

University of North Texas at Dallas
Fall 2015
SYLLABUS

SOCI 4990 (031): Sociology Capstone 3 Hrs

Department of		Sociology	Division of	Liberal Arts and Life Sciences
Instructor Name:	<i>Steven L. Arxer, Ph.D.,</i>			
Office Location:	<i>Founder's Hall, Room 321</i>			
Office Phone:	<i>972-338-1592</i>			
Email Address:	Steven.Arxer@untdallas.edu			
Office hours	Preferred method of communication: Email Response time back to email is 48 hours. Virtual Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-9:50am and Mondays 11:30am-3pm. Face-to-Face Office hours: Monday 8-9:50am and Wednesday 11:30am-12:55pm and by appointment. <i>Not available on Saturday and Sundays, and weekdays after 10 PM.</i>			
Class Meeting Days & Times:		Online		
Course Catalog Description:	Senior Sociology majors use their skills and knowledge to develop data driven senior Theses that integrate core sociological concepts, theory and methods. Students are required to find an applied sociology application in their projects.			
Prerequisites:	"C" or better in SOCI 3200D, SOCI 3220D, SOCI 3240D and SOCI 3280D. Required of all sociology majors. Senior level Sociology majors only.			
Co-requisites:	None			
Required Text:	Required Text/Readings John W. Creswell. 2009. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches 3rd edition (or later edition). Sage			
Recommended Text and References:	None			
Access to Learning Resources:	UNT Dallas Library: phone: (972) 780-3625; web: http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm UNT Dallas Bookstore: phone: (972) 780-3652; e-mail: 1012mgr@fhcg.follett.com			
Course Goals & Overview: This is a writing and oral communications intensive course integrating analysis and critical examination of the major fields of sociology. Focus is mastering classic sociological accounts as applied to the writing and reporting of the student's research project.				

Departmental Outcomes: At the end of this course, the student will

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At the end of this course, the student will:

1. Identify assumptions underlying theoretical argument
2. Identify limitations of theoretical arguments.
3. Identify assumptions underlying particular research methodologies
4. Identify limitations of particular research methodologies
5. Understand alternative viewpoints on social scientific issues
6. Describe how theory contributes to sociological knowledge
7. Compare and contrast major theoretical orientations
8. Explain how theories reflect and affect the historical context in which they are developed.
9. Describe major theories in selected substantive areas of sociology
10. Design and carry out a research project
11. Critically assess empirical research of others
12. Summarize basic issues in the area
13. Compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations and middle range theories in the area
14. Explain how sociology contributes to understating of the area
15. Summarize current research in the area
16. Suggest specific policy implications of research and theories in the area
17. Be able to identify the critical ethical issues in research such as confidentiality, informed consent, and minimization of risk to subjects
18. Be aware of various professional codes of research such as the code of ethics from the American Sociological Association

COURSE OUTLINE

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by announcements during class.

Tentative Schedule*

TOPICS	Assignment/work	Student Learning Outcome
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WEEKS 1-2 8/24-9/6 Introduction to the course Chapter 1: The selection of a research design Chapter 2: Review of Literature	Introductions Activity Discussion #1 Assignment 1: Research question	1,2, 4, 7
WEEKS 3-4 9/7- 9/20 Chapter 3: The use of theory Chapter 4: Writing strategy & ethical consideration	Discussion #2 Assignment 2: Research Goals and Question	1,2,4, 7, 10
WEEKS 5-6 9/21-10/4 Chapter 5: Designing research introduction Chapter 6: The purpose statement Chapter 7: Research question & Hypothesis	Assignment 3: Introduction and Literature Review	3,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,12,13, 14,15
WEEKS 7-8 10/5-10/18 Chapter 8, 9, 10: Quantitative, Qualitative, & Mixed method data collection	Discussion#3 Assignment 4: Methods Section (Data Collection)	3,4,10, 17, 18, 19
WEEKS 9-10 10/19-11/1 Data analysis and interpretation	Assignment 5: Results and Discussion	12,13,14,15, 16
WEEKS 11-12 11/2-11/15	Discussion #4 Submit Draft Research Paper (no grade assigned)	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, 15,16,17, 18
WEEKS 13-14 11/16-11/29	Reaction Paper & Presentation	10,14
WEEKS 15-16 11/30-12/6; 12/11	Final Research Paper Due	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, 15,16,17, 18

COURSE EVALUATION METHODS

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course. If you are having a problem with your performance in this course, please schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible so that together, we can figure out what needs to be done. I am willing to help solve any problem you might experience involving this course, except failure to read the assigned materials or missing class.

1. ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be required to submit 6 assignments. The 5 assignments together will be worth of 100 points (20 X5). Detail instructions on these assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

It is the student's responsibility to approach the instructor **in advance** of a due date if further explanation is necessary. **Students who miss a deadline must document an illness or family emergency to become eligible for turning in assignments without penalty.** Failure to do so will result in an assigned zero. The qualifying student will be given 7 calendar days following the missed date.

Beyond the 10-day period, except under extreme circumstances, no late assignments will be allowed and a zero will be assigned.

To safeguard against any errors in recording your grades, it will be your responsibility to retain all exams/assignments submitted and returned to you. If there is a discrepancy, you will then have on hand the original score and based on this, the proper corrections can be made.

2. PRESENTATION

Each student will upload a file presenting their research to the class. It could be a powerpoint presentation or a recorded audio/video clip. Guidelines on what is to be expected will be posted on blackboard. The presentation will worth of 30 points.

3. RESEARCH PAPER:

Each student will write a research paper (80 points). The research paper will be a write-up of research that you conducted over the semester. It will include an Introduction, Literature Review, Methods Section, Results Section, Discussion, Conclusion and Bibliography. A minimum of 20 scholarly references need to be included in the Bibliography. The paper (not including the Bibliography) should be between 17-25 pages. A guideline that describes what should be included in each section and page length for each section will be posted on blackboard.

4. ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

For 4 times throughout the semester students will be asked a specific question or questions related to course materials. *These questions will be posted in the Blackboard.* You will have until the due date to post your response and then one day to read statements from other students and submit comments to them. Discussion Area submissions are worth total 5X4=20 points.

Here are some guidelines regarding your participation in these class discussions.

1. For each question or questions that I've designated for a particular chapter, submit your well-considered response. Then, take a look at what others have said on the topic. Respond to at least ONE of your fellow students with at least one comment/question regarding something he/she has said.
2. As far as evaluating your discussion responses, I will be interested in whether a response shows an understanding of what research method is. Integrate methodological concepts into your responses.

Applying these concepts accurately shows your familiarity with the reading as well as your ability to apply it. Avoid simply repeating what others have already said in their responses. Take some time to offer different examples or ways of analyzing the issue. Also, it's important to remember that this isn't a talk show where it's adequate to simply state your personal opinion. Earning an "A" (4.5 points out of 5) on the discussions requires going beyond the minimal requirements of the assignment.

3. Occasionally, it's apparent that a response is meant to be cute or funny, but not serious and thoughtful. I'm not looking for comedic talent. The discussions require more than having a conversation with your colleagues in the class.
4. I strongly recommend that you take the time to compose your discussion response (e.g., in your software program like Microsoft Word or Works), save it and then post it in the Discussion Area. Always keep a copy of your discussion responses in case of a technical problem on the course website.
5. As mentioned in the section above, students should be courteous to others in the class. That means no YELLING!!, personal insults, threats, profanity as well as other inappropriate postings in the Discussion Area. Sometimes students will disagree with each other. That's okay—disagreements should be expressed politely and intellectually (focusing on the course material).

6. REACTION PAPER

Students will write a short reaction paper as a follow-up to their final project in which they reflect on how their capstone project has enriched their thinking and will aid in their future professional endeavors. The paper will be graded using a rubric evaluating exposure, culture, and use of different viewpoints.

Grading Matrix

Instrument	Value (points or percentages)	Total
Assignments	5 assignments at 20 points each	100
Research Paper	1 paper at 80 points	80
Presentation	1 @ 30 points	30
Discussions	4 @ 5 points each	20
Reaction paper	1 @ 20 points	20
Total:		250

Grade Determination:

A = 225-250 pts; i.e. 90% or better

B = 200-224 pts; i.e. 80 – 89 %

C = 175-199 pts; i.e. 70 – 79 %

D = 150 – 174 pts; i.e. 60 – 69 %

F = 149 pts or below; i.e. less than 60%

University Policies and Procedures**Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance):**

The University of North Texas Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students' with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed as accommodations are not retroactive. For more information, you may visit the Student Life Office, Suite 200, Building 2 or call Laura Smith at 972-780-3632.

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness Policy:

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Assignment Policy:

If you are unable to submit the assignments due to serious illness where you are physically incapacitated (e.g., hospitalized), medical documentation is required to resolve the missed assignment. *Be sure to speak with me immediately if you fail to meet the assignment submission deadline.*

Exam Policy:

*Exams should be taken as scheduled. No makeup examinations will be allowed except for documented emergencies (See Student Handbook). If you are unable to take an exam due to serious illness where you are physically incapacitated (e.g., hospitalized), medical documentation is required to resolve the missed exam. **If you miss any exam, then you will be given an essay make-up exam.** Be sure to speak with me immediately if you miss an exam. Remember, you must submit official documentation in order for this policy to apply to you.*

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of Academic Integrity policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Academic Integrity at http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/policies/Chapter%2007%20Student%20Affairs,%20Education,%20and%20Funding/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.pdf for complete provisions of this code.

In addition, all academic work submitted for this class, including exams, papers, and written assignments should include the following statement:

On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance that violates the UNTD Academic Integrity Policy.

Bad Weather Policy:

On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website www.unt.edu/dallas. Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

Attendance and Participation Policy:

The University attendance policy is in effect for this course. Class attendance and participation is expected because the class is designed as a shared learning experience and because essential information not in the textbook will be

discussed in class. The dynamic and intensive nature of this course makes it impossible for students to make-up or to receive credit for missed classes. Attendance and participation in all class meetings is essential to the integration of course material and your ability to demonstrate proficiency. Students are responsible to notify the instructor if they are missing class and for what reason. Students are also responsible to make up any work covered in class. It is recommended that each student coordinate with a student colleague to obtain a copy of the class notes, if they are absent.

Diversity/Tolerance Policy:

Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Life as the instructor deems appropriate.

Optional Policies:

- *Use of Blackboard: **Review the course website several times per week, if not daily.** Visiting the website frequently will familiarize you with the resources available on the site as well as alert you to any changes or additions to the website (e.g., possible changes to the syllabus, due date reminders posted in the calendar, instructions for discussions).*
- *Grade of Incomplete: You should discuss with me in advance if an “I” has to be assigned.*
- *Please provide me, the instructor, with **48 hours** to respond to e-mail messages.*
- *Please provide me, the instructor, with about a week to grade and provide feedbacks to your submitted works.*