



Course Syllabus: Introductory Sociology

Prothro-Yeager College (PY 200)

SOCL 1143X 12

Online

Fall 2026

Contact Information

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Office: ODO 131

Office hours: Monday 9:55am-12pm; Tuesday 9:25am-10:50am; Thursday 9:25am-10:50am

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E-mail: amy.clark@msutexas.edu The best way to reach me is via email through D2L or at the email address below. If you need to schedule a Zoom appointment, then please give me as much advanced notice as possible, and we can set up a time. I answer emails from my D2L inbox and through the email address below Monday through Friday within 48 hours excluding weekends. However, electronic communication is time stamped, and I will honor the date and time that you contact me.

Course Description

Sociology is the scientific study of society. This means that as sociologists we utilize the scientific method to observe, learn and make inferences on various levels of analysis. Society includes macro level structures, meso level culture, and micro level individual/group interaction. Within this general overview, sociologists focus on different aspects of society to answer fundamental questions about the world that surrounds us. This course will help you familiarize yourself with basic of sociological research methods of inquiry.

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)."

Textbook & Instructional Materials

REQUIRED TEXT: The Process of Social Research (3rd Edition)

Author: Dixon

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Copyright Year: 2023

ISBN: 978-0-19-761373-3

OTHER REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY:

- Microsoft Office 365 (free subscription through MSU) or other word processing software, which can be converted to a PDF.
- The Respondus Lockdown Browser download to a compatible device and a webcam for the Monitor; webcams can be checked out from the Moffett Library

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given).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 10 pts each)	100	10
Tests (4@150 pts each)	600	60
Application Assignments (2@100)	200	20
Discussion Boards (4@25)	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 10 points each: 100 points total

There are 10 quizzes, and each quiz is 10 questions. Each quiz is worth 10 points and may include multiple choice and true false questions. Quizzes will cover the required textbook readings and/or required videos. Students will have 10 minutes to finish each quiz. Quizzes cannot be completed "late." The Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor will be used. Students will need a webcam to use with the Lockdown Browser for the monitor feature. Quiz grades will not be curved. Quizzes will be made available by 9am on the day that they are due, and they are due no later than 11:59pm CST on the due date. No quizzes are accepted late without an approved excuse.

Exams

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

Each exam will be 50 questions, which includes true/false and multiple-choice questions. Students will have 50 minutes to complete each attempt, and students will be allowed two attempts per exam. The grades for both test attempts will be averaged. The Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor will be used. Students will need a webcam to use with the Lockdown Browser for the monitor feature. Test grades will not be curved. Exams will be made available by 9am on the day that they are due, and they are due no later than 11:59pm CST on the due date. No late exams are accepted without an approved excuse. Exams are open book/open notes.

Application Assignments

There are 2 application assignments worth 100 points each. They are required to be two to three pages in length, double-spaced, and cited in APA 7th edition format. 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. Applications are due by 11:59pm CST in D2L on their respective due dates. Applications will be checked for possible plagiarism using Turnitin. Students should not use any generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist the with writing their papers including but not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or Copilot. Any use of an AI tool will automatically result in a zero on the assignment. Late application assignments will be accepted without an excused reason up to 48 hours after the due date.

Discussion Boards

Discussion Boards: 4 @25 points each; worth 100 points total

There are four discussion boards worth 25 points each, which require both an original post AND two posts to the responses of peers. Each original discussion post should address the prompt provided in at least 350 words. Each peer post should be at least 100 words. Peer responses should continue the original discussion by offering additional insight, raising valid points, asking relevant questions, or suggesting additional resources for review. Discussion board assignments will be graded via a detailed rubric provided in the D2L course shell, and they are due by 11:59pm CST on the date listed in the course calendar. Late discussion boards will be accepted without an excused reason up to 48 hours after the due date.

Extra Credit

There are extra credit opportunities in class worth a total of 10 points. Extra credit is due by 11:59pm CST on the date and time listed in the course calendar.

Late Work

Application assignments and discussion boards will be accepted 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 applications and discussions 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.

Instructor Class Policies

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.

Expectations about classroom etiquette and netiquette

- Students should be willing to listen to others and not engage in any form of hostile communication or excessively disruptive behavior (netiquette).
- Respect, empathy, kindness, and compassion for others will be a cornerstone in this course. Sociologists discuss things that are inherently controversial. Though this is an online class, some of our class "discussions" may be energized at times, and it may become apparent that not everyone agrees. Regardless, we are all part of a larger community at MSU Texas, and I expect that each of you will do your very best to respect one another. We are all here to learn and grow. Please know that if you feel triggered by any topic in this course, there are campus support services available.
- When interacting with me and each other online, please keep MSU Texas' core value of respect in mind at all times. Rude, abusive behavior will not be tolerated online. Disruptive behavior will be referred to Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Online communications should display principles of netiquette and be civil in tone.

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 assignments. 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:

All assignments in the course are due in D2L by 11:59pm CST on their respective due dates.

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 1 8/24-8/30	Course Introductions Syllabus	N/A
Week 2 8/31-9/6	Read Dixon Chapter 1 Read PPT Chapter 1	Quiz (#1) -due 9/4 Discussion Board #1 -due 9/4

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 3 9/7-9/13 *No classes 9/7	Read Dixon Chapter 2 Read PPT Chapter 2	Quiz (#2) -due 9/11 Discussion Board #2 due 9/11
Week 4 9/14-9/20	Read Dixon Chapter 3 Read PPT Chapter 3 Videos: Sociology Preview; What is sociology; Sociology & the Scientific Method (Crash Course Sociology)	Quiz (#3) -due 9/18 Discussion Board #3 due 9/18
Week 5 9/21-9/27	Exam #1 Review	Exam 1 -due 9/25
Week 6 9/28-10/4	Read "The Mark of a Criminal Record" article by Pager (PDF in D2L course shell) Watch Pager's video on "Race, Employment, and a Criminal Record" in the D2L course shell	Application #1 -due 10/2 Quiz #4 -due 10/2
Week 7 10/5-10/11	Read Dixon Chapter 4 Read PPT Chapter 4	Quiz #5 -due 10/9 Discussion Board #4 due 10/9
Week 8 10/12-10/18	Watch "The Dark side of Science: The Milgram Experiment-Short Documentary) in D2L and Watch "The Milgram Experiment: Obedience to Authority" in D2L Read Dixon Chapter 7 Read PPT Chapter 7	Quiz #6 -due 10/16 Application #2 -due 10/16
Week 9 10/19-10/25	Exam #2 Review	Exam #2 due 10/23
Week 10 10/26-11/1	Read Dixon Chapter 8 Read PPT Chapter 8	Quiz #7 due 10/30

Week or Module	Readings and activities	Assignment Due Dates
Week 11 11/2-11-8	Read Dixon Chapter 9 Read PPT Chapter 9	Quiz #8 -due 11/6
Week 12 11/9-11/15	Exam #3 Review	Exam #3 -due 11/13
Week 13 11/16-11/22	Read Dixon Chapter 10 Read PPT Chapter 10	Quiz #9 -due 11/20
Week 14 11/23-11/29 *No classes Thanksgiving Break (11/25-29)	Read Dixon Chapter 13 Read PPT Chapter 13	Quiz #10 -due 11/23
Week 15 11/30-12/6	Exam #4 Review	Exam #4 -due 12/4 Extra credit due 12/4
Week 16 12/7-12/13	N/A	N/A