



SYLLABUS
Social Problems
Sociology 1306, Section 902
Fall Semester, 2024

My Information

Name Dr. Jacob Hardy
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Phone TBD (Please Leave a Message)
Office Location CAB 347D
Office Hours/Discussion Times

Tues. 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

And by Appointment

(To be discussed further in class) You can book me for a virtual office hours appointment using my Calendly Link here:
<https://calendly.com/jacobhardy>

Course Information

Classroom **MADLA 236**
Discussion Days Tuesday
Discussion Time 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.
Prerequisites None
Course Credit Hours 3 Credit Hours

Required Course Materials

Seeing Social Problems: The Hidden Stories Behind Contemporary Issues, by Ira Silver, 1st edition, 2020, Sage Publications, ISBN: 978-1071802250

Assorted additional readings will also be posted to the course Blackboard page

Course Overview

Course Description, Goals, & Learning Outcomes: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the application of sociological principles and theoretical perspectives to major social problems in contemporary society such as inequality, crime and violence, substance abuse, environmental issues, deviance, globalization, or family problems, amongst many other issues.

This class is an introductory course but attracts a variety of students. As this is not a majors only class, I have tried to strike a balance between what is of general interest/use regardless of our academic interests and to those who are exploring the foundations of sociology as a discipline or career.

Upon completion of this course, students will have developed their “sociological imagination” and better understand themselves and their society in relation to the many potential, and existent problems we find in the world around us. The assignments in this class will also help all students develop their critical thinking and writing skills.

Course Requirements and Grading

This class is designed to be an immersive learning experience. In addition to lectures, students will be expected to keep up with weekly readings, complete several brief writing assignments, and participate in class discussion. Assignments will challenge students to apply the concepts covered in class to their own lives.

Please check your TAMUSA email account daily, because important information about this class will be emailed to you. Please check the course Blackboard page frequently as well. Course announcements, grades, articles, etc. will be posted there. Regular checks of the Blackboard page will be the best way to keep up with what is going on with the course, and any adjustments we may make to the tentative course calendar.

A breakdown of course requirements and how each will contribute to your grade is included below.

Scheduled Exams: There will be three exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 100 points (or 25%) of your overall grade and will be multiple choice. Together these exams make up 75% of your grade in this course. None of the exams will be comprehensive. Each exam will cover the material covered in class since any previous examination up to the point of the next examination. This includes course readings, class discussion, and any relevant media utilized in class or posted on Blackboard.

If for any reason an exam is missed due to a university excused absence a makeup exam will be administered provided that you notify me of your reason for absence and provide documentation within 7 days of the absence.

Assignments: There will be a total of three written assignments for this course. The assignments must be typed, no greater than 12 pt font, with 1-inch margins, and must be two double spaced pages.

All writing assignments will be assigned on Friday and will be due the following Friday. In this way, we can discuss the concepts presented in the weekly reading assignments during lecture and address any questions that might arise about the readings.

Some of the assignments will ask you to think theoretically, apply theory to real life situations, or to discuss policy implications. As such, a significant part of your grade will be based on how much work you put into the assignment and whether or not you read and understood the reading. Assignments will be graded on a percentage scale, with 100 indicating a perfect score.

All writing assignments will be turned in via Blackboard. For all of your writing assignments you should utilize 12pt. typeface, Times New Roman font. Late work will be accepted so long as university excused absence documentation, or communication with me regarding extenuating circumstances is submitted to me within 7 days of the assignment due date. If an assignment is turned in late and does not have a university excused absence or some form of authorization from me, but is within 24 hours of the due date then I will accept the late work with a 10% penalty to the grade. Any assignments turned in more than 24 hours after the due date without a university excused absence will not be accepted and will result in a zero for that assignment.

AI Statement - Writing has always incorporated tools as well as the voices and ideas of other people. GenAI can be a powerful tool in any writer's arsenal, but its use is not without risk. While GenAI's ability to convincingly string words together has a place in the writing process, it also risks introducing factual inaccuracies and, more importantly, risks making invisible the important connections between writing and thinking we are cultivating in this class. I will have detailed instructions for how to address the use of AI posted with your materials on Blackboard.

Attendance: The University views class attendance as the responsibility of individual students. Attendance is essential to complete the course successfully. University rules related to excused and unexcused absences are located online at <https://catalog.tamusa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/class-attendance/>

Notes on Course Format

This class is delivered in a hybrid format. This essentially means that we will have a live, in person lecture as scheduled and noted on the first page of this syllabus (and as listed in your online course registration portal.) This course will also have an asynchronous component. Basically, this means that I will, as necessary, record additional material, and post it for the class on the course Blackboard page. You will need to access those course materials and recordings and review them on your time during this course. I will work to focus our lecture times together to cover the core material, but please be sure to plan to keep up to date with the recorded material as well as it will be a core component of this course.

Calculation of Course Grades

		Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Tests & Tentative Dates	Test 1 9/17	100	25.0%
	Test 2 10/22	100	25.0%
	Test 3 12/03	100	25.0%
Assignments	Writing Assignments	80	20.0%
	Attendance	20	5.0%
	TOTAL	400	100%

Grading Scale

Number of Points Earned	Course Grade
360 or More (90-100%)	A
320 to 359 (80-89.99%)	B
280 to 319 (70-79.99%)	C
240 to 279 (60-69.99%)	D
239.9 or Less (<59.9%)	F

Access to Grades: Grades will be posted on the course Blackboard gradebook. Please note, it is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) for me to discuss grades with you via email. Any questions about grades should be addressed with me in person, preferably during office hours. Please *Verify your Blackboard grades often. If you notice any errors or omissions notify me as soon as possible.*

Extra Credit: There will be no extra credit in this course.

Borderline Grades: There will be no rounding of borderline grades in this course. All points are earned.

Incompletes: I may assign grades of “incomplete” (I), but only under rare circumstances, and only if you request it. If a significant crisis occurs in your life near the end of the semester (such as a serious illness or a death in the immediate family) and you provide me with detailed documentation and notification of its occurrence, then a grade of incomplete might be assigned. If you ever find yourself in a situation that is negatively affecting your performance in the course, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. I cannot help you if I do not know what the problem is. If you wait until the end of the semester to notify me of issues, my options to identify and implement strategies to help you succeed in this course are more limited.

Readings: The bulk of the readings for this course will be from the required book listed in this syllabus. Secondary readings will be made available in the content section of this course’s Blackboard page. Please check the course Blackboard page regularly as material posted there will be beneficial to your performance in this course.

Classroom Policies: I believe in a relaxed and open classroom environment. If you are late to class due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance I understand, but please try to enter as unobtrusively as possible so as not to disturb your fellow students. Otherwise I expect you to be on time to class. If you need to leave class early try to notify me beforehand. In regard to electronics, I encourage the use of a variety of note taking tools, so tablets and laptops are permitted, so long as they are used solely for note taking. Cell phone use, as well as chatting with fellow students once the class has begun is strongly discouraged.

Classroom Civility, Respect and Tolerance: Sociology delves into a variety of sensitive topics. I respect your individual viewpoints and ask that you respect the viewpoints of your classmates, even those that you do not agree with. Name-calling, yelling, or condescending remarks about any individual or group will not be tolerated. We should all strive to avoid ethnocentrism in this class. Ethnocentrism is the automatic assumption that one’s perspective is superior to others. This course is a seminar. This means students will read the assigned reading and then come together to discuss it. Class participation is important. Without discussing the content of this course, it would be very difficult for everyone to grasp the concepts. I encourage you to participate in class. It is vital that you ask questions if you are unsure of anything covered in the class. If you have a question, it is likely that someone else in the class has the same question and is afraid to ask. Classroom discussion is highly encouraged in this course, but the underlying policy for this course is that we will all treat one another with respect.

Instructor Error: I am human, and as such from time to time I make mistakes. If you find that there is a grade or attendance discrepancy, please notify me so that we may work to correct it as soon as possible. In addition, since a portion of this course involves writing assignments, please keep an extra copy of all your written work until final course grades have been submitted. The electronic age has minimized accidents somewhat, but nevertheless it is better to be safe than sorry.

Academic Integrity & Student Rights and Expectations

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The purpose of the following statement is to enumerate the essential provisions for the student freedom and responsibility to learn at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. All students are required to follow all policies and regulations as set forth by The Texas A&M University System. This includes the [A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct](#).

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no university rule or procedure that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the university, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and the administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, University Catalog and students must comply with them and the laws of the land.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire university community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.
6. We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

We are each a part of this university and this course, and as such I expect each and every one of us to do our utmost to uphold and respect that responsibility. Academic integrity is a crucial part of your growth and experience at this university. As such, all work in this course should be the product of the individual student. Unless explicitly stated in assignment instructions, no collaborative work is allowed.

Plagiarism: As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest edition of the *Texas A&M University - San Antonio, Handbook* as well as the AI statement above.

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for individuals with disabilities. Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations of their disability. If you have a disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is dss@tamusa.edu.

Academic Learning Center: All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. The Academic Learning Center is an appointment based center where appointments are made through the Navigate platform. Students access Navigate through Jagwire in the Student Services tab. The Center is active on campus outreaching to students to highlight services offered. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu or calling (210)-784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

Counseling Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you or someone you know is experiencing life stressors, emotional difficulties, or mental health concerns at Texas A&M University – San Antonio, please contact the Student Counseling Center (SCC) located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210-784-1331 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday – Friday. After-hours crisis support is available by calling 210-784-1331. Please contact UPD at 911 if harm to self or harm to others is imminent.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free, confidential (to the extent permitted by law), and are not part of a student's academic or university record. SCC provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff, and faculty who are registered in JagE Alert, will have the option to receive a text message, email, and/or phone call with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/upd/index.html>.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a

student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Jaguar Writing Center: The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the student services tab. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center. The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing writingcenter@tamusa.edu.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. In addition, you may notify the instructor if you are comfortable doing so.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, about special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person, Room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under A&M System policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

Respect for Diversity: We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the classroom, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism, and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the university. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and other healthcare providers) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about an incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C.