

SOCI 1301-004 Principles of Sociology

Professor: Dr. Jennifer G. Correa

[Dr. Correa's Email](#)

Phone: 210-784-2249

Office: 350D Central Academic Building (CAB)

Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays | 11:00–12:15 p.m. | MADLA 254

Campus Student Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Official University Course Catalog Description

This course is designed to introduce to students to the scientific study of human interaction, social institutions, and dynamic changes in society. The focus is on the critical interplay between the individual and society, in particular, how and individual impacts society, and in turn how societal structures organize human life. This course meets the standards for the “Social and Behavioral Science” category of courses under the core curriculum. Required for all sociology majors, minors and BAAS degrees with a concentration in sociology.

Course Overview

Sociology examines how individuals and groups shape—and are shaped by—families, communities, institutions, and global systems. Sociologists ask questions such as: Why do some communities experience greater inequality than others? How do education, media, and technology shape identity and opportunity? How do global economic and political changes affect our daily lives? This course introduces students to the sociological perspective while developing transferable skills valued across many professions, including critical thinking, communication, research interpretation, cultural awareness, and evidence-based problem solving. Whether pursuing careers in business, healthcare, education, criminal justice, public service, or beyond, students will gain a sociological perspective that strengthens their ability to understand people, organizations, and the social forces that shape society.

Core Learning Objectives

The following learning objectives align with the Texas Core Curriculum objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the broader goals of introductory sociology.

- 1) Students will apply sociological theories and concepts in order to develop critical thinking surrounding social issues, institutions, and inequality.
- 2) Students will communicate sociological ideas through written, verbal, and/or visual analysis using sociological concepts and evidence-based arguments.
- 3) Students will interpret sociological research, evaluate methods of data collection, and analyze empirical and quantitative evidence.
- 4) Students will examine how power, identity, culture, and inequality shape social experiences and influence diverse communities to gain a civic awareness as part of developing social responsibility.

Schaefer “Sociology Matters” Chapters

Chapter 1 “The Sociological View”

Chapter 2 “Culture & Socialization”

Chapter 4 “Deviance and Social Control”

Chapter 5 “Stratification in the US and Global Inequality”

Chapter 6 “Inequality by Race and Ethnicity”

Chapter 7 “Inequality by Gender”

Course Format & Student Expectations

- This course meets in-person on Tuesdays & Thursdays.
- Attendance and active participation are important.
- Course sessions combine instructor-led discussion, student engagement, and critical reflection.
- The syllabus is our class roadmap and may be updated as needed – any major changes will be announced in our class meetings and on Blackboard.

Student Strategies for Success

- Attend and engage in every class—your presence supports learning and discussion.
- Stay current on assignments and confirm submission receipts.
- Regularly review the syllabus, personal notes, and course assigned readings.
- Ask questions—engaged learners grow the most.

Required Textbook/E-Book

Schaefer, Richard T. “Sociology Matters,” via [Brytewave](#).

Blackboard

Grades, assignments, announcements, and course materials will be posted in Blackboard.

Course Policies & Conduct

Academic Freedom and Classroom Discussion (Student Handbook, 8.5.1 & 4.2.4)

Students are encouraged to think critically, ask questions, and engage respectfully with differing perspectives. Sociology often examines complex and contentious social issues, and students are not expected to agree with every idea discussed in class. Rather, students are expected to examine social issues using a sociological lens grounded in course materials and discussion. Under university policy, students are free to take reasoned exception to views presented in the course and withhold judgment regarding matters of opinion, but they remain responsible for learning course content and participating within the scope of the course. Student performance will be evaluated solely on academic criteria as outlined in this syllabus and university policy.

Academic Integrity & Generative AI Policy

Developing your own voice in writing, analysis, and critical thinking is central to this course. All work must be your own; use of unauthorized sources, including generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT), may constitute academic misconduct under university policy. When in doubt, consult with me before submitting your work.

“Sociology Lab”: Preparation & Participation

The classroom serves as a Sociology Lab where students practice “doing sociology” by investigating the social world through sociological concepts, evidence, discussion, and critical inquiry. Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class and engage thoughtfully in any collaborative activities, sociological analysis, and particularly in Social Mapping Presentation days during Week 13 – Week 15.

Attendance & Communication

Consistent attendance is important to success in this course, especially because much of our learning occurs through discussion and Sociology Lab activities during class meetings. If an emergency or illness prevents attendance, communicate with me as early as possible. Use your A&M–SA email account for course communication. I typically respond to emails within 24–48 hours during weekdays. Emails sent over the weekend may receive responses the following Monday.

Late Work & Assignment Submission

Late work is generally not accepted unless advance notice and valid justification are provided. Students are responsible for confirming successful Blackboard submissions. Blank, incorrect, or unreadable files may receive a zero. If you are struggling with deadlines or course expectations, communicate early so we can discuss possible options.

Civil Dialogue & Classroom Etiquette

To support a productive learning environment, students should silence phones and minimize distractions during class meetings. Respectful dialogue, active listening, and professional conduct are expected at all times. Classroom behavior that disrupts instruction or interferes with the learning environment may be addressed according to university policy.

A&M–SA Student Resources

Disability Support Services

Texas A&M University–San Antonio is committed to equitable access for all students. Students with disabilities or learning barriers may be eligible for accommodations and are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services early in the semester.

Location: CAB 210 | [DSS Email](#) | Phone: (210) 784-1335.

Jaguar Writing Center

The Writing Center provides free support for writing, presentations, reading strategies, and academic skills.

Location: CAB 208 | [Jaguar Writing Center Email](#) | Phone: (210) 784-1332.

Course Assignments (At a Glance)

Assignments	Brief Description	Points
Exam 1	Multiple choice 30 question exam over chapters 1, 2, & 4	60 pts
Exam 2	Multiple choice 30 question exam over chapters 5, 6 & 7	60 pts
Writing Prompt #1	In-class hand-written response to a holistic question concerning Chapters 1, 2, & 4 due by end of class	15pts
Writing Prompt #2	In-class hand-written response to a holistic question concerning Chapters 5, 6, & 7	15 pts
Social Mapping Project	Student creates visual map showing connection of a sociological concept to a city or county law, policy, initiative, or program	50 pts
Participation (Soc Lab)	Based on class attendance, engagement level, and discussion input	20 pts
Total Points		220 pts

Grading Scale: Points to Letter Grades

198 – 220 = A

176 – 197.5 = B

154 – 175.5 = C

132 – 153.5 = D

Below 132 = F

Course Grade Assignments (Detailed)

Multiple-Choice Exams (Critical Thinking & Reasoning Skills) – 2 X 60 points each

Each exam will be given in-class during a Tuesday (F2F) class meeting (see Course Schedule). Each exam will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions worth two points each. Exam 1 will be comprised of questions stemming from Chapters 1, 2, & 4. Exam 2 will be comprised of questions stemming from Chapters 5, 6, & 7. The purpose of these exams is to check your understanding of key sociological concepts, theories, and examples from the textbook and class discussions. Exam 1 is on September 22nd and Exam 2 is on October 20th. You will have time in class to complete the exam. Be on time!

Analytic Writing Prompts (Analytic & Application Skills) – 2 X 15 pts each

These two in-class short, handwritten responses (100-word minimum) are designed to help you apply sociological concepts to society (or social surroundings) using prompted questions noted in your Course Schedule located in Course Syllabus. The prompts are guided by major themes in your Schaefer text as well as class discussions. The objective is to connect your Schaefer text to the prompt question through using the text as evidentiary support for your response. When using or paraphrasing specific ideas, terms, or phrases from Schaefer, provide an appropriate in-text citation. Each prompt is graded based on the following criteria (shown below). Prompt #1 is on Tuesday, September 15th and Prompt #2 will be on Tuesday, October 13th. See below for grading criteria.

Analytic Writing Prompt Grading Criteria:

- a.) Use of sociological theory/concept – 3 pts
- b.) Understanding of the theory/concept. – 3 pts
- c.) Analytical insights. – 3 pts
- d.) Clarity and communication. – 3 pts
- e.) Fulfills in-class assignment & length (100-word min, written). – 3 pts

Social Mapping Project (Research, Creative, & Communication Skills) – 50 pts

In this assignment, you will use Canva to create one visual social map that applies sociological thinking to a city or county government policy, program, or initiative in Texas. Using Social Mapping, you will show relationships, patterns, and power to explain how local governments respond to community needs such as housing, education, healthcare, public safety, jobs, or the environment. This project helps you apply sociological concepts, analyze local power and policy, and communicate ideas visually and orally. You will give a 5-minute presentation, with 8–10 students presenting per class session, during Weeks 13–14, in alphabetical order by last name. The final project must be submitted as a PDF or PNG only and brought on a flash drive on your presentation day; links or shared Canva files will not be accepted. The project is graded in two parts: (Part 1) how well your social map answers three sociological questions and (Part 2) your class presentation.

Social Map Grading Criteria:

Part 1. Three Sociological Questions – 36 pts:

- 1.) Describe a specific local government's policy, ordinance, program, or initiative and explain why it promotes a quality standard of living and/or protection for its community members (e.g. housing, jobs, education, healthcare, policing, or environmental/climate)? – 12 pts (major theme: standard of living & protection)
- 2.) How did the local government foster community engagement (e.g. outreach strategies, etc.) from its constituents to strengthen their involvement in this decision-making process for a policy, ordinance, program, or initiative? – 12 pts (major theme: community-engagement and decision-making)
- 3.) What sociology theory best helps explain this role of local government —its approach, and its method for involving residents in the decision-making for this policy, ordinance, program, or initiative, and for providing a better quality of life for residents in the community? – 12 pts (major theme: application of sociological theory)

Part 2. Class Presentation – 14 pts:

You will present your Social Map to the class in a brief, five-minute presentation. The goal of the presentation is to clearly explain your map, highlight your key sociological findings, and demonstrate how your selected theory helps explain local government action.

Instructional Steps for Completing Social Map:

Step 1. Choose the Local Government: You'll need to focus on a specific Texas city or county. If you already know which one to choose, that's great. Otherwise, consider cities with rich demographic diversity or unique social challenges that will help you answer sociological questions effectively.

Step 2. Research Local Government Policies: Now that you have sociological questions in mind, you need to gather information about the local government's policies, ordinances, initiatives, etc. that relate to each question. Research: City/County websites - City budgets, policy documents, strategic plans, and public health reports; Public forums or city council meetings - Many local governments provide transcripts or recordings of public meetings where decisions are made; Social media or News - Keep up to date with how the local government is responding to issues like protests, public health crises, or climate challenges.

Step 3. Define Your Sociological Questions: Your task is to address three sociological questions. These questions should relate to the community dynamics and role of the local government in meeting these needs. You can use Schaefer's textbook as a foundation.

Step 4. Create your Social Map: Select a mapping tool (e.g. Canva), visualize connections, & add brief explanations. Your map will be all on one page (or on one visualization). Use each of the themes noted above to categorize & organize your information.

Step 5. Present your Social Map Findings to Class for 5-minutes, please practice beforehand so you do not go over time. I will also be keeping time for all students to ensure the 5-minute rule.

Step 6. All students must complete & submit their Social Map to Blackboard based on the date of your scheduled presentation (e.g. "Social Mapping Presentation "11-17-26").

Participation (Active Listening, Civic Awareness, Public Speaking Skills)– 20 pts

The classroom serves as a "Sociology Lab" where students actively apply sociological thinking to the social world. Rather than simply memorizing concepts, students will analyze social issues, institutions, media, and everyday experiences through discussion and critical inquiry. Participation grades are based on attendance, preparation, engagement during class meetings, active listening, thoughtful contributions, and participation in any Sociology Lab activities. See below for assessment criteria.

Participation Assessment Criteria:

- a.) High Participation = 20 pts
A student frequently participates in meaningful and productive sociological discussion regarding lecture material, readings, and Sociology Lab activities during class meetings.
- b.) Moderate Participation = 15 pts
A student periodically participates in meaningful and productive sociological discussion regarding lecture material, readings, and Sociology Lab activities during class meetings.
- c.) Low Participation = 10 pts
A student seldom participates in meaningful and productive sociological discussion or engagement during class meetings.
- d.) No Participation = 0 pts
A student does not participate in meaningful discussion, engagement, or Sociology Lab activities throughout the semester.

Course Schedule: Readings, Exams, & Due Dates

WEEK 1

What is Sociology? The Sociological View

August 25, Tuesday

- Course Introduction
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 1, “The Sociological View,” pp. 1-13.
- Watch discussion on Mills’ [Sociological Imagination](#).

August 27, Thursday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 1, “The Sociological View,” pp. 1-13.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 1, “The Sociological View,” pp. 14-34.

WEEK 2

What is Sociology? (cont.)/Culture & Socialization

September 1, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 1, “The Sociological View,” pp. 14-34.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, “Culture and Socialization,” Chapter 2, pp. 38-52.

September 3, Thursday

- Lecture highlights over Sociology Matters, Chapter 2, “Culture and Socialization,” pp. 38-52.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 2, “Culture and Socialization,” Chapter 2, pp. 53-70.
- Watch discussion on culture and socialization with case of [Genie Wiley](#).

WEEK 3

Culture and Socialization (cont.)/Deviance & Social Control

September 8, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 2, “Culture and Socialization,” pp. 53-70.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 4, “Deviance and Social Control,” pp. 98-114.

September 10, Thursday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 4, “Deviance and Social Control,” pp. 98-114.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 4, “Deviance and Social Control,” pp. 115-124.
- Watch discussion on deviance and social control with [The Milgram’s Experiment](#).

WEEK 4

Deviance and Social Control (cont.)/Gear Up for Exam 1

September 15, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 4, “Deviance and Social Control,” pp. 115-124.
- Analytic Writing Prompt #1: Using insights from Chapters 1, 2, and 4, explain how the sociological imagination helps us understand how social processes (e.g. family, school, peers, media, or law) that shape an individual’s sense of self. Use one clear example and submit your written response by the end of class.

September 17, Thursday

- Class discussion over Chapters 1, 2, & 4.
- Prepare for Exam 1 by reviewing Chapters 1, 2, and 4, along with your class notes and chapter resources. Exam 1 will be held in class on Tuesday, September 22nd. Please bring a Scantron and pencil and make sure to clearly mark your responses on the exam.

WEEK 5

Exam 1/Stratification

September 22, Tuesday

- Exam 1 In-Class – please bring a scantron and make sure to mark your responses on the exam in a clear fashion with a pencil.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 5, “Stratification in the US and Global Inequality,” pp. 127-144.

September 24, Thursday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 5, “Stratification...” pp. 127-144.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 5, “Stratification in the US and Global Inequality,” pp. 145-161.
- Watch discussion on [social inequality](#).

WEEK 6

Stratification (cont.)/Inequality by Race and Ethnicity

September 29, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 5, “Stratification...” pp. 145-161.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 6, “Inequality by Race and Ethnicity,” pp. 164-176.

October 1, Thursday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 6, “Inequality by Race and Ethnicity,” pp. 164-176.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 6, “Inequality by Race and Ethnicity,” pp. 177-186.
- Watch discussion on a social understanding of [race](#).

WEEK 7

Inequality by Race & Ethnicity (cont.)/Inequality by Gender

October 6, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 6, “Inequality by Race and Ethnicity,” pp. 177-186.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 7, “Inequality by Gender,” pp. 189-196.

October 8, Thursday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 7, “Inequality by Gender,” pp. 189-196.
- Read Schaefer: Sociology Matters, Chapter 7, “Inequality by Gender,” pp. 197-204.
- Watch discussion on gender inequality in the [health care system](#).

WEEK 8

Inequality by Gender (cont.)/Gear Up for Exam 2

October 13, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights over Sociology Matters, Chapter 7, “Inequality by Gender,” pp. 197-204.
- Analytic Writing Prompt #2: Using insights from Chapters 5, 6 & 7 – explain how sociologists understand the ways a person’s socioeconomic position and racial and/or gender identity influence their life chances. This prompt focuses on how sociologists explain inequality in society. Use one clear example and submit your written response by the end of class.

October 15, Thursday

- Class discussion over Chapters 5, 6, & 7.
- Prepare for Exam 2 by reviewing Chapters 5, 6 and 7, along with your class notes and chapter resources. Exam 2 will be held in class on Tuesday, October 20th. Please bring a Scantron and a pencil.

WEEK 9

Exam 2/Social Map Research

October 20, Tuesday

- Exam 2 In-Class – please bring a scantron and/or make sure to mark your responses on the exam in a clear fashion with a pencil.

October 22, Thursday

- Students will begin researching a local Texas government. Professor’s role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

WEEK 10
Social Map Research & Construction

October 27, Tuesday

- Students will continue research on local Texas government. Professor's role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

October 29, Thursday

- Students will begin work on constructing map using Canva; Professor's role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

WEEK 11
Social Map Research & Construction

November 3, Tuesday

- Students will continue work on constructing map using Canva; Professor's role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

November 5, Thursday

- Students will continue work on constructing map using Canva; Professor's role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

WEEK 12
Social Map Completed Draft Checks

November 10, Tuesday

- Students will continue work on constructing map using Canva; Professor's role will be to assist students with Social Mapping Project.

November 12, Thursday

- Students scheduled to present on Week 13 will demonstrate their completed draft to professor. Remaining students will continue work on constructing map using Canva.

WEEK 13
Social Mapping Student Presentations

November 17, Tuesday

- Presentations: Approximately 8–10 students will present per class session. Each student has 5 minutes to present their Social Map. Day of Presentation: Bring your Social Map saved on a flash drive for use in class. Submission: Submit your Social Mapping project in Blackboard → Exams & Quizzes → e.g. “Social Mapping Presentations 11-17-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

November 19, Thursday

- Presentations: Approximately 8–10 students will present per class session. Each student has 5 minutes to present their Social Map. Day of Presentation: Bring your Social Map saved on a flash drive for use in class. Submission: Submit your Social Mapping project in Blackboard → Exams & Quizzes → e.g. “Social Mapping Presentations 11-19-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

WEEK 14
Social Mapping Student Presentations

November 24, Tuesday

- Presentations: Approximately 8–10 students will present per class session. Each student has 5 minutes to present their Social Map. Day of Presentation: Bring your Social Map saved on a flash drive for use in class. Submission: Submit your Social Mapping project in Blackboard → Exams & Quizzes → e.g. “Social Mapping Presentations 11-24-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

November 26th – November 28th Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 15
Social Mapping Student Presentations

December 1, Tuesday

- Presentations: Approximately 8–10 students will present per class session. Each student has 5 minutes to present their Social Map. Day of Presentation: Bring your Social Map saved on a flash drive for use in class. Submission: Submit your Social Mapping project in Blackboard → Exams & Quizzes → e.g. “Social Mapping Presentations 12-1-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

“In science, when human behavior enters the equation, things go nonlinear. That’s why Physics is easy and Sociology is hard.” – Neil de Grasse Tyson