

# **SOCI 4392-001: Sociology Capstone Syllabus**

## **Instructor Information**

- Dr. Danny Malone Jr.
- Central Academic Building, Office 350B
- Email: dmalone@tamusa.edu
- Office Phone Number: (210)-784-2209
- Office Hours: Tuesdays from 12p-2p or by appointment

## **Course Information**

- Course Description
  - This course is the culminating experience of the sociology major. Students will synthesize previous learning to conduct a semester-long research project. This course will develop writing, peer review, and presentation skills so that students produce a final research paper which will be presented in a public showcase.
- Prerequisite SOCI SOCI 3320 and SOCI 3330
- MW 12:30-1:45pm
- Madla Building, Room 238

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Integrate past learning by making connections between known sociological knowledge and your research
- Improve reading, research, and writing (synthesis, citation, and revising) skills appropriate to the discipline of Sociology
- Develop presentation skills
- Develop conclusions supported by empirical evidence and theory and effectively communicate them orally and in writing
- Produce a research paper
- Develop collaboration skills through constructive criticisms, suggestions, and comments at each stage of the research process

## **Course Requirements**

### Course Readings and Materials

Alexander, Michelle. (2012). The New Jim Crow. The New Press: USA. ISBN: 978-1595586438

Flores-Gonzalez, Nilda. (2017). Citizen But Not Americans. New York Press: USA. ISBN: 978-1479840779.

Supplementary course material will be available on Blackboard Ultra.

### How to Access Course Materials

- Log into Jagwire: <https://jagwire.tamusa.edu>
- Click on Blackboard
- Under "My Courses," locate our course and click on it.

## **Class Participation**

Participation is paramount in your academic thus it is important that a part of your grade captures your participation in the course. Students are expected to come to each class with the assigned readings ready to engage with Dr. Malone and other peers. I periodically give pop quizzes to gauge if students are abreast of course readings.

Class participation includes, not limited to, pop quizzes, documentaries assignments, in-class activities, and online work. Of course, this also includes attendance. When it comes to online work, particularly discussion forums, each student is required to write an original post responding to the prompt and addressing it fully for credit. I have detailed instructions on Blackboard Ultra

## **Steps to the Capstone**

Your capstone will be completed in parts so that you do not lose track of progress throughout the course. These steps will include drafts of various parts of the projects: topic choice and research questions, introduction, literature review, data and methods, and expected findings. Introduction, literature review and data and methods are

required to be sent to the Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center for review.

### **Special Topics- Student Driven**

As a part of the capstone experience, I dedicate a portion of the course to being “student driven” when it comes to teaching a class about a sociological topic that is not covered in the course. Students are encouraged to pick a topic they can teach to the class in about 20 minutes where sociological theories, arguments, and key findings from sociology scholars are covered. There should be a PowerPoint presentation. Topics should be approved before beginning research.

### **Exams**

You are responsible for taking 2 exams in this course. Each exam will evaluate you on the material covered directly prior to the exam. Exams are not cumulative. Exams are available through Blackboard Ultra. Approach taking your online exams as if Dr. Malone were right next to you. This means you are to receive no outside assistance nor use notes. You will have 75 minutes to complete the exam. If technical issues arise, please contact me as soon as possible.

### **Presentation and Reflection**

Each student will provide a presentation to the Jaguar Community. These presentations should reflect the work you have done over the course of the semester. Business Casual attire is the standard for your presentation day. Our presentations will mimic a sociology conference in form and structure.

Reflections will be your account of your experience in the Capstone course. This assignment should reflect a serious engagement of the student’s growth throughout the course. There will also be a Qualtrics Exit Exam for each student to take that is not for a grade but a required portion of the course. It is a tool for the Sociology department to assess our student’s experience, acumen, and our program objectives and outcomes.

## Capstone Project

Each student will write a research paper/policy analysis project (20-page minimum) on a topic of the student's choice and apply several sociological theories and research methodology to demonstrate a deep understanding of how sociology is relevant to understanding our contemporary society. More details on Blackboard Ultra.

## Grading Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

| Assignments/Activities      | % of Final Grade |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Class participation         | 10%              |
| Capstone Steps              | 10%              |
| Exam #1                     | 15%              |
| Exam #2                     | 15%              |
| Presentation and Reflection | 20%              |
| Capstone Final Project      | 35%              |

## Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

| Letter Grade | Points |
|--------------|--------|
| A            | 100-90 |
| B            | 89-80  |
| C            | 79-70  |
| D            | 69-60  |
| F            | <60    |

## Attendance and Tardiness

Class periods are comprised of both lecture and discussion. Thus, your attendance is essential to success in this course. However, unexpected events do arise which may prevent you from attending. For this reason, you will be allowed 3 unexcused absences or what I call "self-care" days. All additional unexcused absences will result in a

one-letter grade penalty per absence. In the event of any absence, I encourage you to retrieve course lecture notes from your peers.

There may be occasions (inclement weather or other unforeseen events) when Dr. Malone cancels class and/or TAMUSA is closed. In these events, I will communicate at my soonest convenience to students via email directing you to Blackboard Ultra where alternative coursework will be available.

### **Late Assignment**

All assignments are due by the specified time on Blackboard Ultra. Any assignment turned in after the deadline is considered late and will receive a standard deduction of 10 points. After 1 late day, the assignment will be a "0" unless there is a university excused reason.

Students who do not have a university-excused absence will not be allowed to make up a missed examination. You must have written documentation for the absence and have notified the instructor within 24 hours of the absence to be able to schedule a make-up exam. No exceptions.

### **Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism**

Academic dishonesty includes any unapproved activity that compromises the integrity of ANY portion of assignments. This includes, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism (which includes self-plagiarism), or failing to appropriately cite sources. This also includes Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content, which is not original. Any form of academic dishonesty is incompatible with Texas A&M-San Antonio's mission and generally understood standards of ethical academic behavior.

### **Disability Disclosure Statement**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you

may have a disability, Disability Support Services is in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

The purpose of the following statement is to enumerate the essential provisions of students' freedoms and responsibilities 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, including the A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct

### Students' Rights

- 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.
- 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, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
- 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.
- Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university students' rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

## Students' Responsibilities

- A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and staff, and the administration.
- A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted and compliant with the University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and in the University Catalog.
- A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
- A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
- A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official University notifications.
- 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.

## 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.

### **Statement of Harassment and Discrimination**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal 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 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, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. 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 providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university. 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's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct 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 Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a



situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

## **Course Resources**

### **Academic Learning Center**

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu) calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

### **The 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, plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can make individual or group appointments with a writing tutor. The Writing Center is in Central Academic Building, Suite 208. The Writing Center can be reached by emailing [writingcenter@tamusa.edu](mailto:writingcenter@tamusa.edu) or calling 210-784-1222. Students can also make appointments with the Writing Center under the Student Services tab in JagWire.

### **Counseling/Mental Health Resources**

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the

Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit [tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](https://tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').

Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to include support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

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

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here:  
<https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>.

Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

### **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 submit a CARE referral (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for

support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

### **Military Affairs**

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at [military.va@tamusa.edu](mailto:military.va@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 the policy, students are provided with an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course 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.

### **Course Schedule- Next Page**

Content may be subject to change based on pace of course

| <b>Week/Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>   | <b>Reading</b>           | <b>Assignment Due</b>                                   |
|------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| Week 1, 8/25     | Introduction to The Sociology Capstone                               | Class Handouts           | Updated Resume/CV Due Saturday                          |
| Week 2, 9/1      | Sociological Theory and Methodology                                  | CITI Training Online     | Cover Letter and Action Plan Due Saturday               |
| Week 3, 9/8      | Capstone Work  | CITI Training            | Capstone Topic Due Monday<br>CITI Training Due Saturday |
| Week 4, 9/15     | Exam Week  | No Readings              | Jeopardy Review and Exam #1 Due Wednesday               |
| Week 5, 9/22     | What Does it Mean to Belong  | Flores-Gonzalez (Ch 1-2) | Intro Draft Due Saturday                                |
| Week 6, 9/29     | Sociology and Race and Ethnicity                                     | Flores-Gonzalez (Ch 3-4) | Open  |
| Week 7, 10/6     | Latino Millennial Identity and Understanding in Contemporary America | Flores-Gonzalez (Ch 5-6) | Literature Review Draft Due Saturday                    |
| Week 8, 10/13    | System of Control  | Alexander (Ch 1-2)       | Open  |
| Week 9, 10/20    | The Race of Incarceration  | Alexander (Ch 3-4)       | Methods Draft Due                                       |

| <b>Week/Date</b>  | <b>Topic</b>                           | <b>Reading</b>        | <b>Assignment Due</b>  |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| Week 10,<br>10/27 | The New Jim Crow<br>and Beyond         | Alexander<br>(Ch 5-6) | Not Just a Game<br>Doc and<br>Response Due<br>Saturday       |
| Week 11, 11/3     | Exam Week                              | No<br>Readings        | Jeopardy Review<br>and Exam #2<br>Due Wednesday              |
| Week 12,<br>11/10 | Special Topic-<br>Student Driven       | No<br>Readings        | Student Topic<br>Presentations<br>due on<br>Presentation Day |
| Week 13,<br>11/17 | Special Topic-<br>Student Driven       | No<br>readings        | Student Topic<br>Presentations<br>due on<br>Presentation Day |
| Week 14,<br>11/24 | Research<br>Prep/Thanksgiving<br>Break | N/A                   | N/A  |
| Week 15, 12/1     | Research<br>Presentation               | N/A                   | N/A  |
| Week 16, 12/8     | Capstone Final<br>and Reflection       | N/A                   | Due Wednesday  |