SOCI 1301.003
Human Societies
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
Fall 2017
TR 12:30 – 1:45
Center for Instruction 113

Instructor: Dr. Michael Ramirez
Office: Bay Hall 344
Office hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 2:00 – 3:30
Wednesdays 9:00 – 11:00
and by appointment
Phone: 361-825-2388
E-mail: Michael.Ramirez@tamucc.edu

Course Description:
Sociology is the study of social behavior and human groups. It is much more than simply a discipline—it is a way of engaging with and examining your world. This course is designed to introduce you to sociological perspectives and its major theories, as well as the research methods employed by sociologists to understand how society works. We will discuss the core concepts and theories that sociologists use, but will also review classic and contemporary studies on particular aspects of social life. We will focus primarily on the influence of social relationships on people’s attitudes, behaviors, identities, and life outcomes. Topics we will discuss include culture, socialization, the media, race, gender, social class, education, deviance, family, work, health, and social change.

Learning Outcomes:
This course has five distinct yet compatible goals:

- To define and understand basic concepts in sociology
- To understand the relationship between technology and social change
- To recognize the reciprocal relations between individuals and society

Course Requirements
Texts:
Required:

Assignments:
Exams:
We will have four exams throughout this course. Each exam will focus only on those materials read or studied since the last exam, although we will be building concepts and theoretical understandings that will be drawn upon throughout the course. It is only in this sense that they will be cumulative.

Exam 1 will be worth 10% of your final grade. Exam 2, Exam 3, and Exam 4 (your final exam) will each be worth 15% of your final grade.

Participation:
To encourage your thinking on the issues we will cover in class, I will periodically give you assignments and/or activities to complete. Some will be assigned for homework, while others will be completed during class. These activities serve a dual purpose. First, they will help you organize your thoughts on particular topics we will cover in class. Second, they will help spur class discussions.

These short assignments may take the form of reflecting on a particular set of sociological issues, reactions to films/readings from class, analyzing some form of media, briefly interviewing someone about some social phenomena, in-class surveys, or other writing opportunities. Regardless of form, I am primarily interested in the development of your sociological imagination. Expect to have some type of participation assignment nearly every class period throughout the semester. In-class activities and assignments will typically be worth 25 points each. Homework assignments and BlackBoard discussion forum postings will typically be worth 50 points each. There will not be opportunities to make up points for missing class on days on which in-class assignments are completed. Likewise, missing class on days on which I assign homework does not grant you an extension. It is your responsibility to check BlackBoard for assignments.

These assignments will be averaged together to count for 25% of your final grade.

Sociological Imagination Papers:
Over the course of the semester, you will be required to write two papers on sociological phenomena we will study in class. Details for each paper will be distributed and explained in class approximately one week before the due date. You will typically need to collect some data for each paper (a content analysis of media or perhaps a short unobtrusive participant observation). You will then analyze your data and apply appropriate sociological concepts and ideas to your analysis. Each paper will be approximately 3 to 5 pages in length. You will upload your paper on BlackBoard.

Note: Plagiarism detection software will be used to review your paper. If it appears that you have plagiarized any existing work (either that from another source [online or otherwise] or from another student [either in this class or another]), you will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. Sanctions may include anything from receiving a zero for the assignment, receiving an F for your final grade, and/or recommendation for dismissal from the University. For more information on Academic Dishonesty and its sanctions, refer to: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/IAffairs/index.htm.
Each paper will be worth 10% of your final grade (for a total of 20%).

**Course Policies**

*Attendance Policy:*
Regular attendance is essential to doing well in this course. I will be checking attendance regularly. It is your responsibility to make certain you have signed the attendance sheet. If you are not in class at the point that the sheet is passed around, you will be marked absent for that day.

If you need to arrive late or leave early because of an appointment or such, please talk to me before class and make your arrival/departure as quietly as possible. This is as much, if not more, for your classmates as it is for me. Many students find it very distracting to keep focused on lecture when others are coming and going at odd times.

Lastly, if you choose to come to class, I expect you to be mentally as well as physically present. Sending/reading text messages, getting on the internet, and reading newspapers or other texts during class is unacceptable. If you need to get work done for another class, then just skip this class. We all have to make choices about where to put our energy on any given day.

**Classroom Ground Rules:**
In this class, we will discuss both abstract theoretical ideas and concrete, practical information about different social groups and social behaviors. I hope that these materials will challenge you intellectually and personally. Because this class may touch on controversial social issues, I propose the following ground rules, which I would like you all to agree to and assume while in this classroom.

1. Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own social group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group.

2. Agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.

3. Be respectful. Class discussion time is a critical point of showing respect and intellectual growth. We need to make our discussions “safe” for everyone. We all need to make this happen together. Listen carefully to comments. Do not interrupt. Use words (nonverbal and guttural sounds are not acceptable forms of communication). Frame your responses in civil terms (verbal attacks are not acceptable). If you want to take issue with someone else’s response, first summarize what you heard them say. Then discuss why the “idea” (not the person) is problematic.
4. You speak for yourself. You own your opinion and you get to keep it. The voices that we speak with are often indicative of larger narratives that have been a part of our particular social experience. We do not speak for all members of a group to which we belong. I strive to present research that is methodologically and theoretically sound. Your opinion may not be supported by research that I present in class. That dissonance may make you uncomfortable or even angry. Note those emotions. They are important.

**Academic Dishonesty:**
It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the University's codes on academic dishonesty. In general, any form of academic dishonesty (including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism) will not be tolerated. Such instances will be reported to the Department Chair, as well as to Student Affairs. Sanctions can include: receiving a zero on the assignment/exam, receiving an F for the final course grade, and/or recommendation for dismissal from the University. For more information, refer to: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/JAffairs/index.htm](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/JAffairs/index.htm).

**Notice to 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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Academic Advising:**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Grade Appeal Process:**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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 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 Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

**Starfish:**

Starfish is a software communication program used to connect you (the student) to your “Success Network” of instructors, advisors, and other academic support programs on campus. If you receive an email from starfish@tamucc.edu, this means I have raised a Starfish “communication” item useful for connecting you to campus resources and course progress guidance. Starfish “communication” items include:

* Flags: Early Alerts regarding Course Effort/Progress
* Kudos: Commendation for Course Effort/Progress
* Referrals: Recommended utilization of services: tutoring, mentoring, coaching, advising, etc.
* To-dos: Assigned tasks, such as “Meet with me”

Acting on these messages in a timely manner is vital to your success as a student at TAMUCC. The purpose of Starfish is to help instructors communicate information with their students, and connect students with campus resources available to them. For Starfish assistance, please call 361-825-3653 or email Starfish@tamucc.edu

**Grading:**

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Formula</th>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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<td>Exam 4</td>
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<td>Paper 1</td>
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<td>Paper 2</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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Final Grade = sum of these totals ___

Final Letter Grades:

- A = 90.00% to 100.00%
- B = 80.00% to 89.99%
- C = 70.00% to 79.99%
- D = 60.00% to 69.99%
- F = below 60.00%
**Course Calendar**
Materials should be read **before** coming to class.

**RW:** *The Real World*
**AR:** Additional Readings (available on BlackBoard)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td><strong>The Sociological Perspective</strong></td>
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<td>Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 31</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Sept 5</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 1</td>
<td>AR: Mills’ “The Promise”</td>
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<td><strong>Methods of Social Research</strong></td>
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<td>Sept 7 – 12</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 2</td>
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<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
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<td>Sept 14 – 19</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 3</td>
<td>AR: Caplow’s “Rule Enforcement Without Visible Means: Christmas Gift Giving in Middletown”</td>
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<td><strong>Socialization</strong></td>
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<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 4</td>
<td>AR: Furstenberg et al.’s “Growing Up Is Harder To Do”</td>
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<td>Sept 26</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Deviance</strong></td>
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<td>Sept 28 – Oct 3</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 6</td>
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<td><strong>Media</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Stratification</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 10 – 12</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Oct 17</td>
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<td><strong>Race and Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 24</td>
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<td>AR: McIntosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”</td>
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<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 9</td>
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<td>AR: Ramirez’ “‘My Dog's Just Like Me': Dog Ownership as a Gender Display”</td>
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<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 9</td>
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<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Nov 7</td>
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<td>AR: Gerson’s “Feminism and Family”</td>
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<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>EXAM 3</td>
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<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 11</td>
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<td>AR: Thompson’s “Hanging Tongues: A Sociological Encounter with the Assembly Line”</td>
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<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 14</td>
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<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>No class&lt;br&gt;Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>Nov 28</td>
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<td><strong>Social Change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 30 – Dec 5</td>
<td>RW: Chapter 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 12</td>
<td>EXAM 4 at 11:00 am</td>
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SOCI 1301 INFORMATION SHEET

Name: ________________________________

Name by which you wish to be called: ________________________

Email address: _________________________

Major: ________________________________

What career do you plan to pursue in the future?

Briefly, why does this line of work interest you?

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COURSE CONTRACT

In order to remain in this class, you must read the syllabus, complete this form, and return it to the instructor.

Statement of Understanding Course Requirements

I have read the syllabus for SOCI 1301, and I understand the course requirements including the policies on grading, coursework, classroom ground rules, attendance, absences, make-up exams, and academic dishonesty.

Name: ________________________________ (print)

Signature: ____________________________