

SOCI 1301-001 Principles of Sociology

Professor: Dr. Jennifer G. Correa

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Office: 350D Central Academic Building (CAB)

Student Office Hour: Tuesdays/Thursdays 1-2 p.m.

Course Meetings & Location: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 11–12:15 p.m., MADLA 236

Course Description

Sociology in Action: Exploring the Forces that Shape Our Lives

Sociology is a broad and dynamic discipline that seeks to understand the complexities of human behavior, social interaction, and institutional influence. Drawing on diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical research methods, sociologists examine how individuals and groups are shaped by—and in turn shape—families, communities, institutions, and global systems. They ask questions such as: How do family structures guide our lives? Does educational attainment influence job opportunities? How do global markets impact the U.S. economy? Sociology offers critical insight into our actions, reactions, and social environments, helping us make sense of both everyday encounters and the larger forces that structure society. Sociology offers insight into the patterned nature of human behavior and social interaction, illuminating how our individual actions are embedded within broader social structures while interrogating the systemic forces that shape some of the most urgent societal and global challenges facing humanity and the environment.

Learning Objectives

- 1.) Apply foundational sociological theories to contemporary social issues.
- 2.) Interpret sociological research and evaluate methods of data collection.
- 3.) Analyze how structures of power, identity, and inequality shape society.

Course Format & Student Expectations

- This course meets Tuesdays & Thursdays; Attendance and active participation are essential.
- Weekly 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 class and on Blackboard.

Student Success Tips

- 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 Text/E-Book

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

Schaefer E-Book Chapters Covered

- 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”

Blackboard

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

Course Policies & Conduct

Academic Freedom (Student Handbook, 8.5.1)

Students will be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views in any course of study and to withhold judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students have the right to be evaluated for their participation and work in the classroom in accordance with the parameters as indicated in the course syllabus. A syllabus will be provided to each student at the first-class meeting.

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.

Preparation & Participation

Come to class prepared by completing assigned readings. Active engagement—through questions, discussion, and real-world connections within the scope of the course—enhances your learning and our shared classroom environment.

Attendance & Absences

Consistent attendance is crucial. If an emergency (e.g., illness, family matter) prevents attendance, notify me with documentation if possible. Staying in communication helps support your success.

Late Work & Makeup Policy

Late work is generally not accepted unless advance notice and valid justification are provided. Submitting blank or unreadable files via Blackboard may result in a zero. If you're struggling with a deadline, reach out early.

Grading Concerns

You are welcome to schedule a meeting to discuss any concerns about your performance. Grades reflect the evaluation of your work—not a negotiation—but I am here to support your improvement and understanding.

Civil Dialogue & Classroom Etiquette

Sociology engages complex and often contentious topics. You are not expected to agree with every idea, but to examine social contexts using a sociological lens. Civil, thoughtful discussion grounded in the readings is expected. To support our shared learning space, please silence your phone during class and notify me in advance of any urgent needs or accessibility concerns.

Communication & Email

Use your A&M-SA email account for all course-related communication. I typically respond within 24–48 hours during weekdays. Emails sent over the weekend may receive responses the following Monday.

A&M-SA Student Conduct Policies & Resources

Freedom in the Class (Student Handbook, 4.2.4)

Faculty, in the classroom and in conference, will encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression as long as such is within the scope of the course they are teaching. Student performance will be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards as noted in [Student Handbook](#).

Academic Misconduct & Disruptive Behavior (Student Handbook, 9.4.1)

Academic honesty is essential to your learning and to the university's mission. All work submitted must reflect your own effort. Cheating, plagiarism, or any attempt to gain an unfair academic advantage violates university policy and may result in penalties including a failing grade or disciplinary action. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program as noted in the [Student Handbook](#).

Texas Six-Drop Rule

Texas law limits undergraduates to six course drops over their academic career. Exceeding this limit can affect your record.

Disability Support Services

Texas A&M University–San Antonio is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Students with disabilities or who experience learning barriers may be eligible for academic accommodations and should contact Disability Support Services early in the semester to discuss their access needs. If elements of this course present barriers to access, please notify me so that we can explore reasonable adjustments. Location: CAB 210 | Email: dsupport@tamus.tamus.edu | Phone: (210) 784-1335.

Jaguar Writing Center

Need help with writing? The Writing Center offers free tutoring on essays, presentations, reading strategies, and more. Location: CAB 208 | Email: tutoring@tamus.tamus.edu | Phone: (210) 784-1332.

Course Grade Assessments

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). These exams will be multiple choice ranging at thirty questions at two-points apiece. 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 February 17th, and Exam 2 is on March 24th. You will have the full class time to complete the exam. Be on time!

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

These two in-class short, prompted responses (100-word minimum) are designed to help you apply sociological concepts to society (or social surroundings) using prompted questions in class. The prompts are guided by major themes in your Schaefer text as well as class discussions. The prompts are scheduled after a unit has been completed (e.g. three chapters comprise a unit). The objective is to connect your Schaefer text to the prompt question. You will complete two prompts, submitted via Blackboard. Each prompt is graded based on the following criteria (shown below). Please see Course Schedule for due dates. Submission categories are created the day before prompts are due. See below for grading criteria.

Analysis 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 —it's 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.

Steps for Completion of 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 SM: 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 SM 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 SM map to Blackboard based on the date of your scheduled presentation (e.g. "Social Mapping Presentation "4-28-26").

Participation (Active Listening, Civic Awareness, Public Speaking Skills) – 20 pts
Your participation grade is based on attendance and level of engagement during class, including active listening, contributing to discussions, and asking questions. Consistent attendance and effort to connect with lectures and the textbook are essential. Meaningful participation is relevant to course content, and productive participation shows critical thinking that helps move discussion forward. Being in attendance matters, but participation is more than attendance alone. See below for assessment criteria.

Participation Assessment Criteria:

- a.) High Participation = 20 pts (A student frequently participates in meaningful & productive discussion regarding lecture/textbook during class meetings)
- b.) Moderate Participation = 15 pts (A student periodically participates in meaningful & productive discussion regarding lecture/textbook during class meetings)
- c.) Low Participation = 10 pts (A student seldomly participates in meaningful & productive discussion regarding lecture/textbook during class meetings)
- d.) No Participation = 0 pts (A student never participates in any meaningful & productive discussion or exchange throughout entire semester).

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 Schedule: Readings, Exams, & Due Dates

WEEK 1

Why is Sociology? The Sociological View

January 20, Tuesday

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

January 22, 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

January 27, 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.

January 29, 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

February 3, 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.

February 5, 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

February 10, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights & discussion over Sociology Matters, Chapter 4, “Deviance and Social Control,” pp. 115-124.
- Analytic Writing Prompt #1: The sociological imagination helps us see how individual experiences are shaped by larger social forces rather than personal choices alone. 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) shape an individual’s sense of self. Use one clear example and submit your written response by the end of class.

February 12, 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, February 17th. Please bring a Scantron and a pencil.

WEEK 5

Exam 1/Stratification

February 17, 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.

February 19, 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

February 24, 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.

February 26, 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

March 3, 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.

March 5, 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

March 17, Tuesday

- Lecture highlights over Sociology Matters, Chapter 7, “Inequality by Gender,” pp. 197-204.
- Analytic Writing Prompt #2: Sociologists use the concept of life chances to show how factors such as socioeconomic status, race, and gender shape the opportunities people have over the course of their lives. 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.

March 19, 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, March 24th. Please bring a Scantron and a pencil.

WEEK 9

Exam 2/Social Map Research

March 24, 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.

March 26, 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

March 31, Tuesday

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

April 2, Thursday

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

WEEK 11

Social Map Research/Construction

April 7, Tuesday

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

April 9, Thursday

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

WEEK 12

Social Map Research/Construction

April 14, Tuesday

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

April 16, Thursday

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

WEEK 13

Social Mapping Student Presentations (Kick-Off)

April 21, Tuesday

- Presentations: About 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 4-21-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

April 23, Thursday

- Presentations: About 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 4-23-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

WEEK 14

Social Mapping Student Presentations (Finale)

April 28, Tuesday

- Presentations: About 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 4-28-26” on your scheduled presentation date.

April 30, Thursday

- Presentations: About 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 4-30-26” on your scheduled presentation date.