**FALL 2014: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS at ARLINGTON**

SOCI 1311, Section 004: Introduction to Sociology

Professor: Jason E. Shelton, Ph.D.

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Time and Place of Class Meetings: MWF from 1:00pm to 1:50pm in UH #11

**Course Description:** *Sociology is the systematic and scientific study of human behavior, social groups, and society.* The goal of this course is to examine the impact that social structures, social forces, and institutions have upon individuals and groups. By the end of this course, students should not only be able to identify some of the fundamental sociological concepts and theories—as well as the person(s) who developed them—but also apply this mode of thinking to current events and social problems. Some of the topics to be addressed in this course include an overview of the sociology of culture, socialization, race/ethnicity, stratification, gender, crime, religion, politics, and the family.

**Required Text:** William E. Thompson and Joseph V. Hickey. 2012. *Society In Focus: An Introduction to Sociology, Census Update* (7th Edition). Boston, MA: Pearson.

**Description of Exams:** This course will consist of four exams. Three will be in-class scantron multiple choice exams, and one will be administered and graded online via BlackBoard. Students will take the online exam at home, and use their class notes as well as textbook to complete it. The online exam is multiple choice but comprehensive (e.g., it covers materials discussed throughout the entire semester). Students are required to read newspaper articles, watch short films, and examine graphs in order to complete the online exam. It will be timed and students must work alone. It is NOT a group-based assessment.

No work for extra credit is necessary, and none will be accepted in lieu of missed requirements or to raise grades. I randomly give out bonus points on particular days during the semester (mainly as a reward for attendance). Students are expected to have read the course materials **before** coming to class. Also, out of respect for our scholarly goals, I ask that you place your electronic devices (e.g., cell phone) on silent or vibrate.

**Grading:** Each exam is worth 100 points. Your final grade will be calculated by simply dividing your point total by 400. Students are expected to keep track of their performance via Blackboard throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. The final grading scale is as follows:

A= 90 to 100%

B= 80 to 89%

C= 70 to 79%

D= 60 to 69%

F= 0 to 59%

**Student Learning Outcomes:** This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington core curriculum requirement in Social and Behavioral Sciences. It addresses the following four Core Objectives mandated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

* *Critical Thinking Skills*—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
* *Communication Skills*—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
* *Social Responsibility*—to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
* *Empirical and Quantitative Skills*—to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least 3 additional hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Attendance Policy:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I will not take attendance. However, be here on the exam days because I **do not** give make-ups (unless you have an incredibly valid reason that can be substantiated with evidence).

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

In this course, scholastic dishonesty automatically results in an **F** for the assignment in question, and possibly even an **F** in the course overall. (I highly recommend that you take this policy very seriously; I have no sympathy for students who attempt to cheat on tests or plagiarize papers.)

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>). The final drop date for the **Fall 2014** semester is **October 29th for undergraduates.**

**Americans With Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and the letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide me with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by staff in the Office of Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Student with Disabilities at (817)-272-3364.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law “Title IX” such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication Policy:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Recording Lectures:** Please see me if you feel that you need to record class lectures. Also, taking notes for distribution outside the classroom (e.g., for companies that sell lecture notes to students) is strictly prohibited and will be met with very stiff penalties.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit/emergency exit, which varies depending on where you choose to sit within the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Important Dates for the Fall 2014 Term**

Friday August 22nd Class Begins

 Monday September 1st NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Friday September 19th EXAM #1

 Friday October 24th EXAM #2

 Wednesday October 29th Last Day to Drop Classes

 Friday November 28th NO CLASS

(Thanksgiving Break)

 Wednesday December 3rd Last Day of the Semester

 Friday November 21st EXAM #3

 Monday December 8th EXAM #4

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Section 1:**

Week 1 (Aug 22nd): F= Welcome: Aims & Expectations

Week 2 (Aug 25th): M= Ch 1: Discovering Sociology

 W= (continued)

 F = (continued)

Week 3 (Sep 1st): M= NO CLASS (Labor Day)

W= Ch 3: Culture and Society

F= (continued)

Week 4 (Sep 8th): M= Ch 4: Socialization

 W= (continued)

F= Ch 5: Social Interaction in Everyday Life

Week 5 (Sep 15th): M= (continued)

 W= Ch 6: Social Groups and Organizations

F= **EXAM #1**

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**Section 2:**

Week 6 (Sep 22nd): M= Ch 7: Deviance & Conformity

W= (continued)

F= (continued)

Week 7 (Sep 29th): M= TBA

 W= TBA

F= Ch 8: Social Stratification & the U.S. Class System

Week 8 (Oct 6th): M= (continued)

 W= Ch 10: Race & Ethnicity

 F= (continued)

Week 9 (Oct 13th): M= TBA

W= Ch 11: Sex & Gender

F= (continued)

Week 10 (Oct 20th): M= TBA

W=TBA

 F= **EXAM #2**

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**Section 3:**

Week 11 (Oct 27th): M= Ch 13: Families

 W= (continued)

 F= Ch 14: Education

Week 12 (Nov 3rd): M= (continued)

 W= Ch 15: Religion

 F= (continued)

Week 13 (Nov 10th): M= Ch 16: Politics & War

W= (continued)

F= (continued)

Week 14 (Nov 17th): M= Ch 17: The Economy & Work

W= (continued)

F= **EXAM #3 (must be completed online by 6pm)**

Week 15 (Nov 24th): M= TBA

W= TBA

F= NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 16 (Dec 1st): M= TBA

W= TBA

**EXAM #4: Monday, December 8th from 11am-1:30pm**