



## SOSC 3300 Social Sciences Proseminar

Class Location: Online

Fall 2019--16 weeks

### Instructor Contact Information

**Instructor:** Christine Jones, PhD

**Office:** HH 204C

- **Contact me** via Canvas message or email: [Bioarchjones@tamuct.edu](mailto:Bioarchjones@tamuct.edu)
- **Office hours:** Mon & Wed 1pm-2:30pm

### Catalog Description

Social Science Proseminar is designed for students entering upper level course work in the social sciences. This course provides undergraduates with an introduction to professional communication, upper level writing expectations, and ethics in professional writing.

- **Expanded Description:** This course will insure students are capable of writing for the social sciences. It is important for students to understand aspects of professional decorum in the social sciences, accessing on-campus resources, and meeting basic standards for writing and presentation styles in the social sciences. This course is essential for students to successfully demonstrate knowledge of basic sociological and criminal justice concepts, demonstrate their ability to research, and present in a professional environment.

### Mode of instruction and course access

*This is a 100% online course, and uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com/]. Since this is an online class, most communication between the instructor and students will be electronic in nature; however, all students are welcome and encouraged to attend office hours or make an appointment for an office visit.*

### Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [https://tamuct.instructure.com/] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [https://tamuct.onecampus.com/]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal. Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

- **Canvas Support.** Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select "Chat with Canvas Support," submit a support request through "Report a Problem," or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.
- **For Other Technology Support.** For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: Email: [helpdesk@tamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu.edu), Phone: (254) 519-5466 Web Chat: [http://hdc.tamu.edu] *Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*

- **Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement.** Make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines. If you have problems with your personal computer and/or Internet, you have access to the computer lab in Warrior Hall (Room 104). The library (in Warrior Hall) also has computers students can use.

### **Student-instructor interaction**

During the week (Mon-Fri) I usually check emails often and respond within 24 hours. I may not respond to weekend emails until Monday or Tuesday. Email is a better way to reach me than Canvas message. If you plan to come to my office hours, please mention it or send me a quick email so I can make sure to have enough time to schedule and see all students.

### **Warrior Shield:**

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account. Connect to Warrior Shield by [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### **Course Objectives:**

- Ability to communicate in a professional manner
- Familiarity with the benefits and responsibilities of membership in professional organizations and associations
- Familiarity with several on-campus resources, such as the University Writing Center, University Library, and Office of Professional Development
- Ability to find and use digital and library resources
- Enhanced basic composition skills, including improved clarity and structure as appropriate for formal writing in the social sciences
- Ethics in professional writing
- Ability to conduct and compose a review of social science literature
- Gain foundational knowledge of acceptable format and citation styles (e.g., APA, ASA)
- Experience presenting in an academic environment

### **Required Textbooks:**

- American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). ISBN: 9781433805622
- American Sociological Association (2019). *American sociological association style guide* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington D.C.: American Sociological Association. ISBN: 9780912764559

- Burns, T. & Sinfield, S. (2016). *Essential study skills: The complete guide to success at university* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). London: Sage Publishing, Inc. ISBN: 9781473919020
- Chatfield, T. (2018). *Critical Thinking*. Sage Publishing. ISBN: 9781473947146
- Lester, M. & Beason, L. (2013). *The McGraw-Hill handbook of English grammar and usage* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN: 9780071799904

## Course Requirements

- **Readings.** Specific readings from the textbooks will be listed in the Canvas modules by week, but students are also expected to consult their textbooks as needed throughout the course. Students may receive additional reading and viewing materials throughout the semester to enhance, expand on, and aid in discussions.
- **Assignments (10 @0-50 points each, 500 points total)**  
There will be ten (10) assignments over the course of the semester. Some of these assignments will be in the form of discussion boards; others will be brief individual written assignments. The assignment topics are provided in the course calendar and assignment details will be provided in Canvas in the weekly modules. The grades for these assignments are participation grades--*complete* participation earns full points.
- **Writing Journal (5 @0-30 points each, 150 points total)**  
As part of this course, each student will write an essay on a social problem (see the next section). As this is a course designed to provide students with helpful tools/strategies for being successful in their courses, the writing journal will break down the writing process into manageable and meaningful parts, culminating in the final essay.

The writing journal will be divided into five parts:

1. Possible topics
2. Final topic
3. Primary resources
4. Outline
5. Essay draft

Full credit will be given to fully completed journal entries. Suggested due dates are included in the course calendar. For feedback on journal entries, you must meet the suggested due dates. Feedback will help you in your final essay, so students are encouraged to meet these deadlines.

- **Social Problem Essay (0-200 points)**  
Each student will prepare an essay on a social problem of their choice. The topic must be approved by the instructor – assignments based on an unapproved topic will not be graded. See the syllabus for the due date for topic submission. The full guidelines including criteria, formatting instructions, and grading rubric for the social problem essay are posted on Canvas.

- **Course Reaction Essay (0-150 points)**

Students will be responsible for completing a course reaction essay by the end of the semester. For this exercise, the student should think critically about the content presented in the course as a whole. Include in your essay the most and least helpful aspects of the course, and at least one example of how you would implement an aspect of the course into other courses that you might take.

| Coursework                     | Points |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Assignments (10 @ 50 each)     | 500    |
| Writing journals (5 @ 30 each) | 150    |
| Social problem essay           | 200    |
| Course reaction essay          | 150    |
| <b>Total:</b>                  | 1000   |

| Points     | %         | Grade |
|------------|-----------|-------|
| 900 – 1000 | 90 – 100% | A     |
| 800 – 899  | 80 – 89%  | B     |
| 700 – 799  | 70 – 79%  | C     |
| 600 – 699  | 60 – 69%  | D     |
| 0 – 599    | 0 – 59%   | F     |

**Grade posting:** All grades will be posted online; it takes about 1-2 weeks for the instructor to grade written work. Be assured that she is grading classwork as fast as she possibly can. Feedback on writing assignments will be provided within the Canvas grading system.

**General Writing Assignment Grading Standards and Expectations:**

Along with any specific assignment guidelines posted on Canvas, the writing assignments assigned in this course will be assessed and graded by the following standards:

- C** A C indicates satisfactory performance. A C paper demonstrates positive qualities and avoids serious errors. The positive qualities include the presentation of a central idea that is adequately developed and competently organized. The errors to be avoided include serious flaws in the construction of paragraphs and sentences, in the selection of appropriate words, and in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally clear.
- B** A B paper surpasses the C paper by demonstrating a higher level of effectiveness in the organization, while sustaining clarity in expression. It has few or none of the common errors in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally fluent and polished.
- A** An A paper reflects outstanding work. Characteristics of an A paper include clarity of expression, logical development of a central idea, originality of thought. An “A” paper engages the reader’s attention and invites rereading. The writing style is consistently fluent, polished, and distinctive.
- D** A D indicates an unsatisfactory performance. A D paper is flawed by any one or several of the following: weakness in establishing or developing a central idea;

serious errors in sentence or paragraph construction; serious errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

- F** An F indicates and unacceptable performance. An F paper is flawed by one or more of the following: failure to follow the assigned topic; failure to conceive, state, or develop a central idea; serious repeated errors in sentence construction or paragraph development; serious repeated errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

### Also important...

Write to your **academic** audience. Stay objective in tone and use appropriate, professional language. Do not assume that the reader knows what you are writing about, what book you used, etc. Be clear and specific with your wording. Proofread for clarity and use the proper APA formatting for citing ALL sources.

- For additional help with APA formatting, refer to the following website:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- On the left side of the page, you will see links for in-text citations and for reference lists. For every source used in a paper, you must have BOTH an in-text citation and a reference list entry. This goes for both quoted and paraphrased material.

## COURSE SCHEDULE (Topics listed by week)

**Subject to revision, if necessary, during the semester.** Assignments are due by 11:59pm on Sunday of each week, with the exception of the last week of classes. The final due date for the last week of classes is 11:59 on Friday, Dec 13. All assignments must be completed and/or submitted in Canvas. No other forms of submission will be accepted.

### Week 1: Course Introduction & Syllabus (Week of Aug 26)

#### Syllabus Quiz

### Week 2: Plagiarism, Paraphrasing, Quotations, Student Resources (Week of Sep 2)

HAPPY LABOR DAY

#### Assignment 1: Plagiarism and paraphrasing DUE 9/8

### Week 3: University resources, University library, evaluating sources (Week of Sep 9)

#### Writing journal 1: Possible topics DUE 9/15, Assignment 2: University resources DUE 9/15

### Week 4: Citations, reference lists (Week of Sep 16)

#### Assignment 3: Evaluating sources/references DUE 9/22

### Week 5: Academic reading--sources, strategies (Week of Sep 23)

#### Writing journal 2: Final topic DUE 9/29, Assignment 4: Reference list ranking 9/29

**Week 6: Types of writing assignments, note-taking** (Week of Sep 30)

**Assignment 5: Reading strategies and note-taking DUE 10/6, Writing journal 3: primary resources DUE 10/6**

**Week 7: Basic composition, Grammar, spelling, punctuation** (Week of Oct 7)

**Assignment 6: Common writing issues DUE 10/13**

**Week 8: Common writing issues and the importance of outlines** (Week of Oct 14)

**Writing journal 4: outline DUE 10/20**

**Week 9: Critical thinking** (Week of Oct 21)

**Assignment 7: critical thinking DUE 10/27**

**Week 10: Bias** (Week of Oct 28)

**Assignment 8: Bias DUE 11/3**

**Week 11: Critical thinking** (Week of Nov 4)

**Writing journal 5: essay draft DUE 11/10**

**Week 12: Proof-reading Paper formatting and feedback** (Week of Nov 11)

HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY

**Assignment 9: proofreading DUE 11/17**

**Week 13: Professional communication** (Week of Nov 18)

**Assignment 10: Professional communication DUE 11/25**

**Week 14: HAPPY THANKSGIVING** (Week of Nov 26)

Review and assess essay draft instructor feedback

**Week 15: Social problem essay week** (Week of Dec 2)

**SOCIAL PROBLEM ESSAY DUE 12/8**

**Week 16: Course reaction essay week** (Week of Dec 9)

**COURSE REACTION ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY DEC 11 @ 11:59PM. LATE SUBMISSIONS OF THIS ESSAY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER FRIDAY DEC. 13 @ 11:59PM**

### **COURSE PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

#### **Diversity in the Classroom**

Respect for cultural and human biological diversity are core concepts within the Social Sciences. In this course, each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute to class discussion. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by your fellow students and instructor, and refrain from derogatory comments about other individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints. In this course we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disabilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities,

geographical locations, languages, military experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.

### **Late Work**

Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after the due date. For each day the assignment is late, 10% of the total grade will be deducted from the assignment before it is graded. For example, if the assignment is worth 100 points and you turn it in two days late, you will start off with a grade of 80 *before* the assignment is graded.

Exceptions to the late policy would be any work due the last week of classes. No assignments will be accepted past the last day of classes. Please plan accordingly.

**\*\*\*Assignments turned in later than a week after the due date will not be graded.\*\*\***

### **Academic dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student caught plagiarizing will receive a 0 (zero) for that assignment and may be referred to the university for further discipline. A second incident of plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the university for further discipline.

### **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

*All University resources, procedures, and guidelines are available online through the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] in the modules section.*

**Copyright Notice.** Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Copyright. 2019 by Christine Jones at Texas A&M University-Central Texas, College of Arts & Sciences; 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, TX 76549; Bioarchjones@tamuct.edu.