



SOSC 3300 Social Sciences Proseminar

Class Location: Online

Fall 2020--16 weeks

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Christine Jones, PhD

Office: HH 204C

- **Contact me** via Canvas message or email: Bioarchjones@tamuct.edu
- **Office hours: By webex or phone appointment. Email me to set up a virtual meeting!**

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 have questions or concerns about the class and need to talk about them, please email me to request a webex or phone appointment.

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.

COURSE 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 ensure 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.

Technology Requirements

- This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.
- 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

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- **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@tam.u.edu, Phone: (254) 519-5466 [Web Chat](http://hdc.tam.u.edu): [<http://hdc.tam.u.edu>] *Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*

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.

COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University-Central Texas has adopted policies and practices to minimize virus transmission. All members of the university community are expected to adhere to these measures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses, course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.) and co-curricular programs:

- **Self-monitoring**—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction. Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.
- **Face Coverings**— Face coverings must be worn inside of buildings and within 50 feet of building entrances on the A&M-Central Texas Campus. This includes lobbies, restrooms, hallways, elevators, classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, break rooms, non-private office spaces, and other shared spaces. Face coverings are also required in outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not maintained. The university will evaluate exceptions to this requirement on a case by case basis. Students can request an exception through the Office of Access and Inclusion in Student Affairs.

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- o If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the Office of Student Conduct. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.
- Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in the course and course-related activities.
- Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- The university will notify students in the event that the COVID-19 situation necessitates changes to the course schedule or modality.

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:

These textbooks are also on reserve at the library. If you get an older edition of a textbook, such as a style guide, you may want to check on differences between the editions online.

- American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (7th ed.). ISBN: 9781433832161
- American Sociological Association (2019). *American sociological association style guide* (6th ed). Washington D.C.: American Sociological Association. ISBN: 9780912764559
- Burns, T. & Sinfield, S. (2016). *Essential study skills: The complete guide to success at university* (4th 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* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN: 9780071799904

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Writing Instructive

This is a Writing Instructive (WI) course so writing will be an integral part of my instruction and our interactions. Writing will be a fundamental way that I measure student mastery of course content. WI means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills. Students will complete work on a range of writing assignments such as discussion boards, short written assignments, a social problem essay, and a course reflection paper, all worth a significant part of the final grade. As part of these assignments, you will receive timely written feedback so that you can revise your work and improve for the final submission. For example, you will work on a sequence of five writing journal assignments that will lead to your final social problem essay.

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 (12 @0-37.5 points each, 450 points total)**
There will be twelve (12) 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 @0-40 points each, 200 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.

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- **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 (12 @ 37.5 each)	450
Writing journals (5 @ 40 each)	200
Social problem essay	200
Course reaction essay	150
Total:	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. The final due date for the last week of classes is 11:59 on Friday, Dec 11. All assignments must be completed and/or submitted in Canvas. No other forms of submission will be accepted. **Full guidelines for all assignments listed in this schedule are provided in the weekly Canvas course modules.**

Week 1: Course Introduction & Syllabus (Week of AUG 24)

Assignment 1: Introduction discussion DUE 8/30

Week 2: Plagiarism, Paraphrasing, Quotations, Student Resources (Week of AUG 31)

Assignment 2: Plagiarism and paraphrasing DUE 9/6

Week 3: University resources– Library and University Writing Center (Week of SEP 7)

HAPPY LABOR DAY!

Writing journal 1: Possible topics DUE 9/13, Assignment 3 has two parts!! Both are DUE 9/20

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Week 4: Citations, reference lists (Week of SEP 14)

Assignment 4: References DUE 9/20

Week 5: Academic reading--sources, strategies (Week of SEP 21)

Writing journal 2: Final topic DUE 9/27, Assignment 5: Source ranking DUE 9/27

Week 6: Types of writing assignments, reading strategies & note-taking (Week of SEP 28)

Assignment 6: Note-taking DUE 10/4, Writing journal 3: primary resources DUE 10/4

Week 7: Basic composition, Grammar, spelling, punctuation (Week of OCT 5)

Assignment 7: Common writing issues DUE 10/11

Week 8: Common writing issues and the importance of outlines (Week of OCT 12)

Writing journal 4: Outline DUE 10/18

Week 9: Critical thinking (Week of OCT 19)

Assignment 8: Critical thinking DUE 10/25

Week 10: Bias (Week of OCT 26)

Assignment 9: Bias DUE 11/1

Week 11: Proof-reading and Paper formatting (Week of NOV 2)

Writing journal 5: essay draft DUE 11/8

Week 12: Incorporating feedback (Week of NOV 9)

HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY

Assignment 10: proofreading DUE 11/15

Week 13: Presentation skills week 1 (Week of NOV 16)

Assignment 11: Practice presentation DUE 11/22

Week 14: Presentation skills week. 2 (Week of NOV 23)

THANKSGIVING WEEK

Assignment 12: Presentation on your social problem essay DUE by 12/6@ 11:59pm

Week 15: Social problem essay week (Week of NOV 30)

SOCIAL PROBLEM ESSAY DUE 12/6 @ 11:59pm

LATE SOCIAL PROBLEM ESSAYS NOT ACCEPTED.

Week 16: Course reaction essay week (Week of DEC 7)

COURSE REACTION ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY DEC 9 @ 11:59PM.

LATE COURSE REACTION ESSAYS NOT ACCEPTED.

****Late submissions of any assignment will not be accepted after FRI, DEC 11 @ 11:59pm****

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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

Canvas deadlines on written assignments are suggested deadlines, excepting the final social problem essay and course reaction essay. Late submissions are not accepted for the social problem essay and the course reaction essay, which are both due in the final 2 weeks of classes. Class assignments that are not the social problem essay or course reaction essay will be accepted late without penalty. Late work submitted after the suggested deadline may not receive instructor feedback. No late assignments will be accepted past Dec 11 at 11:59 pm.

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.

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