Course Description.
This course is designed to be a capstone course for sociology majors. The course will feature a senior research paper. Student will integrate information and skills acquired throughout his/her undergraduate career. Students will develop a research question that will yield a review of relevant literature, an empirical approach to exploring the question, an analysis of data compiled, and a discussion of the implications of the findings. In addition to producing a research paper, students will be expected to generate products (i.e. power point presentation and resume) that will prepare them for their post-graduation goals.

Course Objectives.
By the end of the semester, sociology seniors will:
- Be able to develop clear research questions that generate testable hypotheses
- Be able to compose a paper worthy of acceptance for presentation at an undergraduate session of a major conference in the discipline
- Improve their ability to work the SPSS
- Improve their ability to organize, interpret and critique statistical information
- Have enhanced oral presentation skills
- Be prepared for post-graduation job interviews and/or graduate school admissions

Course Format.
The structure of senior seminar is unlike any other course offered within the Sociology program. Class meetings will involve mostly active discussions among students and between students and Sociology faculty. In addition to class meetings students will be expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings with faculty mentors.

Course Requirements.
Attendance:
Given the format of the course, class attendance and meeting appointments with faculty are critical to the successful completion of the course. Except for validly supported medical and/or family emergencies, absence from a scheduled class meeting will result in 3-point deductions FROM YOUR FINAL GRADE for every infraction. Similarly, frivolous cancellations of, or unexcused no-shows to, scheduled meetings with faculty advisors will also result in a 3-point deductions FROM YOUR FINAL GRADE for each infraction.

Mentor Meetings:
Once students get assigned to their faculty advisors, students will be expected to schedule a meeting with their advisor ONCE PER WEEK. Your diligence in keeping these appointments will be factored into your attendance grade.

**Participation/Preparedness:**

Given the student-centered structure of this course, the quality of learning that takes place in the course is largely contingent upon the level of commitment students give to the course. Learning undoubtedly will be compromised if students come to class unprepared, not having completed assignments. To ensure the best environment for learning, students are expected to come to class having completed the assignment. Dr. Araiza will be facilitating the discussions this semester.

Participation/Preparedness will be assessed by examining the quality of: timely submissions, contributions to in-class discussions, the feedback you provide to your peers, as well as making scheduled appointments with your mentor and your responses to the critiques offered by your mentors and peers. Participation/Preparedness will constitute 15% of your final grade.

**Major Field Test:**

Students are also expected to take the GRE Major field test at the students scheduled times and place. The test serves at least two purposes. First, it enables faculty to assess the extent to which students from this program compare to other sociology majors in the U.S. in terms of the various areas of testing. Second, it provides useful information for graduate school application, especially for those who are considering advanced degrees in the discipline.

Registration and information for the major field test can be found at [http://www.tamucc.edu/~atcweb/mftinfo.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/~atcweb/mftinfo.html).

The major field test constitutes 5% of your final grade. Simply taking the field test results in receiving complete credit for this portion of your grade.

**Resume:**

A guest lecturer will speak to us about writing an effective resume and interviewing etiquette. Faculty members will be providing you with feedback on your resume. The final submission of a clean, professional resume constitutes 10% of your grade.

**Power Point Presentation:**

Students will be required to give a 15 minute power point presentation of the research project. This presentation is a formal affair. You will be expected to discuss your research project in a coherent manner, using formal English. Furthermore, you will be expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner, and dress in professional attire. Failure to comply with any of these expectations will result in a significant reduction in your grade.

Presentations will take place during the last class meetings. The order of presenters will be determined by lottery (unless your absent). The presentation will constitute 20% of your grade.

**Research Paper:**

This research paper must be at least 5000 words, not including the title page, the abstract, tables, graphs, footnotes, and references. The paper will be comprised of a title page, a 200-word abstract, a problem statement, a review of the literature, a methods section, a results section, a conclusion, and a reference section.

The research may be quantitative or qualitative in nature. You may choose to collect your own data or conduct a secondary analysis of data. Regardless of what you choose to do, note that your data analysis must extend beyond descriptive statistics. In other words, you will be expected to conduct some test of significance. Finally, your paper is expected to follow ASA format. The final product submitted will constitute 45% of your grade.
**Submissions:**

Assignments are expected to be turned in on their due dates. Assignments must be submitted in hard copies and machine-readable format using Word or Word Perfect. Late submissions will be penalized.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Preparedness</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Field Test</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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**Grading Policy:**

The sociology faculty will independently assess each student’s performances in the literature review, the resume, the presentation, and the research paper. Each student’s grade for each of these areas will be an average of the total of all four grades given by the sociology faculty. When assessing student’s Participation/Preparedness, faculty members will be deferring to the student’s assigned advisor’s assessment as well as the lead instructor.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

CHEATING POLICY
Any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Should you be caught cheating, your name will be submitted to the Department Chair, as well as to the Vice President of Student Affairs. If you are caught cheating, you will get a zero on the exam/assignment and will not be allowed to retake the exam/assignment or resubmit the reaction paper. Please see the Student Code of Conduct for the disciplinary procedures pertaining to academic dishonesty.

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Arts and Humanities requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located at Driftwood 203E and can be reached at 825.3466.

STUDENTS with DISABILITIES
The Americans with Disabilities Act 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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at 825.5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

EMAIL
You have your very own Islander e-mail account. I will be using this account should any correspondence be necessary. All university notifications will be using your Islander account to contact you. To access your Islander email, first go to S.A.I.L. for your new student ID number. Next, go to http://newuser.tamucc.edu for your new email account. For more information call 825.5618.