

**South Plains College: Common Course Syllabus**  
**Department: Behavioral Sciences**  
**Revised August 2024**

**Department:** Behavioral Science Discipline:

**Sociology Course Number:** Soci 1301

**Course Title:** Introduction to Sociology

**Available Formats:** conventional and internet

**Campuses:** Levelland, Reese, Plainview, Lubbock Center, Downtown Lubbock, Dual-Credit.

**Prerequisite:** No prerequisite for conventional sections; must be TSI compliant in reading for Internet sections including dual credit. Credit: 3 Lecture: 3 Lab: 0.

This course partially satisfies a Core Curriculum Requirement: Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Component Area (080)

**Course description:** The scientific study of human society, including ways in which groups, social institutions, and individuals affect each other. Causes of social stability and social change are explored through the application of various theoretical perspectives, key concepts, and related research methods of sociology. Analysis of social issues in their institutional context may include topics such as social stratification, gender, race/ethnicity, and deviance.

**Core Curriculum Objectives addressed:**

- Communications skills—to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Empirical and quantitative competency skills—to manipulate and analyze numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- Social Responsibility—to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

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**Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:**

1. Compare and contrast the basic theoretical perspectives of sociology.
2. Identify the various methodological approaches to the collection and analysis of data in sociology.
3. Describe key concepts in sociology.
4. Describe the empirical findings of various subfields of sociology.
5. Explain the complex links between individual experiences and broader institutional forces.

**Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:** See instructor's course information sheet for information on assessment that may include the following: pretests and posttests, quizzes, discussions, essays and/or other types of assessment tools.

**Course Evaluations:** Refer to instructor's course information sheet for specifics on coursework and grading.

**Attendance Policy:** As per the SPC General Catalog: Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus. When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable period as determined by the instructor. Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first-class meeting. Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy. It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through Texan Connect. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant. Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them;
4. Missing in-text citations.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
5. Taking an examination for another;
6. Altering grade records;
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
8. Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's;
9. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

**Artificial Intelligence Statement:**

**Purpose of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Applications:** AI applications such as ChatGPT, OpenAI, Bard, Grammarly, WordTune and others are advanced language models designed to aid and engage in meaningful conversations, as well as generate and revise content. AI is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities.

**Academic Integrity:** Using AI to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of SPC academic integrity policies. Plagiarism undermines the learning process and is strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that their work reflects their own ideas, research, synthesis, and analysis and appropriately cites all sources, including AI.

**Collaboration and Consultation:** While AI can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility. Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on AI for solutions without actively engaging in the learning process is discouraged and can be grounds for academic integrity violations. Utilizing AI as a tool for brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.

**Critical Thinking and Originality:** AI usage can provide suggestions and information, but it is essential to critically evaluate the responses and exercise independent thought. Relying solely on AI for answers deprives students of the opportunity to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills. In assignments where originality, creativity, and independent thinking are valued, AI would be detrimental to the student learning process. Critical thinking and originality emphasize the importance of independent thinking in all academic endeavors as part of the student's learning experience apart from outside influence and offers the student the opportunity to refine their unique, individual voice through academic discourse with other students and faculty.

**Ethical Use and Bias Awareness:** AI is trained on large amounts of data from the internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the responses provided by AI. Therefore, when using AI, just like with using any other database, students must verify that the information is from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral, peer-reviewed sources.

**Responsible Engagement:** Students should engage with AI in a respectful and responsible manner and avoid using offensive language, discriminatory remarks, or engaging in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior. Students should also uphold the standards of respectful communication in addressing both AI and fellow classmates.

**Compliance with South Plains College Policies:** Policies regarding the appropriate use of AI in South Plains College courses are set by instructional departments and individual instructors. Appropriate use of AI may range from strict prohibition to assignments they may require the use of AI. Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in

disciplinary action, including academic penalties. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the specific course policies regarding the use of AI and adhere to them throughout the semester.

Remember, AI can be a tool to support your learning in certain courses and assignments, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your overall academic growth.

**Student Code of Conduct Policy:** Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class

### **Academic Appeals Procedure**

#### **INFORMAL APPEAL**

1. The student should schedule an appointment with the instructor of the course to discuss the final grade or discipline action.
2. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should schedule an appointment with the appropriate department chairperson to discuss the situation. (The chairperson may request that the instructor also be present.)
3. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should schedule an appointment with the Divisional Dean to discuss the situation. (The dean may request that the chairperson also be present.)
4. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should be advised of the formal appeal process.

#### **FORMAL APPEAL**

1. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the Informal Appeal, he/she should provide the following information, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs:
  - a. A request for a formal appeal hearing.
  - b. A brief statement of what is being appealed.
  - c. The basis for the appeal.
  - d. Pertinent facts relating to the appeal.

NOTE: The agenda of the appeals hearing will include only those factors documented in the student's appeal request letter.

2. The Vice President for Academic Affairs of South Plains College, will determine the date, time and place of the hearing, and notify the student accordingly.

#### **THE HEARING**

1. Composition of the appeals committee:

a. Vice President for Academic Affairs will preside over the hearing. b. Faculty member of the student's choice. c. Faculty member and student of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. d. President of the Student Body/Student Advisory Council. e. Vice President of Student Affairs.

2. Other persons who should be available at the hearing:

a. The student who requested the hearing. b. The faculty member involved. c. Anyone the student or faculty member wishes to be present to substantiate the case. d. Chairperson and Divisional Dean.

3. Hearing Procedure: The Committee will hear the student's appeal during which the parties to the controversy, and such representatives as desired, will present all facts relating to the case. Consequently, the committee will recommend appropriate action by majority vote.

4. The termination of the hearing finalizes the academic appeal procedure.

#### **APPEAL RESTRICTIONS**

1. Only final grades or dismissal resulting from academic discipline will be considered. 2. The instructor's teaching ability or expertise will not be considered during the hearing. 3. No grade or disciplinary action can be formally appealed after a period of six (6) months from the date that the student is informed.

**Students can find the Diversity Statement, Disabilities Statement, Non-Discrimination Statement, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement, and Campus Concealed Carry Statement here: <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>.**

***South Plains College policies, return to campus plan, and protocols regarding COVID-19 can be found here: [COVID Response \(southplainscollege.edu\)](#).***

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#### INSTRUCTOR-SPECIFIC COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

SOCI 1301  
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY  
Spring 2025

**Instructor:** Morgan Keener

**Office:** Plainview 101H

**Phone:** 806.716.4320

**Email:** [mkeener@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:mkeener@southplainscollege.edu) or through Blackboard Email

**Office Hours:** Mondays & Wednesday 8:00-9:45am; Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:45-11:00am; Fridays 10:00-12:00pm

**Required Text:** No textbook is required. Weekly readings are provided for you.

**Course Overview:** The scientific study of human society, including ways in which groups, social institutions, and individuals affect each other. Causes of social stability and social change are explored through the application of various theoretical perspectives, key concepts, and related research methods of sociology. Analysis of social issues in their institutional context may include topics such as social stratification, gender, race/ethnicity, and deviance.

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5. Explain the complex links between individual experiences and broader institutional forces

**Required Text:** N/A – Resources will be made available in Blackboard.

**Course Materials:** Access to a computer, or fully charged laptop, and the internet; paper and writing utensil.

**How this Course is conducted:** This course is conducted completely online. We do NOT meet face to face in a traditional classroom setting. It is your responsibility to have the necessary equipment (internet, computer, Word, etc.) for this participating in this course.

**Logging into Blackboard:** To access your course, go to <https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com/> or go to the SPC Homepage and click on the “Login to” link in the top right-hand portion of the page and then click on the Blackboard link on the

pull-down or you can type or copy the address into the address window of your computer. I recommend that you bookmark Blackboard on your computer for quick access. You can also log into MySPC and there is a Blackboard link there. Once you reach the site you will click "Log In". The log-in screen will come up asking for your username and password. Simply follow the instructions on the screen.

**Technical Problems/Support:** If you are having computer problems, you must let me know. I will try to help you in any way that I can. Please remember that it is your responsibility to have a backup plan if your computer goes down. Please have this plan in place now and do not wait until it is a crisis. If you lose your course work due to bad flash drives, Internet service down, computer crash, or your dog ate your homework, there is nothing I can do about it. THIS IS YOUR WARNING TO HAVE A BACKUP PLAN IN PLACE.

**IMPORTANT:** Most tech issues are related to failure to update java, using the incorrect internet browser (Google Chrome is the only acceptable browser) and/or not deleting browsing history files daily. Most issues are related to computer issues, not Blackboard. Please note that this instructor does NOT recommend use of any handheld devices for taking this course. Cellphones are wonderful but not for course work done on the Internet. Reminder - bookmark the Blackboard login page on your computer.

**SPC Technical Support Contact:** Call (806) 716-2180 or email at [Blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:Blackboard@southplainscollege.edu) for student technical support. I am your course work support contact. Only call or e-mail technical support with questions about Blackboard or computer functioning. There is Technical Support information in the Start Here area of your Blackboard course. It contains links to Student Tutorials and the Student Orientation Course for Blackboard. Contact me for any course content information.

PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO TURN COURSE WORK IN OR YOU MAY HAVE PROBLEMS! Remember the saying "TECHNOLOGY HAPPENS"!

**Anti-virus Software:** Please make sure that your computer has an up-to-date antivirus software program installed.

**Academic Integrity:** In addition to the policy in the Common Course Syllabus, students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will earn a zero on the work in question for the first offense and will be dropped from the course with an 'F' should a second offense occur. Any amount of dishonesty is subject to these consequences, whether a lot or a little; this can include but is not limited to one copied sentence of a written assignment, a missing citation, an entire paper copied from someone/somewhere else, one plagiarized post on a discussion board, one copied exam item, looking at the scantron of another student during an exam or an exam or other



coursework completed by someone other than yourself. You have also committed academic dishonesty when sharing course content/items/answers. This includes sharing course content with classmates or future students as well as sharing course content on websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, or similar “study applications.” For further information and examples please see the Catalog, Student Guide, or refer to [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org)

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resource Policy:** If the student submits work obtained by using AI or is suspected of utilizing AI, it will be considered plagiarism and receive a grade of zero for the work. This course policy will be provided as feedback for said coursework, letting the student know that AI is suspected, or plagiarism has occurred. It is the student’s responsibility to follow up with the instructor within 3 days of the posted grade if work has been incorrectly flagged for AI use. The student can discuss the coursework in question with the instructor by virtual appointment to earn credit. In these cases, the student will need to verbally provide mastery of concepts related to the work in question. Any further attempts at using artificial intelligence as one’s own work will continue to earn zeroes for those attempts or may result in a course drop with an F by the instructor. The incidents will also be detailed to the Dean of Students for disciplinary actions.

**Attendance Policy:** The following is in addition to the Common Course Syllabus:

Since this course is a virtual classroom, attendance will be taken according to the following:

- Participating in class discussions by posting to the discussion board
- Submitting assignments on or before due dates.

*Note: Simply logging into the course or logging into the course and sending an e-mail is NOT considered attendance for this course. You MUST participate in the course by submitting work during any given week to be considered “in attendance”.*

“Participation” in this online class is **mandatory** – you must be active. There are numerous assignments which should force you to log-in continuously. I understand that each of you has your own schedule and will be logging-on at different times. That’s fine. All that is expected of you is that you **GET THE WORK DONE!!**

Each assignment and discussion have a dictated due DATE and TIME. It is your responsibility to get the work done and submitted to me by the designated time/date. Therefore, since this is a virtual classroom, attendance will be taken according to completion/submission of Discussions, Quizzes, Assignments, and Projects.

If you are unable to log-in or complete your work for any reason, **YOU MUST CONTACT ME ASAP!**

Excuses such as "The network was down," or "I could not figure out how to send the assignment through the assignments function" are not acceptable. In short, plan ahead and **do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments.** It is always okay to turn in assignments early although discussion board postings should be done with the calendar schedule.

**It is the student's responsibility to drop the course on or before the last drop date of the semester to avoid failure. Administrative drops will not be made, unless student has discussed/made arrangements with me.**

## **COURSE POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS**

This is what you need to do to **earn** your grade

**Introduction module:** You must complete this to remain in the course.

**Course Work:** *You are responsible for all of your readings and assignments.* It is required that you read/review each assigned module, as well as complete the module activities. There are 9 modules that you will complete over the course of the semester with corresponding activities, discussions, and exams. There will also be a Final Exam and Evidence Portfolio Assignment at the end of the semester

**Total possible points you can earn is 1,000.** Your overall letter grade/percentage is based solely on the points you earn. Please reference the grading scale below. **Grades are NOT rounded up, which means if you earn 899 points, you will receive an 89% or a B as your overall grade, no exceptions**

### **Grading scale:**

**A = 900 – 1000**

**B = 800 – 899.99**

**C = 700 – 799.99**

**D = 600 – 699.99**

**F = 0 – 599.99.**

**This scale is the typical: A = 90%-100%; B=80%-89.99%; C=70%-79.99%; D=60%-69.99%; and F=0%-59.99%.**

If you have any questions about any of the course work or anything about the course material do not hesitate to speak to me during office hours, before/during/after class, or via Blackboard e-mail.

**Late work** is accepted but not encouraged. Deadlines provide structure, and it is preferable that you stick to the course calendar. The deadline for all late work will be provided by the instructor in Blackboard.

**Extra credit opportunities** will be made available during the semester. I recommend that you take advantage of those opportunities as they become available as I will not make extra credit available on individual request.

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**Sociological perspective:** Students will use what is termed as the Sociological Perspective since you are now students of Sociology. This perspective stresses the social context in which people live and steps away from what is termed "person blaming." Sociologists look beyond individuals and individual experiences. This perspective strives to understand human behavior by placing it within its broader social context. Depending on a person's characteristics such as gender, age, race, sexual orientation and religion among others, we each have different experiences. Sociologists using this perspective (and that includes you, the student) evaluate people and behaviors in terms of what is typical or atypical (or not typical) by studying society and finding general patterns of behavior. They do NOT judge others or their behaviors with terms such as good/bad, moral/immoral or right/wrong. Do NOT use these terms in your assignments or discussion posts or you will lose points.

This course will discuss relevant (or hot button) topics as this is a sociology course, and we are studying society. Some of those topics include race, gender, sexuality, poverty, social media, politics, etc. Due to our current cultural climate, these topics may be uncomfortable to some students. Nonetheless, it is not the aim of this course to change or challenge any student's values or beliefs or to expose any personal information at the student's expense; instead, this is an educational course, which provides students with new knowledge and different perspectives that can serve them as they see fit. This classroom is a safe space, in which everyone is viewed as important.

## Course Calendar Spring 2025

**All assignments modules are due on Sundays by 11:59pm**

Date	Day of the Week	Course Work
Jan 13	Monday	Classes begin
Jan 19	Sunday	Introduction Module due
Jan 20	Monday	MLK, Jr Day – all campuses closed
Jan 26	Sunday	Module 1 due
Feb 2	Sunday	Module 2 due
Feb 9	Sunday	Discussion 1 with 2 replies Exam 1
Feb 16	Sunday	Module 3 due
Feb 23	Sunday	Module 4 due
Mar 2	Sunday	Discussion 2 with 2 replies Exam 2
Mar 9	Sunday	Module 5 due
Mar 16	Sunday	Module 6 due
Mar 17-21	Mon-Fri	Spring Break – all campuses closed

<b>Mar 30</b>	Sunday	Discussion 3 with 2 replies Exam 3
<b>Apr 6</b>	Sunday	Module 7 due
<b>Apr 13</b>	Sunday	Module 8 due
<b>Apr 18</b>	Friday	Easter Holiday – all campuses closed
<b>Apr 20</b>	Sunday	Discussion 4 with 2 replies Exam 4
<b>Apr 24</b>	Thursday	Last day to drop fall courses
<b>Apr 27</b>	Sunday	Evidence Portfolio
<b>May 4</b>	Sunday	Final Exam due
<b>May 8</b>	Thursday	Classes end
<b>May 9</b>	Friday	Graduation

**This calendar is subject to change.** Students will be notified in class and/or through Blackboard of any changes.