exams during the semester. These exams are close-book format with multiple choices, short essay questions that based on virtual lectures, readings, and those quizzes you have taken. These exams will be taken online. Stu Students may use one sheet of compact notes arranged in convenient reference form. Students may not share notes with another student during the exams. The final exam is not cumulative and will cover the lectures presented after the midterm exam. Students will be provided with a study guide prior to the exams. e is 1 more Attempt of taking the exam will be allowed. However, your final score on this exam will be the score of the "average of your attempts".

### **Student Performance Expectations**

Students enrolled in this course will automatically be entered in a Stimulative Grading Scheme (SGS). This scheme provides an incentive to students who are excelling academically in this course. The SGS provides students with "Distribution Points to

Date" three or four time in the semester, so students will be easily having a perception of his/her performance with a percentile rank in the class. So students are highly encouraged to have great user activities, submitting all assignments on time, and standing in the higher percentile of the distribution charts.

### **Grading Policy**

Attendance (in class & online)	80
Homework/Reading/Discussion	90
Proposal/Presentation	80
Quizzes	60
Midterm Exam	80
Final Exam	90
Overall performance	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>

Overall performance points (20 points) is based primarily on student performance over the semester, such as overall assignment completions, user activities, class activities participations, etc., but not just a ranking percentile. (See the detail at Stimulative Grading Scheme in D2L).

**Final letter grade:**      A: 450-500  
   B: 400-449  
   C: 350-399  
   D: 300-349  
   F: below 299

### **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](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](mailto: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](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>

## **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](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## **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  
Gee Library- Room 162  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto: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.

## **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 to 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 318".

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.

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1	Aug. 26-	Welcome and Warm Up for preparation	
2	Sep. 2-	Introduction to the course outline and syllabus. Science and research.	Ch. 1
3	Sep. 9-	Dimensions of research	Ch. 2
4	Sep. 16-	Theory and research.	Ch. 3
5	Sep. 23-	How to Write a Research Proposal.	Ch. 4
6	Sep. 30-	The Literature Review and Ethical Concerns	Ch. 5
7	Oct. 7-	Qualitative and Quantitative research designs.	Ch. 6
8	Oct. 14-	<b>Review *** Mid term exam***</b>	Ch. 1-6
9	Oct. 21-	Qualitative and Quantitative, Measurement.	Ch. 7
10	Oct. 28-	Qualitative and Quantitative sampling.	Ch. 8
11	Nov. 4-	Experimental research.	Ch. 9
12	Nov. 11-	Survey research.	Ch. 10
13	Nov. 18-	Nonreactive research and secondary analysis.	Ch. 11
14	Nov. 25-	Field research.	Ch. 13

15	Dec. 2-	<b>Review, Virtual presentation of Your proposal; Discussion of Presentations via VoiceThread</b>	Ch. 7-13
16	Dec.9-13	<b>***Final Exam***</b> As scheduled by the University	Ch. 7- 13