



Sociology 1306-Contemporary Ideas Fall 2026

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Jana Miller
Office Location: Virtual
Office Hours: As Needed
Office Phone: 903-257-8765 Text (cell)
Office Fax: None
University Email Address: Jana.Miller@tamuc.edu or JMiller@navarrocounty.org
Preferred Form of Communication: Email or Text
Communication Response Time: Within 24 hours or less

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required: **Henslin, James M. 2018 Sociology: A down-to-earth approach. 14th Edition**
ISBN: **9780135236314 (e-book)**
Software Required: None
Optional Texts and/or Materials; None

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Course Description

A critical discussion of the sociological perspective on studying descriptions, causes, and prevention of social problems such as crime, mental illness, drug abuse, environmental degradation, poverty, terrorism, and declining quality of life in today's world.

Student Learning Outcome:

1. Demonstrate comprehension of how social problems/issues affect people at the individual, group, and societal levels as measured through objective exams.
2. Communicate, in written, oral, or visual means the application of sociological theories and quantitative analysis to real world topics and contemporary issues as measured by written exams.
3. Demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues and view yourselves as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

1. Attend class regularly (via Internet)
2. Read material **before** class
3. **Active** participation in discussions (not just "I agree/disagree")
4. Use of D2L learning management system, use of Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, use of basic presentation and graphics programs, etc.

Instructional Methods

The method of instruction for this course will be in an online format. Attendance is flexible. You are required to access the course while you participate in the assignments. Your regular participation assignments, log in 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 the loss of points for participation.

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Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Communication is the key to success! Please sign into your course as often throughout the week, as possible. Complete your discussion boards as requested. Understand, that I can only grade what I have and the more I have the better the grade. If you ever have any questions, please just ask. You may email, text or call. Please do not call or text after 8:00 PM.

Because we will be dealing with controversial contemporary social issues, an open mind and a mature attitude are important requirements for this course. Students are expected to be polite and courteous and conform to classroom etiquette and the university code of conduct at all times.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A	900-1000
B	800-899
C	700-799
D	600-699
F	0-599

Assessments

Exams: You will have 4 exams during the course (each exam is worth 100 points). The exams, in general, will not be cumulative, however some of the material presented later in the course builds on topics previously discussed. Exams are to be taken on the date listed on the syllabus. Each examination will consist of short essay questions. You may prepare for these exams by reviewing reading assignments, class notes and discussion questions. Please know that a short essay is not 1-3 sentences. It is a well thought out answer in 2-3 good paragraphs. You should also cite any sources used to answer these questions.

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Online Discussions: We are going to integrate most of our learning into online discussion. Please, make sure you are familiar with all aspects of D2L. There is an online tutorial if there is something you do not understand. Not understanding D2L is not an acceptable excuse for late assignments. Start now getting familiar with it. For full credit of 20 points, you will need to post an original post that is cited correctly (APA) and answer TWO of your classmates with a reply which consists of more than “I agree or I disagree”. There should be a total of THREE replies to each discussion board for full credit. Each post is expected to use key terms, theories, and ideas from the textbook. The purpose of these discussions is to show you have done the assigned reading and understand it.

Research Project: The research project will be in the format of a PowerPoint due at the end of the semester. I would like you to create this PowerPoint based on one of the topics from our text. The idea is the topic you choose should be able to thoroughly explain the topic you choose from the text. So, once you have chosen your topic, I want you to completely define the topic and explain how this topic fits into our discussions. This PowerPoint must be at least 30 slides long not including your title slide and works cited slide(s). Please, use APA format writing style and for your works cited slides. You must use at LEAST 5 sources or works cited. Your work will be graded for grammar, spelling and content. You will have all semester to work on this project and if you have any questions, please ask. I am here to help you learn and have a positive learning experience. I want you to be creative using color and pictures. Please use examples to back up your topic. You can use humor, have fun with this project, and just understand it is your **final**. You will have deadlines to meet **throughout** the course with reference to this project, so please be on the lookout for prompts on your syllabus. This will be your final exam as well and is worth 200 points of your final grade.

You are encouraged to monitor your grades throughout the semester via the grade book in D2L. If you turn in an assignment and do not receive a grade or have a question about the grading, I need to know immediately. I will not entertain any disputes later than one week after the grades are posted. In this course, email is an essential corresponding method and a supplement to the course. This means that you will hear from me regularly throughout the semester, such as using email for reminders, clarifications, last minute notification, etc....Needless to say, students are expected to check email regularly in daily fashion. You should also contact me via email with questions, requests or issues that might not be addressed clearly in online lessons. You have also been provided my cell phone number in case there is an issue that arises that is an emergency. Please do not call or text after 8:00PM.

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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 ETAMU 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>

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Interaction with Instructor Statement

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as class 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:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU 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 East Texas A&M 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](#)

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Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

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

Students with Disabilities-- 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

East Texas A&M University

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/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M 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

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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 East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, 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

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course Outline by Topic and Chapter

08.20.2026-08.23.2026- Week 1:

Chapter 1 The Sociological Perspective- entry 1
Please introduce us to you- entry 2
Complete Discussion Board

****Note****- you have two questions to answer for **full credit!**

08.24.2026-08.30.2026- Week 2

Chapter 2 Culture-
Complete Discussion Board

08.31.2026-09.06.2026-Week 3

Chapter 3 Socialization
Complete Discussion Board

PowerPoint Topic- Please send via EMAIL the topic you would like to use for your PowerPoint. This must be approved before you begin. This is part of your final grade.

09.07.2026-09.13.2026- Week 4

Chapter 4 Social Structure and Social Interaction
Complete Discussion Board

09.14.2026-09.20.2026- Week 5

EXAM 1- Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4

Chapter 5 How Sociologists Do Research
Complete Discussion Board

09.21.2026-09.27.2026- Week 6

Chapter 6 Societies to Social Networks
Complete Discussion Board

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09.28.2026-10.04.2026 -Week 7

Chapter 11 Sex and Gender
 Complete Discussion Board

PowerPoint works cited Due- Please send via EMAIL a few of the sources you will be using as part of your PowerPoint. This is part of your research paper grade.

10.05.2026-10.11.2026- Week 8

Chapter 12 Race and Ethnicity
 Complete Discussion Board

10.12.2026-10.18.2026- Week 9

EXAM 2-Chapters 5, 6, 11 & 12

Chapter 13 Aging and the Elderly
 Complete Discussion Board

10.19.2026-10.25.2026-Week 10

Chapter 15 Politics
 Complete Discussion Board

Any Questions about your PowerPoint??

10.26.2026-11.01.2026- Week 11

Chapter 16 Marriage and Family
 Complete Discussion Board

11.02.2026-11.08.2026- Week 12

Chapter 17 Education
 Complete Discussion Board

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11.09.2026-11.15.2026- Week 13

EXAM- 3 -Chapters 13, 15, 16 &17

Chapter 18 Religion
Complete Discussion Board

11.16.2026-11.22.2026-Week 14

Chapter 19 Medicine and Health
Complete Discussion Board

11.23.2026-11.29.2026- Week 15

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

11.30.2026-12.06.2026-Week 16

EXAM- Chapter 18 & 19

**Complete FINAL copy of PowerPoint which is due via EMAIL, NO LATER THAN
12.06.2026 at 11:59PM.**

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