**FALL 2018: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS at ARLINGTON**

SOCI 1311, Section 001: Introduction to Sociology

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Time and Place of Class Meetings: MWF from 10am to 10:50am in Science & Engineering Innovation & Research (SEIR) #198

Graduate TA: Jennifer Wellman ([jennifer.wellman@mavs.uta.edu](mailto:jennifer.wellman@mavs.uta.edu))

**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 class, students should not only be able to identify 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 and ethnicity, stratification, gender, crime, religion, politics, and the family.

**Core Curriculum Course**

This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington’s Core Curriculum requirement in ***Social and Behavioral Sciences***. Courses in this category focus on the application of scientific methods in the understanding of what makes us human. They involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

**General Learning Objectives:**

As a core course in Social and Behavioral Sciences, this course addresses the following four objectives:

* 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.
* Empirical and Quantitative Skills: To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
* Social Responsibility: To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities.

**Learning Outcomes in Relation to Learning Objectives:**

***Objective: Critical Thinking Skills***

*Outcomes:*

1. Students will be able to apply their “sociological imagination” to think critically about the social world.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical perspectives employed in sociology, such as symbolic interactionism, structural functionalism, and conflict theory, as well as middle-range theories in specific substantive areas.
3. Students will be able to explain processes of socialization and how socialization works to promote conformity and suppress deviance.
4. Students will be able to list and explain the major social institutions that function in society, such as the family, the economy, politics, and the media.

*Learning Venue:*

* Lectures
* Class discussions
* Readings

*Assessment Method:*

* Exams
* Signature assignment 1 (see Appendix A)

***Objective: Communication Skills***

*Outcomes:*

1. Students will be able to develop effective communication, written and oral, about the field of sociology.

*Learning Venue:*

* Class discussions
* Readings

*Assessment Method:*

* Signature assignment 1 (see Appendix A, assesses written communication only)

***Objective: Empirical and Quantitative Skills***

*Outcomes:*

1. Students will be able to describe the role of evidence in the social sciences and the application of systematic empirical inquiry.
2. Students will be able to identify various research designs and their appropriate application to the study of social life.
3. Students will be able to perform a bivariate analysis and describe the empirical findings related to the analysis.

*Learning Venue:*

* Lectures
* Class discussions
* Readings

*Assessment Method:*

* Exams
* Signature assignment 2 (see Appendix A)

***Objective: Social Responsibility***

*Outcomes:*

1. Students will be able to discuss how social stratification and inequality affect individual life chances.
2. Students will be able to explain the major social groups that function in society, such as gender, racial and ethnic groups, and social classes.
3. Students will be able to identify what issues of fairness are raised by social stratification and inequality.

*Learning Venue:*

* Lectures
* Class discussions
* Readings

*Assessment Method:*

* Exams
* Signature assignment 3 (see Appendix A)

**Required Text:** William E. Thompson, Joseph V. Hickey, and Mica L. Thompson. 2017. *Society in Focus: An Introduction to Sociology*  (8th Edition). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Type or paste the link below into your browser to have access to online notes, quizzes, and other learning tools:

<http://textbooks.rowman.com/ISBN/9781442255975>

**Description of Requirements:** This course will consist of three scantron multiple choice exams. Each exam is comprised of 50 questions (worth two points each) that are administered in a multiple choice or true/false format.

Students are also required to complete three core curriculum Signature Assignments, which involve writing two essays and one research brief. See Appendix A for detailed descriptions and grading rubrics. These mandatory assessments satisfy the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s “General Learning Objectives” for core courses in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. All Signature Assignments MUST be completed for bonus points to in order to pass this course. At least one more opportunity for bonus points will become available over the course of the semester.

**Grading:** Each of the three exams is worth 100 points, while bonus point opportunities will be worth four points each. Your final grade will be calculated by simply dividing your point total by 300. Students can calculate their final grades in two simple steps: (1) tally your point total (i.e., Exam1+Exam2+Exam3+B1+B2+B3+B4=Total Points), and (2) divide your total points by 300.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance via Blackboard throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (such as myself and the TA) 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%

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Students are expected to have read the course materials **before** coming to class. 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, such as reading required materials, completing Signature Assignments, and preparing for exams.

**Attendance Policy:** At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator of student success. 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). While UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the US Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to make when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of “F,” faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

**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 in their courses by 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 2018** semester is **November 2nd for undergraduates.**

**Disability Accommodations:** UTArlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* 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 disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364](http://www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364).

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** UT Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/eos).

**Title IX Policy**: UT Arlington is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment, and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For more information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817)-272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu)

**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](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

Some important campus phone numbers include:

* Counseling Services: 817-272-3671
* Relationship Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention: 817-272-9250
* UTA Police Department: 817-272-3003 (Emergencies) and 817-272-3381 (Non-Emergencies)

**Electronic Communication:** 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:** Some classrooms are equipped with technology to record our course lectures. Under such circumstances, it is my discretion (a) whether to make such videos available to students, and (b) when to make them available. **In short, I reserve the right to not release them at all.** Otherwise, 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. Finally, out of respect for our scholarly goals, I ask that you place your electronic devices (e.g., cell phone) on silent or vibrate.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online 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 via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** For semester-long courses, 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.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**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, 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 2018 Semester**

Wednesday August 22nd Class Begins

Monday September 3rd NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Monday September 17th EXAM#1

Friday September 21st SIGNATURE

ASSIGNMENT#1 DUE

Friday October 26th EXAM#2

Friday November 2nd Last Day to Drop Classes

Friday November 16th SIGNATURE

ASSIGNMENT#2 DUE

Wednesday to November 21st-23rd NO CLASS

Friday (Thanksgiving Break)

Friday November 30th SIGNATURE

ASSIGNMENT#3 DUE

Tuesday December 4th Last Day of Classes

Wednesday December 12th EXAM #3

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Section 1:**

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

F= Discovering Sociology (Ch 1)

Week 2 (Aug 27th): M= (continued)

W= (continued)

F = Society and Culture (Ch 3)

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

W= (continued)

F= Socialization (Ch 4)

Week 4 (Sep 10th): M= (continued)

W= Social Interaction in Everyday Life (Ch 5)

F= Social Groups, Organizations, and Bureaucracies (Ch 6)

Week 5 (Sep 17th): M= **EXAM #1**

W= TBA

F= TBA **(Signature Assignment#1 Due)**

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**Section 2:**

Week 6 (Sep 24th): M= Deviance & Conformity (Ch 7)

W= (continued)

F= (continued)

Week 7 (Oct 1st): M= TBA

W= TBA

F= TBA

Week 8 (Oct 8th): M= Social Stratification & the U.S. Class System (Ch 8)

W= (continued)

F= Race & Ethnicity (Ch 10)

Week 9 (Oct 15th): M= (continued)

W= Sex & Gender (Ch 11)

F= (continued)

Week 10 (Oct 22nd): M= TBA

W=TBA

F= **EXAM #2**

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**Section 3:**

Week 11 (Oct 29th): M= Families (Ch 13)

W= (continued)

F= Education (Ch 14)

Week 12 (Nov 5th): M= (continued)

W= Religion (Ch 15)

F= (continued)

Week 13 (Nov 12th): M= Government, Politics, and War (Ch 16)

W= (continued)

F= (continued) **(Signature Assignment#2 Due)**

Week 14 (Nov 19th): M= The Economy & Work (Ch 17)

W= NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

F= NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15 (Nov 26th): M= TBA

W= TBA

F= TBA **(Signature Assignment#3 Due)**

Week 16 (Dec 3rd): M= TBA

**EXAM #3: Wednesday, December 12th from 8am-10:30am**

**\*I do NOT keep office hours during Final Exam Week!**

**APPENDIX A: Introduction to Sociology**

**SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING RUBRICS**

**Signature Assignment 1 – Empirical and Quantitative Skills Assignment**

Students will prepare a brief research report related to a social issue of their choosing using data from the General Social Survey and the GSS’s Data Explorer tool (<http://gss.norc.org/>). They will upload this essay into Blackboard. The report should be approximately two to three pages in length.

In this report, students are required to do each of the following:

* Students will clearly identify the social issue addressed in their report (concept from rubric: identification).
* Students will clearly identify two variables from the GSS that they will include in their analysis. One of these variables must be related to their selected social issue. Students will explain how this variable is related to their selected social issue. Students will also propose a hypothesis about the relationship between the two variables (concept from rubric: assimilation).
* Students will use the GSS Data Explorer to perform a bivariate analysis (concept from rubric: analysis).
* Students will present a table or graph from their analysis using the GSS Data Explorer and briefly describe the relationship, if any, between the two variables (concept from rubric: presentation).
* Students will draw a conclusion about the relationship between the two variables and provide a short summary of their findings (concept from rubric: application).

**Empirical and Quantitative Skills Rubric for Signature Assignment 2**

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| **Point Value** | **Detailed Description of Point Assessment** | **Simple Explanation** |
| 5 | A report scoring a 5 demonstrates the following:   * **Identification**: The purpose, components, and variables of the investigation/project are clearly identified. * **Assimilation**: The information that is required for an analysis of all investigative components is clearly evident. If applicable, values are correctly translated into variables and all necessary formulas are present. * **Analysis**: All investigative or quantitative components are methodically scrutinized. The steps followed are logical and relevant to the desired result. The proper tools/ technology were used and well integrated into the final product. Any notation is consistent and well defined. * **Presentation**: A concise summary of the analysis is presented. The presented information is correct, of high quality, and the terminology/figures are accurate and easy to understand. All visual representations of evidence are well-scaled and well represent the analysis findings. * **Application**: The coherent integration of all steps of the investigation lead to an accurate, complete, relevant conclusion that is relative to the initial investigative statement. | Excellent |
| 4 | A report scoring a 4 demonstrates the following:   * **Identification:** The purpose, components, and variables of the investigation/project are clearly identified. * **Assimilation:** The information that is required for an analysis of all investigative components is evident. If applicable, most values are correctly translated into variables and all necessary formulas are present. * **Analysis:** All investigative or quantitative components are scrutinized. The steps followed are logical and relevant to the desired result. The proper tools/ technology were used and mostly integrated into the final product. Any notation is consistent and well defined. * **Presentation:** A good summary of the analysis is presented. The presented information is correct, of good quality, and the terminology/figures are accurate and easy to understand. Most visual representations of evidence are well-scaled and/or well represent the analysis findings. * **Application:** The coherent integration of all steps of the investigation lead to an accurate, mostly complete, relevant conclusion that is relative to the initial investigative statement. | Good |
| 3 | A report scoring a 3 demonstrates the following:   * **Identification:** The purpose, components, and variables of the investigation/project are mostly identified. * **Assimilation:** The information that is required for an analysis of all investigative components is mostly evident. If applicable, some values are correctly translated into variables and most necessary formulas are present. * **Analysis:** All investigative or quantitative components are somewhat scrutinized. The steps followed are mostly logical and relevant to the desired result. The proper tools/ technology were mostly used and somewhat integrated into the final product. Any notation is mostly consistent and defined. * **Presentation:** A summary of the analysis is presented. The presented information is mostly correct, of good quality, and the terminology/figures are mostly accurate and easy to understand. Most visual representations of evidence are acceptably scaled and represent the analysis findings. * **Application: T**he coherent integration of most steps of the investigation lead to an accurate, mostly complete, acceptable conclusion that is relative to the initial investigative statement. | Competent |
| 2 | A report scoring a 2 demonstrates the following:   * **Identification:** The purpose, components, and variables of the investigation/project are somewhat identified. * **Assimilation:** The information that is required for an analysis of all investigative components is somewhat evident. If applicable, values are incorrectly translated into variables and some necessary formulas are present. * **Analysis:** Some investigative or quantitative components are scrutinized. Some steps followed are somewhat logical and relevant to the desired result. The proper tools/ technology were somewhat used and not integrated into the final product. Any notation is somewhat consistent but not defined. * **Presentation:** A partial summary of the analysis is presented. The presented information is somewhat correct, of adequate quality, and the terminology/figures are somewhat accurate and relatively easy to understand. Some visual representations of evidence are acceptably scaled and represent the analysis findings. * **Application:** The integration of most steps of the investigation lead to a somewhat accurate, partially complete conclusion that is relative to the initial investigative statement. | Marginal |
| 1 | A report scoring a 1 demonstrates the following:   * **Identification:** The purpose, components, and variables of the investigation/project are not identified. * **Assimilation:** The information that is required for an analysis of all investigative components is not evident. If applicable, values are incorrectly translated into variables and no necessary formulas are present. * **Analysis:** Most investigative or quantitative components are not scrutinized. The steps followed are illogical and/or irrelevant to the desired result. The proper tools/ technology were not used and/or integrated into the final product. Any notation is not consistent and not defined. * **Presentation:** A summary of the analysis is either inadequately presented or not presented at all. The presented information is mostly incorrect, and/or of poor quality, and/or the terminology/figures are inaccurate and/or hard to understand. Few or no visual representations of evidence are acceptably scaled/ represent the analysis findings. * **Application:** The integration does not include all steps of the investigation and does not lead to an accurate, nor complete conclusion that relates to the initial investigative argument. | Poor |

This rubric is from “General Education Competency Information including Rubrics 2012-2013” (Amarillo College).

**Signature Assignment 2 – Critical Thinking and Communication Essay**

Students will write an essay that is approximately three pages in length. They will upload this essay into Blackboard. In this essay, students will use two middle-range theories to discuss and explain a social issue of their choice.

In their essay, students must do each of the following (related to critical thinking):

* Identify a social issue of interest from a recent newspaper article and briefly describe the issue (concept from rubric: inquiry)
* Compare and contrast two middle-range theories that relate to the selected social issue (concept from rubric: analysis)
* Critically evaluate the theories and explain which appears more plausible and why (concept from rubric: synthesis)
* Propose a coherent conclusion about the theories (concept from rubric: product).

Students must also do each of the following (related to communication):

* The essay must be grammatically correct with appropriate word choice, tone, and sentence structure.
* The student should use appropriate sources and documentation.
* The essay should be effectively organized with a logical order overall as well as being well-ordered within each section and having good transitions between sections.
* The essay should begin with an introduction that identifies the social issue and provides a brief outline for the essay.
* The body of the essay should focus on the application and critical examination of the theories to the social issue.
* The essay should end with a conclusion statement.

**Critical Thinking Rubric for Signature Assignment 1**

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| **Point Value** | **Detailed Description of Point Assessment** | **Simple Explanation** |
| 5 | An essay scoring a 5 consistently demonstrates the following:   * Inquiry: An exceptional examination of a matter through the interpretation of evidence, instructions, problems, tasks, etc. * Analysis: Identifies and presents exceptional explanations of complex analyses OR identifies and promotes novel or alternative problem-solving methods. * Synthesis: Identifies, organizes, and evaluates exceptional arguments OR presents well connected and holistically transformed ideas into original concepts. * Product: Follows the evidence to present unambiguous conclusions, solutions, and/or products OR transforms the evidence/takes an innovative approach to a task to present innovative and novel conclusions, solutions, and/or products. | Excellent |
| 4 | An essay scoring a 4 demonstrates the following:   * Inquiry: A thorough examination of a matter through the interpretation of evidence, instructions, problems, tasks, etc. * Analysis: Identifies and presents thorough explanations of complex analyses OR identifies novel or alternative problem-solving methods. * Synthesis: Identifies, organizes, and evaluates thorough arguments OR presents obviously connected ideas. * Product: Follows the evidence to present unambiguous conclusions, solutions, and/or products OR transforms the evidence/takes an innovative approach to a task to present innovative and novel conclusions, solutions, and/or products. | Good |
| 3 | An essay scoring a 3 demonstrates the following:   * Inquiry: An accurate examination of a matter through the interpretation of evidence, instructions, problems, tasks, etc. * Analysis: Identifies and presents accurate explanations of complex analyses OR identifies appropriate problem-solving methods. * Synthesis: Identifies, organizes, and evaluates accurate arguments OR presents connected ideas. * Product: Follows the evidence to present mostly unambiguous conclusions, solutions, and/or products OR effectively uses the evidence/effectively approaches a task to present conclusions, solutions, and/or products. | Competent |
| 2 | An essay scoring a 2 demonstrates the following:   * Inquiry: An incomplete examination of a matter through the interpretation of evidence, instructions, problems, tasks, etc. * Analysis: Identifies and presents incomplete explanations of complex analyses OR identifies inadequate problem-solving methods. * Synthesis: Identifies, organizes, and evaluates incomplete arguments OR presents weakly connected ideas. * Product: Somewhat follows the evidence to present unambiguous conclusions, solutions, and/or products OR somewhat uses the evidence/takes a somewhat effective approach to a task to present conclusions, solutions, and/or products. | Marginal |
| 1 | An essay scoring a 1 demonstrates the following:   * Inquiry: No examination of a matter through the interpretation of evidence, instructions, problems, tasks, etc. * Analysis: Does not identify or present explanations of complex analyses OR does not identify appropriate problem-solving methods. | Poor |

This rubric is from “General Education Competency Information including Rubrics 2012-2013” (Amarillo College).

**Communication Rubric for Signature Assignment 1**

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| **Point Value** | **Detailed Description of Point Assessment** | **Simple Explanation** |
| 5 | An essay scoring a 5 demonstrates the following:   * Focus: Includes all elements that build upon the thesis * Organization: Has an effectively creative pattern of development * Assignment’s Requirements: Enhances the assignment * Style: Has a flair for style with sustained grammatical accuracy | Excellent |
| 4 | An essay scoring a 4 demonstrates the following:   * Focus: Includes all elements that effectively support the thesis * Organization: Has a clear and consistent pattern of development * Assignment’s Requirements: Responds clearly to the assignment * Style: Has an effective style for the rhetorical situation with few interfering sentence-level errors | Good |
| 3 | An essay scoring a 3 demonstrates the following:   * Focus: Has a clear thesis but one or two digressive or unsupportive elements * Organization: Has a few minor problems (missing transition, short introduction and/or conclusion, etc.) * Assignment’s Requirements: Meets the assignment’s requirements * Style: Has an inconsistent style and/or sentence-level errors, but meaning is not compromised | Competent |
| 2 | An essay scoring a 2 demonstrates the following:   * Focus: Involves a missing thesis and/or insufficient support * Organization: Involves missing transitions, introduction, and/or conclusion * Assignment’s Requirements: Ignores several requirements * Style: Has an obstructive style and/or contains sentence-level errors that begin to hoard the reader’s attention | Marginal |
| 1 | An essay scoring a 1 demonstrates the following:   * Focus: Involves a missing thesis, no support, and/or plagiarized evidence * Organization: Rambles from one thing to another with no attempt at a consistent development * Assignment’s Requirements: Does not meet the majority of requirements * Style: Has an offensive style and/or includes sentence-level errors that are glaring throughout the paper and meaning is lost | Poor |

This rubric is from “General Education Competency Information including Rubrics 2012-2013” (Amarillo College).

**Signature Assignment 3 – Social Responsibility Essay**

Students will write an essay that is approximately three pages in length. They will upload this essay into Blackboard. In this essay, students will discuss social stratification and inequality as they relate to a topic of interest, such as the family, deviance, crime, race/ethnicity or gender.

In their essay, students must address a set of questions related to citizenship, social justice, and ecology (related to social responsibility). These include:

* What role to people play – through their actions and inactions – in generating and maintaining systems of stratification and inequality in society (concept from rubric: citizenship)?
* What issues of fairness are raised by stratification and inequality with respect to the selected topic (concept from rubric: social justice)?
* How might it be possible to overcome inequality in the selected topic (concept from rubric: ecology)?

**Social Responsibility Rubric for Signature Assignment 3**

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| **Point Value** | **Detailed Description of Point Assessment** | **Simple Explanation** |
| 5 | An essay scoring a 5 consistently demonstrates one or more of the following:   * **Citizenship**: Demonstrates orally, in writing, and/or through projects and an understanding of the citizen’s proactive role in society, such as participating in the democratic process and contributing to one’s community AND/OR demonstrates orally, in writing, and/or through activities a clear inclination to participate in the democratic process and contribute to the community. * **Social Justice**: Demonstrates orally, in writing and/or projects the ability to evaluate the issues of fairness, prejudice, discrimination, and ethical behaviors on the basis of critical thinking and the use of data and scientific information AND/OR demonstrates through projects and interactions in class and in the field the treatment of others in a fair, non-discriminatory manner while demonstrating respect and value for cultural diversity and differences. * **Ecology**: Demonstrates orally and/or in writing clear understanding of the larger ecological issues related to the interaction or people, environment, science and technology. Understands how actions of individuals, businesses, governments, etc, impact that balance AND/OR participates in projects or activities that demonstrate appreciation and caring for the environment. | Excellent |
| 4 | An essay scoring a 4 demonstrates one or more of the following:   * **Citizenship**: Demonstrates some awareness of the citizen’s role in society. However, is struggling with how important that role might be and the importance of one person within the system. Is open to further learning and improvement AND/OR demonstrates some inclination to participate in the democratic process. Contributes to the community and is open to further learning and improvement. * **Social Justice**: Demonstrates some ability to access and evaluate issues and evaluate issues of fairness, prejudice, discrimination and ethical behavior based upon critical thinking and use of data and scientific information AND/OR mostly treats others in a fair, non-discriminatory manner. Mostly demonstrates respect and values cultural diversity and differences. However, is still uncertain about many circumstances and is developing further about these issues. * **Ecology**: Demonstrates some understanding of ecological issues related to the interaction of people, environment, science and technology. Struggles to understand how individuals and institutional actions impact ecological balance. Is interested and open to learn more AND/OR demonstrates some appreciation and caring for the environment through projects or activities. | Good |
| 3 | An essay scoring a 3 demonstrates one or more of the following:   * **Citizenship**: Demonstrates elementary level of awareness of the citizen’s role in society. Gives little consideration to the importance or impact of the individual in society AND/OR demonstrates some reluctance to participate in the democratic process but displays some openness to further learning and improvement. * **Social Justice**: Demonstrates elementary abilities in assessing issues of fairness, prejudice, discrimination and ethical behaviors based upon critical thinking and the use of data and scientific information AND/OR Shows signs of being unaware, disrespectful, and / or biased toward people of different backgrounds and life styles. However, is in elementary stage of awareness of this and is willing to learn more about these issues. * **Ecology**: Demonstrates limited understanding of ecological issues related to the interaction of people, environment, science and technology. However, is interested in learning more about such interactions AND/OR demonstrates limited appreciation and caring for the environment. | Competent |
| 2 | An essay scoring a 2 demonstrates one or more of the following:   * **Citizenship**: Demonstrates very poor understanding and / or clear misunderstanding of the citizen’s role in society AND/OR ignores any responsibility to participate in the democratic process. Reluctant to learn and improve in this area. * **Social Justice**: Clearly cannot assess and evaluate issues of fairness, prejudice, discrimination, and ethical behaviors based upon critical thinking and the use of data and scientific information AND/OR does not respect nor value cultural diversity and differences. Shows signs of treating others in a discriminatory and prejudicial manner. Is not aware of these behaviors, or is not interested in learning more about these issues. * **Ecology**: Demonstrates a very narrow view of the world based upon egocentrism. Extremely limited understanding of the interaction of people, environment, science and technology and has little interest to learn more AND/OR absence of any demonstration of appreciation or caring for the environment. | Marginal |
| 1 | An essay scoring a 1 demonstrates one or more of the following:   * **Citizenship**: Refuses to understand or rejects citizen’s role in society AND/OR exhibits blatant rejection of the democratic process. Not open to further learning and improvement in this area. * **Social Justice**: Refuses to address issues of fairness, prejudice, discrimination and ethical and unethical behaviors AND/OR treats people with disrespect AND/OR is unfair and discriminatory to others who are different from self. Closed to new learning concerning the topic. * **Ecology**: Refuses to address ecological issues related to the interaction of people, environment, science | Poor |

This rubric is from “General Education Competency Information including Rubrics 2012-2013” (Amarillo College).