STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Sociology

SOCIOLOGY 495 – Sociology Capstone (CRN: 14926)

Professor: Dr. Ray Darville, Regents Professor of Sociology, 2015-2016
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FAX Number: (936) 468-2162 (department FAX)
Class Hours: 2:30 - 3:45 Mondays and Wednesdays
Classroom: F482
Office Hours: 8:00-10:00 Mondays, 2:00-3:00 Tuesdays, 8:00-10:00 Wednesdays, 10:00-12:00 Thursdays; others by appointment; others by appointment
E-mail Address: rdarville@sfasu.edu (email through Desire to Learn only)
Web Address: Desire to Learn (D2L.SFASU.EDU)
Assistant: (936) 468-4405

Course Description (SFA Bulletin)
Culminating experience for sociology majors. Application of sociological theory and methods. Pre-requisites and co-requisites: SOC379, SOC471, and one of the following: SOC378, ANT440, or ANT441

Program Learning Outcomes for Sociology
1. The student will be able to identify, compare, and contrast sociological classical and contemporary theories.
2. The student will be able to identify the principles of good social scientific research design. Such principles include validity, reliability, precision in measurement, and sampling methodology.
3. The student will possess sociological knowledge as evidenced by the identification of the major concepts involved with social stratification, demography, race and ethnic relations, deviance, and globalization.
4. The student will be able to apply sociological knowledge and skills to a variety of settings.
5. The student will recognize the implicit assumptions behind claims of knowledge about the social world, will be able to evaluate and distinguish between strong and weak arguments, and will be able to draw conclusions from a set of premises.
6. The student will be able to read theoretical arguments and to identify their major strengths and weaknesses.
7. The student will be able to analyze a data set using statistical techniques and draw conclusions from the results.
Student Learning Outcomes
After successfully completing this course, a student will be able to:

1. Articulate the sociological perspective and key sociological concepts
2. Select and use appropriate research methods and theory to conduct research to complete an individual research project.
3. Produce a professional research product.
4. Provide peers with constructive feedback.
5. Give an oral presentation using appropriate visual technology.
6. Demonstrate professionalism through peer collaboration, regular and timely meeting attendance and participation.

Text and Readings
- Macionis, John J. 2014. Sociology. 16th Edition. Pearson. There is a REVEL (online version); I will discuss this in class.
- Selected readings based on student’s research topic

Software
Each must have or have access to the following software, or software that is comparable:
- Internet Browser
- Adobe Reader
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- SPSS

Evaluation of Student Performance
- Exams
  There will be no written exams during the semester

- Written Paper
  Each student will produce a written paper suitable for professional presentation and submission for publication in a sociological or social science journal. Thus, the student will identify an appropriate journal and adhere to its guidelines. The capstone project will involve developing and answering relevant, sociological questions stemming from coursework and from other readings. Topics must be developed by end of the fourth week of the semester via a two-page proposal and the professor will then meet with each student individually to discuss the topic. The professor must give permission for the student to proceed with the research. Each paper will have the following headings and sections: abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion and conclusion. Students may choose from a qualitative or quantitative methodology. The written and oral presentation (see below) will address all six core objectives (critical thinking skills, communication skills, empirical and quantitative skills, teamwork, social responsibility, and personal responsibility).
• **Oral Presentation**
  Each student will be given an in-class oral presentation of their independent research work. The oral presentation will last approximately 10 minutes and will be scheduled during one of the last class meetings of the semester. Department faculty will be invited to attend these presentations. The presentation will generally follow guidelines for presentations at sociology conferences; students will be instructed on this during a class session. Each student will provide brief, written feedback to the other students. Appropriate visual aids will be used during the presentation and will form part of the grade on the presentation.

• **Major Field Test**
  Each student will complete the sociology major field test (MFT). Students will be given instruction and information regarding the exam during the semester. The MFT will be given during April with a date to be determined.

• **Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal**
  Each student will complete the Watson-Glazer Critical Thinking Appraisal. The appraisal is designed to measure salient aspects involved in critical thinking, which reflects one of the core objectives of our department. This form (S) has been used to assess adults, including employment applicants and is used for career guidance. Students will be provided more information on the critical thinking appraisal during the semester. The appraisal will be given in April with a date to be determined.

• **Professionalism**
  Students are expected to attend all class meetings. As a professional, you are expected to arrive on time and not leave early. You are expected to be respectful of others and to make thoughtful contributions to each class meeting. You are expected to participate in peer collaborative work, too.

**Grading**

• **Philosophy**
  I believe that a grade reflects a students’ performance in each course, not necessarily how much a student has worked during the semester or how intelligent a student is. In other words, two students may receive the same final letter grade, but their amount of work and effort in the class may vary greatly with one student working much more than the other. It is not simply a memorization course, but requires abstract thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to apply methodological concepts in specific research situations. I believe that I do not “give” grades, but rather assign grades based on student performance. You can be successful in this course, but work is required that hopefully will help move you into a more professional mode of thinking as you prepare to graduate.
• Formula (Weights) for Final Class Average Calculation
  1. Written Paper 40%
  2. Oral Presentation 20%
  3. Major Field Test 10%
  4. Reading Quizzes 20%
  5. Critical Thinking Appraisal 10%

• Grading System
  I do not automatically “round up” final averages. I will consider raising a final letter
  grade for those students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the course
  and who have a “9” average such as 89.0. Your grade will be determined using the
  following standard system. Make the most of these opportunities; every assessment
  opportunity is precious. I do not grant extra credit opportunities during the semester
  or after the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A = “excellent”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B = “good”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C = “fair”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D = “poor”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>F = “failing”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Missed Examinations and Assignments
  Students are expected to take their examinations at the scheduled times. Officially-
  recognized school activities are exceptions. Complete documentation that satisfactory is
  required for any missed exams to be made up. In cases of illness or family emergency, I
  may allow make-ups. This is purely and exclusively my decision.

Course Evaluation
Near the end of the semester, you will be asked to electronically complete an evaluation
for this course. The Department faculty use the data from course evaluations for these
purposes: (1) course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; (2)
instructional evaluation; (3) decisions regarding faculty tenure, promotion, merit pay, and
retention. As you evaluate this course, we ask you to be thoughtful, thorough, and
accurate. The department faculty members are committed to teaching excellent and
appreciate your feedback and therefore we want your thoughts on this course. The
evaluation process has been simplified and will be completed through MySFA. Although
the instructor will be able to see the names of students who complete the evaluation, all
ratings and comments are anonymous and will be made available to the instructor until
after the grading cycle for this semester has been concluded.

Class Attendance/Participation
I expect excellent class attendance and participation and will track your use of the
D2L materials. This is a face-to-face class, and thus I expect you to be present at all class
meetings and to be on time for those meetings. We will have one or more weekly class
sessions in classroom or in another designated classroom. I plan on checking class attendance each class session. While I do not deduct points for absences, being absent is not helpful to your grade in this course. You will find the class experience helpful as you develop the knowledge and skills expected in this course. If I see you use a cell phone during a class session, I will mark you as absent.

**Student Behavior - Acceptable Student Behavior (SFA Policy 10.4)**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Academic Integrity (SFA Policy 4.1)**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. You should read the complete policy at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp).

**Course Grades (SFA Policy 5.5)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.
Students with Disabilities (SFA Policy 6.1)
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

COURSE TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Number</th>
<th>Monday of Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Introduction to the course; discussion of syllabus; Introduction capstone project; The Sociological Perspective and</td>
<td>Macionis 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>Sociological Investigation</td>
<td>Macionis 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Macionis 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Macionis 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>Socialization and Social Interaction in Everyday Life</td>
<td>Macionis 5 and 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Groups and Organizations and Deviance</td>
<td>Macionis 7 and 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>Social Stratification and Social Class in the United States</td>
<td>Capstone project proposal due Macionis 10 and 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>Global Stratification and Gender Stratification</td>
<td>Macionis 12 and 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>Rest and Relaxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>Race and Ethnicity and Families</td>
<td>Macionis 14 and 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>Religion and Health and Medicine</td>
<td>Macionis 19 and 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>Population, Urbanization, and Environment</td>
<td>Macionis 22 Completed first draft of capstone paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>Social Change Discussion of Oral Presentations</td>
<td>Macionis 24; complete ETS Major Field Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td>Complete ETS Major Field Exam; complete Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal oral presentations of capstone projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Final Exam Week</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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