SOCI 5351  Syllabus  Fall, 2021

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Sociology
SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY
SOCIOLOGY 5351.500 (CRN: 15238)
Cross listed with FORS 5369 (Interpretation Research and Evaluation)
Fall, 2021 Semester (August 23rd – December 10th)

Professor
Dr. Ray Darville: Professor of Sociology and Department Chair
Office Number: LA350 (faculty office)
LA335 (department office)
Phone Number: (936) 468-2256 (office phone)
(936) 468-4405 (department phone)
(936) 468-2162 (FAX)
Class Hours: Mondays at 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. AND Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. All times are Central times. All class sessions will be held via Zoom (link to be provided).
Office Hours All times are Central Time. All office hours will be held via Zoom (link to be provided).
E-mail Address: rdarville@sfasu.edu (use D2L only)
Web Address: Desire to Learn (D2L.SFASU.EDU)
Assistant: Ms. Donna Matheny (936-468-4405)

Course Description (SFA Graduate Bulletin)
Basic principles of social research: formulation of research problem, design, sampling, measurement, and data collection.

Program Learning Outcomes for Sociology
(This is a graduate level sociology class. Because there is not a graduate program in sociology, this course is not required to address these program learning outcomes.)
The sociology program states the following items as program learning objectives (PLOs) for sociology majors.

PLOs
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 for SOCI 5351**

After successfully completing this course, a student will be able to

1. identify a research article’s hypotheses, sample size, unit of analysis, sampling technique, research design, data gathering techniques, major results, and important conclusions
2. be able to identify serious problems when they exist in a research article’s review of the literature, methods, presentation of results, and conclusions
3. access their major discipline’s research code of ethics and state some of its major research guidelines
4. explain in his or her own words important research concepts such as causality and correlation, level of measurement, reliability, validity, research design, and sampling
5. take a theoretical concept and operationally define it so that it can be used in research
6. define, give an example, and state advantages and disadvantages of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental research designs
7. compare and contrast obtrusive forms of data collection (such as surveys and some forms of observation) and unobtrusive forms of data collection (such as content analysis, secondary analysis, and some forms of observation)
8. define, give an example, and state advantages and disadvantages of probability and nonprobability sampling
9. identify the major steps in assessment research
10. form and interpret hypotheses that include independent, dependent, and control variables
11. explain what information can be gained from each of the following: mean, median, mode, minimum, maximum, standard deviation, and confidence interval
12. read a research article critically, evaluate its methodology, and write an article summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Learning Outcome for Sociology</th>
<th>Supported Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Skill Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLO1</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO2</td>
<td>1 - 10</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO3</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO4</td>
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<td>Intermediate</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO5</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Materials

1. There is one required text: Babbie, Earl. 2017. *The Basics of Social Research*. Seventh edition. Cengage Learning: Boston, MA. It is a paperback and should be available for purchase at all local bookstores as well as online. The text will provide you with core information about social science research methods.

![Image of The Basics of Social Research book](image)

The eBook ISBN for SOCI 5351 is 9781305856318. This option will be significantly cheaper than the physical text. To purchase the eBook for this course, access the SFA bookstore website and select your course and section. You will see 9781305856318 available to purchase. Add it to your cart and complete the purchase. When finished, you will receive an email with instructions to access your eBook.


3. There will be selected social science research published articles for reading this semester. They will be provided you via Desire to Learn or the links to the articles will be provided you. You will be tested over the readings on the exams, but you will not get any questions concerning the readings on your reading quizzes. These are given to you for you to improve your readings skills in reading social science research literature and to illustrate key concepts and principles that you will learn from the textbook and lecture notes.

4. Handheld calculator to do simple mathematical calculations.

5. Software. You must have Internet access, Adobe reader to open pdf files, a word processing software program that is compatible with MS Word (I use MS Word), and a spreadsheet program (Excel is recommended). You will also need to use an Internet Browser that is compatible with D2L. I recommend Chrome.

Course Requirements

- **Examinations**

  You will be expected to complete three examinations, including the final, consisting of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions (see schedule). The examinations are worth a total of 100 points each. They will be based on lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings. Some questions will involve basic knowledge while other questions will be applied questions, which require not simply a memorization of material, but comprehension and application of material. Thus, in your study, you *must* go beyond simple memorization of facts, ideas, definitions, etc. I will give you a non-graded practice exam before the first examination. While
completing the exam is voluntary, it should serve as an indicator of the types of questions and the level of difficulty of those questions and it should serve to give you a crude idea of what you know and what you do not know before the exam. Hence, it will serve as a diagnostic tool; I will provide the correct answers to the questions.

- **Chapter Reading Quizzes**
  You will be expected to complete a reading quiz for each chapter in Babbie we study. These quizzes will be administered while a particular chapter is being covered. They will consist of 10 questions each, taken directly from the Babbie text. There are approximately 25 questions in each chapter quiz bank; the test program will choose randomly 10 questions for you through simple random sampling (We will study simple random sampling in the course.). Questions are multiple-choice and true-false. I do not drop any scores. Failure to take a quiz by the deadline results in a score of 0 for that quiz; no make-ups will be allowed. All quizzes will be taken on-line using Desire to Learn. You will have 10 minutes to take each quiz. The due dates and times for the quizzes will be announced on the Desire to Learn. The quizzes are open book and open note. The authority for all questions and answers is the textbook. I recommend that you have your lecture notes with you when you take your quizzes; however, bear in mind that I have not referenced my lecture notes when writing quiz questions. The quizzes serve as a motivator to you to read the Babbie material. There is a moderate, positive relationship typically between quiz scores and exam scores. This suggests that students who perform well on the quizzes usually perform well on the exams. You will note below that quizzes as an element in the final course average calculations are worth 10%. While this may sound relatively insignificant, bear in mind that quizzes are not insignificant. Ten percent represents a full letter grade and thus should not be taken lightly. In fact, some previous students have improved their overall grade in the course through high quiz scores.

- **Exercises/Assignments**
  You will be expected to complete written exercises during the semester, which will give you opportunities to practice, or apply, knowledge gained so that you can improve your skills as a researcher. Assignments will be worth 100 points each. Complete instructions and due dates will be given when appropriate. Assignments may be graded that are submitted late, but will have a maximum credit of 50 points each.

SOI 5351 (3 credits; fully online) spans 16 weeks. The course contains extensive written content that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least 10 hours per week. In addition, students are required to read approximately one chapter per week and read additional material associated with research methods, complete one reading quiz weekly, complete one written assignment each week, and complete three exams during the course. This work requires students to learn: fundamentals of social science research and to be able to apply methodological information in research contexts.
Desire to Learn

- This is a Desire to Learn-based, online-only course. No face-to-face meetings are planned and there is no requirement for you to be on campus to complete any activities associated with the course. As such, you will be using Desire to Learn throughout the course for several activities and items. If you are not familiar with or comfortable using Desire to Learn, you should work through an online orientation created by the Office of Instructional Technology: http://www.oit.sfasu.edu/orientation/index/index.htm before the first class session or during the first few days of class.
- You may receive OIT student support by calling: 936-468-1919.
- During this course, you will need to access course materials on Desire to Learn every week, and almost daily. These include the learning modules, or content modules. There is one module per chapter in the textbook, identified by the chapter number and the chapter name. Learning modules contain specific learning objectives, lecture notes, quizzes, and other activities as well as handouts that you need to print and bring to class. All lecture notes are in html format. You should bring your lecture notes to class.
- Your quizzes and exams will be taken online. The due dates will be listed in the course calendar. You will be taking about one quiz per week.
- You should check for emails from me every day or two. Email is an important tool for me to use to communicate with you. I also expect for you to email me with questions, especially when my information is not clear.
- The course calendar is also important. While I will make effort to give you deadlines in class, I will also post deadlines on the course calendar. I recommend checking the course calendar at least three or four times weekly.
- Finally, keep in mind that Desire to Learn records each visit that you make to the course web site. I can see which pages you saw, what email you read, when you took your quizzes, whether your downloaded items, etc. I use this information informally to assess students’ activity in the course.

Class Attendance/Participation

Class Attendance and Excused Absence (6.7)

Students are expected to attend all classes, laboratories, and other activities on a regular and punctual basis. Attendance policies will be stated in the course syllabus. For those classes where attendance is a factor in the course grade, an accurate record of attendance will be maintained. Students may be excused from attendance for reasons such as health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. However, students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance, when possible, for excusable absences. Students missing classes, other than university-sponsored trips, may contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) and request that an absence notification be sent to the instructor(s). The notification is not an excuse and is not evaluated by OSRR. The notification is only provided as a courtesy to the student and the student's instructor(s). Students remain responsible for providing documentation in a timely manner to the instructor for each absence. The instructor determines whether such
documentation is satisfactory. If participating in university-sponsored events, announcements in mySFA constitute official notification. Faculty members sponsoring activities that require their students to be absent from other classes must submit to the provost and vice president for academic affairs an explanation of the absence, including the date, time, and an alphabetical listing of all attending students. If approved by the provost and vice president for academic affairs, this information will be posted on mySFA. Whether absences are excused or unexcused, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Students with accepted excuses may be permitted to make up work for up to three weeks of absences during a semester or one week of a summer term, depending on the nature of the missed work. Make-up work must be completed as soon as possible after returning from an absence.

**Course Policy for SOC551**

Attendance is expected, but not required at all class meetings. I recognize that this is an online-only class taught through D2L. However, I offer live online (livestream) class sessions using Zoom. While you are not required to attend and I will not take attendance, you are very much encouraged to attend. During the class sessions, I will lecture over relevant course material, answer questions, prepare students for quizzes and exams, and help students with assignments. It’s to your good to attend. If you are not able to attend, I will record all online class sessions. These will be available to you in Zoom Recordings. You will be held responsible for all information covered during these sessions. In addition, I will hold office hours via Zoom. These sessions will not be recorded and are considered optional “come and go” sessions.

**Student Academic Dishonesty (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.

Please read the complete policy at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Course Add/Drop (6.10)**
Students may add courses through the second-class day during the summer semesters and through the fourth class day during the fall or spring semesters. Academic unit chairs/directors will reconcile class schedules by the official reporting date. Students may drop classes through five working days past mid-semester or mid-session as applicable. A student may not drop a course after these dates, unless withdrawing from the university. The following rules apply: 1. A withdrawal or course dropped by the official reporting date will not be recorded on a student's transcript. 2. After the official reporting date, a drop or withdrawal will be noted as a "W" grade on the student’s official transcript. Undergraduate students who enrolled in a Texas public institution of higher education for the first time in the fall 2007 or thereafter may not drop more than six courses with a "W" grade. This number includes any course dropped at another Texas public institution but excludes full semester withdrawals and exceptions as defined in Texas law (Education Code section 51.907). After six withdrawals, the student will receive the grade awarded for each attempted course. 3. Beginning on the sixth working day after mid-term for full semester courses or mid-session for partial semester courses, a drop will not be permitted unless the student withdraws from all courses for the term. This withdrawal will be noted on the transcript as a "WP" if the student is passing at the time or a "WF" if the student is failing at the time. 4. If a student has been found guilty of academic dishonesty, a grade of "WP" or “WH” may be changed to "WF" at the discretion of the faculty member. In the case of a grade change to “WF,” the course will not count toward the six course drop limit since the student is incurring an academic penalty. 5. Approved medical withdrawals may be granted for medical conditions that prevent the student from completing the semester. Medical withdrawals are not intended to shield a student from unsatisfactory progress. Medical withdrawal requests must be made to the Office of the Registrar within six months of the illness or incident cited in the medical withdrawal request, and will be considered by a committee comprised of the registrar and other appropriate university officials.

Course Grades (5.5)
At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (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/.
SFA Statement on Mental Health Services
SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Grading Policy
- Philosophy
  I believe that grades reflect students’ performance in a given course, not necessarily how much a student has worked during the semester. In other words, two students may end up receiving the same final letter grade, but their amount of work in the class may vary greatly with one student working much more than the other. I also believe that this course is unlike any other course you have taken in college and therefore commands serious attention of your time and commitment to learning. It is not simply a memorization course, but requires abstract thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to apply methodological concepts in specific research situations. Lastly, 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. My job is to help you succeed; I’m ready to do so. Are you ready to work and to learn?

- Class Average Formula (Weights)
  Examinations  60%
  Assignments  20%
  Quizzes  20%
100%

- System
  1. As you can see, exams are weighted the most, but assignments and quizzes collectively represent a fifth of your final average. Hence, doing well on them can help your final average and not doing well can hurt your final course average.
  2. Your final letter grade will be determined using the following standard system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>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>

Course Schedule and Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No.</th>
<th>Monday of Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>August 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare for Course/Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>Human Inquiry and Science</td>
<td>Read Content module 1</td>
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<td>Read Babbie chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete assignment: Honesty Statement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complete module 1 exercise</td>
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<td>Complete reading quiz 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend class session</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Paradigms, Theory, and Research</td>
<td>Read Content module 2</td>
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<td>Read Babbie chapter 2</td>
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<td>Complete reading quiz 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend class session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete assignment on hypotheses</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Causality</td>
<td>Read Content module</td>
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<td>Attend class session</td>
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<td>Complete assignment on errors in causal reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>The Ethics and Politics of Social Research</td>
<td>Read Content module 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read Babbie chapter 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend class session</td>
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<td>Complete reading quiz 3</td>
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<td>Complete assignment on ethics</td>
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<td>Attend class session</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>EXAM 1; Research Design</td>
<td>Attend class session</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Study for exam</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete examination 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read Content module 4</td>
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</table>
|    |    | Read Babbie chapter 4  
Complete reading quiz 4  
Attend class session  
Complete assignment on units of analysis |
|----|----|------------------|
| 6  | September 27 | Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement  
Read Content module 5  
Read Babbie chapter 5  
Complete reading quiz 5  
Attend class session  
Complete assignment on levels of measurement |
| 7  | October 4    | Indexes, Scales, and Typologies  
Read Content module 6  
Read Babbie chapter 6  
Attend class session  
Complete reading quiz 6  
Complete assignment on indexes and scales |
| 8  | October 11   | The Logic of Sampling  
Read Content module 7  
Read Babbie chapter 7  
Attend class session  
Complete reading quiz 7  
Complete assignment on sampling |
| 9  | October 18   | EXAM 2  
Attend class session  
Study for exam  
Complete examination 2 |
| 10 | October 25   | Experiments  
Single-System Design  
Read Content module 8  
Read Content module on single-system design  
Read Babbie chapter 8  
Complete reading quiz 8  
Attend class session  
Complete assignment on single-system designs |
| 11 | November 1   | Survey Research  
Read Content module 9  
Read Babbie chapter 9  
Attend class session  
Complete reading quiz 9  
Complete assignment on questionnaires |
| 12 | November 8   | Unobtrusive Research  
Read Content module 11  
Reading Babbie chapter 11  
Complete reading quiz 11  
Attend class session  
Complete assignment on word clouds |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Evaluation Research</td>
<td>Read Content module 12&lt;br&gt;Read Babbie chapter 12&lt;br&gt;Complete reading quiz 12&lt;br&gt;Attend class session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 29</td>
<td>Quantitative Data Analysis</td>
<td>Read Content module 14&lt;br&gt;Read Babbie chapter 14&lt;br&gt;Complete reading quiz 14&lt;br&gt;Attend class session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6</td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAM</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Important University Dates This Semester**

August 23—First Day of Classes for Spring 2021 Semester
August 26—Last Day to Register; Last Day to Change Schedules Other Than to Drop Courses
October 20—Last day to Withdraw from the University Without WP or WF; Last Day to Drop Courses
November 29—Last Day to Withdraw from the University
December 6 -10—Final Exam Week
December 11 - COMMENCEMENT