



Course Syllabus: Introductory Sociology

Prothro-Yeager College (PY 200)
SOCL 1133 Section 105
Tuesday/Thursday 8:00am-9:20am
Fall 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Amy Clark
Office: ODO 131
Office hours: Monday 9:55am-12pm; Tuesday 9:25am-10:50am; Thursday 9:25am-10:50am
Office phone: (940) 397-4316
E-mail: amy.clark@msutexas.edu

Course Description

A general survey course introducing students to the field of sociology. Emphasis is on people as products of groups, social interaction, and social forces. Topics covered include marriage and family, deviance, social class, minority relations, and collective behavior with an effort toward helping students understand the social world and their roles in it.

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the "systematic study of human societies (Newman 2022)."
According to the American Sociological Association (n.d.), "sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organizations, and societies and how people interact within these contexts (para 1)."

Course Objectives

1. Define and explain sociological concepts and theories
2. Articulate the social, historical, political, and economic factors that influence events from a sociological perspective
3. Describe the importance of sociological research
4. Investigate social structures and influences and how people interact in small groups, organizations, and societies
5. Utilize your sociological imagination to explore social forces, which have shaped your own social experiences, identity, and group memberships

Textbook & Instructional Materials

REQUIRED TEXT: Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life (15 Edition) by David M. Newman (2025). ISBN: 9781071934777

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Scantrons: 882-E Compatible Testing Forms. Please make sure your scantron is wrinkle free and in good condition. Do not crumple or bend the form.
- A regular no. 2 pencil and a pencil sharpener or extra sharpened pencils
- A composition book or a spiral notebook (if you plan to complete the extra credit)
- Microsoft Office 365 (free subscription through MSU) or other word processing software, which can be converted to a PDF.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library. If students need help completing their projects or proofreading their reflection paper, then they may utilize TASP support services in the Moffett Library.

Grading

Grades are not curved or rounded. No exceptions.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Quizzes (10 at 20 pts each)	200	20
Tests (4@150 pts each)	600	60
Participation activities (in-class)	50	5
Projects (3)	50	5
Reflection Paper	100	10
Total Points	1000	100

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

Quizzes

Quizzes: 10 worth 20 points each: 200 points total

There are 10 quizzes, and each quiz is 10 questions. The questions may include fill in the blank, multiple choice, and true false questions. Quizzes will cover material from lecture and the required textbook readings. Students will have 20 minutes to finish each quiz, and quizzes will **start at the beginning of class on their respective due dates**. The instructor will take up the quizzes promptly once time is up, and students who walk in late will NOT be given any extra time to complete the assessment. Students are required to attend class *on time*. Quizzes cannot be completed "late." Students with an approved excuse will be allowed to make up missed quizzes at the end of the semester on the assigned make-up day.

Exams

Exams: 4 at 150 points each; worth 600 points total

Exams are completed in class on their respective due dates, and they are completed via scantron. Students are required to bring a scantron and no. 2 pencil to each exam. (Please make sure that you DO NOT FOLD your scantron. Please keep it straight and wrinkle free.) Each exam will be 50 questions, which includes true/false and multiple-choice questions. There are no short answer or fill in the blank questions on the test. There are no essay questions on the test. Students will have the entire class period to complete the questions. Students who arrive to class late on test day must finish the exam by the time they are taken up by the instructor and will not be provided extra time to finish the

exam. (Please also view the policy on Missed Exams.) Test grades will not be curved, and no test grades will be dropped. The tests are not open book, and students cannot use notes. Students with DSS accommodations should arrange to take exams in the DSS office.

Projects

Projects: 3; worth 50 points total

There will also be three projects over the course of the semester. Project 1 (Culture) is worth 20 points. Project 2 is worth 20 points (World Bank). Project 3 (Current Event) is worth 10 points. Each assignment will be graded with a detailed rubric, and students will have access to the assignment directions ahead of time in the D2L course shell. Projects will be submitted through an assignment link in the D2L course shell on their respective due dates. Students are required to cite sources in APA 7th edition format. Students should follow all assignment directions, and students should check them for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Projects are usually between one to three pages in length and double spaced. Projects will be checked for possible plagiarism and unauthorized use of generative AI via Turnitin. Projects will be accepted up to 48 hours late per the late penalties listed in this document.

Reflection Paper: 100 points

Students are required to submit a 6-page, double spaced reflection paper at the end of the semester. The paper will be turned in through D2L. Students will be given detailed instructions and a rubric to follow, which will be available in D2L. Part of the paper will require the students to reflect on key sociological concepts located in specific chapters of their Newman (2025) book. Part of the paper will be a reflection on how these key concepts apply to their own lives or the lives of those around them. Reflections will be checked for possible plagiarism and unauthorized AI usage via Turnitin. Though these are informal papers, students should check them for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Also, students are required to provide a reference list and in-text citations for their textbook and/or any other sources they use to complete their papers. Students should use APA 7th edition format. Reflection papers will be accepted up to 48 hours late per the late penalty in the syllabus.

Participation Activities

The instructor will assign various in-class participation activities over the course of the semester, which add up to 50 points. Students are expected to attend class, and these activities are taken up at the end of class. Students who miss class, for any reason, are not allowed to make up these points. Participation activities may be completed individually or in groups depending on the nature of the activity.

Extra Credit

There are extra credit opportunities in class worth a total of 10 points. Extra credit is due by the date and time listed in the course calendar.

Late Work

Projects and the reflection paper will be accepted late for a penalty UP TO 48 HOURS LATE in D2L with an unexcused absence according to the policy listed below. Therefore, students MUST PAY ATTENTION to the difference between the due date and the last date that an assessment is available. If students have any questions about this, then please ask me as soon as possible.

Unexcused projects and reflection papers may be submitted in D2L up to 48 hours late, but they will be penalized at the following rates:

< or equal to 24 hours late, 50 % reduction in the total point value of the assignment. The deduction will be manually calculated by the instructor and applied in D2L once the assignment has been graded. The number of points deducted will depend on the point value of the assignment.

> 24 hours late but < or equal to 48 hours late, will receive a 75 % reduction in the total point value of the assignment.

>48 hours late WILL NOT be accepted and will be marked as a ZERO in D2L.

Make Up Work/Tests

If students miss an exam or quiz due to a university approved excuse or an otherwise excused absence, they will be required to make up the exam or quiz AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER ON A DATE SPECIFIED BY THE INSTRUCTOR in the Syllabus.

Exams CANNOT BE MADE UP WITHOUT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. It is absolutely the responsibility of the student to make up exams in class on the specified date AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER, and exams must be made up ON THIS DATE. Otherwise, students will receive a zero even if their absence was otherwise excused.

No exams can be made up for reasons associated with unexcused absences, and no tests or quizzes can be taken late for a reduction in points. Unexcused quizzes or tests will be scored as a zero. No unexcused quiz grades can be replaced. Participation points from in-class activities cannot be made up.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course, and you are required to submit some of your written assignments in D2L. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general

course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact D2L Help.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Missing class for unexcused reasons will adversely impact your ability to do well on your tests and quizzes. You will also miss critical instructions for your assignments, which will impact your ability to correctly complete them. So, missing several classes will negatively impact your overall grade in the class- especially if they are unexcused. Also, students will miss the opportunity to complete participation activities, which total 50 points by the end of the semester. These points cannot be made up.

If something serious has happened, which prevents you from coming to class, then please reach out to me as soon as is reasonably possible.

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Dr. Clark **does not permit recordings of her classes** unless there is a specific DSS accommodation letter provided which explicitly states that lectures can be recorded. Such recordings permitted through DSS accommodation may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Attendance and Participation Points: Students are expected to attend the class, be respectful to the instructor as well as to each other. Students should not cause disruptions to the class. Disruptions to the class include using cell phones or laptops, talking to each other, and arriving late. The instructor does not drop students for lack of attendance. However, the instructor does assign a grade for the daily participation activities given in her class, and these points CANNOT be made up. Therefore, students who do not attend regularly WILL see a decrease in their grade for participation activities. I will not drop you for absences. However, your letter grade is very likely to drop if you do not regularly attend class. Attendance is recorded and reported to the Registrar.

Academic Dishonesty: Students are NOT allowed to use ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, CoPilot or any other unauthorized AI in this class. Similarly, students are NOT allowed to use any AI functions in Microsoft Word or Grammarly or any AI tools in any other form of word processing software. Thus, students are advised to use basic spelling and grammar check in Microsoft Word. Students should not use AI along with any word spinners.

Turnitin: Turnitin will be utilized to check for possible plagiarism on written assignments. Students suspected of cheating on exams, quizzes, or written assignments will be given a zero on the assessment and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Students should never submit another person's work; this is cheating and will result in a zero and referral to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Any unauthorized use of AI in the course, such as Chat GPT, Claude, or Gemini will result in a zero on any written assignments.

All written assignments submitted in D2L are checked for plagiarism and use of AI via Turnitin. Students should not use ANY AI features in Microsoft Office or Grammarly to submit their written assignments. Students are advised to use basic features of Microsoft Word and Grammarly only. These basic features should not have any components of AI. If students are unsure about whether or not their word processing software is using AI or will flag Turnitin for the use of AI, then they can contact D2LHelp or the Helpdesk on campus to double check.

Disruptions to the class environment

Students should not use their phone or talk to other classmates during class. This is excessively disruptive. Please refrain from using your phone or laptops during class, and keep them put away during lecture. In the event that you are experiencing a family or personal crisis, then please sit close to the door; you may go into the hall and check your messages or make a phone call if it is absolutely an emergency. Otherwise, please be mindful that unauthorized use of technology is considered excessively distracting.

Students should not be playing games, texting, using social media, or listening to lectures for other classes while attending my class. Students engaging in this behavior will be provided one verbal and one written warning before they are asked to leave class early.

Students talking during class will be provided one verbal and one written warning about their disruptive behavior. If they disrupt class a third time, then they will be asked to leave class early.

There may be times where using your phones and laptops are appropriate based on instructor direction.

Excused absences from Extenuating Circumstances:

Emergencies and other extenuating circumstances happen. The following count as emergencies and/or extenuating circumstances and should be evidenced by appropriate documentation:

- Written evidence of attending a mandatory university-sponsored activity (band, athletics, etc.)-documentation must come from college dean, Athletic Director, and/or Provost

- Official documentation of mandatory military service (i.e., deployment, etc.)
- Religious observance or Holy Day(s)
- Medical appointments related to pregnancy, pregnancy related complications, delivering early, or being restricted from activity for a certain amount of time due to pregnancy
- An acute or chronic illness, which prevents you from coming to campus or coming to class on time
- A written note from a medical clinic
- A written note from the MSU Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- A written note from a physician for a family member/loved one's illness
- You experience issues related to Title IX including but not limited to assault, stalking, or domestic violence
- Official documentation of required jury or court appearance
- Death of a family member/loved one/close relative
- Documentation of a motor vehicle accident, domestic disturbance, theft of your property, etc., which prevented you from coming to class
- Unexpected homelessness, food insecurity, job displacement, or a loss of otherwise reliable transportation-please let me know about this as soon as possible
- If you suddenly became an unexpected caregiver of someone critically ill
- If you are a law enforcement, corrections officer, or first responder and are faced with a verifiable/documented work emergency, which prevented you from coming to class (i.e. a transport, accident, fire, or major trauma etc.)

Though the aforementioned list is thorough, if you have absences related to other extreme/extenuating circumstances beyond your control that are not listed above, then please let me know as soon as possible. I want you to be successful in this class, and I will make EVERY EFFORT to help you do so. Please communicate with me as soon as something has gone wrong and before you begin missing several classes. MSU Texas has a team of dedicated people ready to help you stay in school, and my desire is to support your continued education.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

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 has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Quizzes, exams, and participation activities are completed in class on their respective due dates. Projects and the Reflection paper are submitted in D2L by 11:59pm CST on their respective due dates. Extra credit should be submitted in class on its respective due date.

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 1 8/24-8/30	Course Introductions Syllabus Participation activities	
Week 2 8/31-9/6	Chapter 1 in Newman (2025) Participation activities	Quiz (#1) -due 9/1 Quiz #2 -due 9-3
Week 3 9/7-9/13 *No classes 9/7	Chapter 2 in Newman (2025) Participation activities	Quiz (#3) -due 9/10
Week 4 9/14-9/20	Chapter 3 in Newman (2025) Videos: Sociology Preview; What is sociology; Sociology & the Scientific Method (Crash Course Sociology) Participation activities	Quiz (#4) -due 9/17
Week 5 9/21-9/27	Gun violence lecture notes Participation activities	Exam 1 -due 9/24
Week 6 9/28-10/4	Chapter 4 in Newman (2025) In class video-Project #1 (Adiche) Participation activities	Project #1 -due 10/1 Quiz #5 -due 10/1
Week 7 10/5-10/11	Chapter 5 in Newman (2025) Participation activities	Quiz #6 -due 10/8
Week 8 10/12-10/18	Chapter 6 in Newman (2025) Participation activities	Quiz #7 -due 10/15

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 9 10/19-10/25	Participation activities Videos: • How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime Nadine Burke Harris TED • The difference between healthy and unhealthy love Katie Hood (TED) • Relationship Advice from 50+ Years of Marriage (w/ The Gottmans) How to Be a Better Human TED • Why domestic violence victims don't leave Leslie Morgan Steiner TED	Project #2 -due 10/22 Quiz #8 -due 10/22
Week 10 10/26-11/1	Family violence lecture Participation activities	Exam #2 -due 10/29
Week 11 11/2-11-8	Chapter 8 in Newman Video: <i>The Mark of a Criminal Record</i> (Pager) Participation activities	Project #3 -due 11/5 Quiz #9 -due 11/5
Week 12 11/9-11/15	Social stratification lecture Videos: Tammy's Story; Tammy's Story Update (People Like Us) Participation activities	Exam #3 -due 11/12
Week 13 11/16-11/22	Participation activities Chapter 10 in Newman (2025)	Reflection paper -due 11/19 Quiz #10 -due 11/19
Week 14 11/23-11/29 *No classes Thanksgiving Break (11/25-29)	Participation activities	N/A

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 15 11/30-12/6	Make-Up day=12/1	Make up day 12/1 Exam #4-due 12/3
Week 16 12/7-12/13	No final exam	N/A