

What:

- SOSC 3300: Social Science Proseminar, Spring 2021

Who:

- Instructor: Lynn M. Greenwood, PhD

When:

- January 19 – May 14, 2021

Where:

- Online (Canvas)

Why:

- This is a required course for all criminal justice and sociology majors.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How do I get in touch with you, Dr. Greenwood?

- Office location: 204D Heritage Hall
- Phone number: 512-525-9173*
- Email: lgreenwood@tamuct.edu **
 - Canvas email also okay
- Office hours: available by appointment – email for appointments. All office hours will be conducted through Webex.

*Please, please, if you call me, recognize that this is my personal phone number and act accordingly. If you leave a message, identify yourself, or I probably won't return your call. *Text messages are preferred to phone calls.*

**Please, please, please, if you email me, identify yourself and the class you are emailing me about! If you don't, I probably won't respond.

So, what's this course all about?

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.

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

What books do I need for the class?

- American Psychological Association (2019). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (7th ed.). ISBN: 978-1-4338-3217-8
- American Sociological Association (2019). *American sociological association style guide* (6th ed). Washington D.C.: American Sociological Association. ISBN: 978-0-912764-55-9
- 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. (2017). *Critical thinking: Your guide to effective argument, successful analysis, and independent study*. SAGE. ISBN: 9781473947146
- Lester, M. & Beason, L. (2013). *The McGraw-Hill handbook of English grammar and usage* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN: 9780071799904

Supplementary Materials:

Students will receive additional reading and viewing materials throughout the semester to enhance, expand on, and aid in assignments.

Are these books required?

Yes.

What is a Writing Instructive (WI) course?

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.

This is an online course, right?

Yes. This course uses the TAMUCT CANVAS system. To be able to successfully complete this course, you must have reliable and frequent access to a computer and to the Internet. In addition, you must be able to access Canvas. If you are unfamiliar with Canvas, there is a Canvas Student Quick Start Guide found in the Orientation Module in Canvas. Do not contact your instructor with non-course-related issues regarding Canvas; contact the help desk for Canvas-related issues.

What else do I need to know about an online course?

- 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.**
 - **Accessing Canvas:** In your web browser go to <https://tamuct.instructure.com>. Log in using your myCT username and password.
 - 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 notifications:** You should opt in to Canvas notifications. To opt in to notifications (and other items), log in to Canvas, click on your account, click on notifications, and opt in to the items you wish to receive notifications about. At a minimum, you should select announcements, grading, and conversations (this is the Canvas name for mail).
- **University email:** You should claim and use your university email account. All university-level announcements are delivered to your university email. You may

miss out on vital announcements and information if you do not check your university email regularly. In addition, you should communicate with professors using your university email.

- **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.
- **Online Proctored Testing**
 - A&M-Central Texas uses Proctorio for online identity verification and proctored testing. This service is provided at no direct cost to students. If the course requires identity verification or proctored testing, the technology requirements are: Any computer meeting the minimum computing requirements, plus web camera, speaker, and microphone (or headset). Proctorio also requires the Chrome web browser with their custom plug in.
- **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
 - Phone: (254) 519-5466
 - [Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [http://hdc.tamu.edu]
 - *Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*
- For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

What should I expect from the instructor?

- This is an online course, so most communication between the instructor and students will be online. Students are welcomed and encouraged to make an appointment for an online video appointment.
- I will be checking and replying to student emails daily - students should expect a response within 24 hours. Emails sent on a weekend will be responded to the following Monday, unless it is a holiday. Any deviations from this will be announced in Canvas. During daytime working hours, emails will be responded to more quickly, and other methods of communication can also be utilized if pre-arranged (e.g., Canvas chat or Webex video chat).
- Most assignments will be graded within one week of submission. Depending on length, writing assignments will be graded within two weeks of submission. Deviations from this will be announced in Canvas. All grades will be posted in

Canvas. Feedback on writing assignments will be provided in Canvas*. Students are encouraged to track their progress in the course through the Canvas gradebook.

- *You cannot see feedback on the Canvas mobile app; you must use a computer to be able to see feedback on written assignments.
- *Grading of written assignments: I will provide detailed feedback on the first few paragraphs/first page of any written assignment; I will not mark all writing issues. I will provide general feedback for the entire assignment.*

What do I have to do to pass this course?

Assignments (0-25 points; 250 points total)

- There will be 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. The grades for these assignments are participation grades--*complete* participation earns full points.
- See calendar for due dates and assignment topics.

Writing Journal (0-25 points; 100 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 four parts:

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

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

Social Issue Essay (0-125 points; draft 25 points, essay 100 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.

ESSAYS SHOULD ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:

- Information about the social problem (who, what where, why, how)
- Challenges to combating the problem (expected or known; e.g., costs, problems with adoption by general public)
- Benefits to solving the social problem (who benefits and how)

****A draft will be required and will be worth 25 points of the final course grade.**

Social Issue Presentation (0-50 points)

Each student will create an online presentation (audio or audio/visual) about their social issue. This presentation should be 5 minutes long. Details about the presentation will be provided later in the semester.

Course Reaction Essay (0-50 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.
- Details for this assignment will be provided in Canvas.
- See course calendar/Canvas for due dates.

ETS Assessment (0 or 25 points)

- Students will complete the ETS Assessment in Criminal Justice or Sociology (depending on major). The ETS is a testing program intended to evaluate students nationwide. The criminal justice and sociology departments at TAMUCT use the ETS as a program assessment tool, to better understand student learning, and develop program improvement plans.
- Students will not be graded on how well they do on the assessment; however, given the importance of the assessment for the criminal justice and sociology programs, students are encouraged to do their best work. Upon taking the ETS assessment, you will receive 25 points towards the final course grade.

How do I submit assignments?

- All assignments must be submitted through Canvas.
- All essays must be in Microsoft Word format - make sure when you save a final draft of any assignment that it is either a .doc or .docx document. If you do not know how to do this, I suggest visiting the computer lab.
- Discussion/journal responses should be typed in the discussion board text box. Do not attach a document to discussion boards. Best practice would be to write everything in a Word document first, then copy and paste into the discussion box; save this work.

What about extra credit?

There is no extra credit built into the course. *Do not expect extra credit and do not ask for it.*

Do you accept late assignments?

Late assignments will be accepted past the recommended due date with no penalty. Assignments submitted after the recommended due date will not receive as much feedback as those submitted on time. Feedback is important to improve upon subsequent coursework.

How do I figure out my grade?

Final course grades will be assessed on the following scale:

Assignment	Points	My Grade
Writing journals	100 (4x25)	
Assignments	250 (10x25)	
Essay draft	25	
Social issue essay	100	
Social issue presentation	50	
Course reaction essay	50	
ETS Assessment	25	
Total	600	

When are readings and assignments due?

Course Calendar

- **Subject to revision, if necessary, during the semester**
- **Assignments are due before midnight on Sunday of each week***
 - ***The exception is the last week of class – that week’s assignment will be due on Friday**
- **No assignments will be accepted after May 14, 2021**

Week of Jan 19

- Assignment 1: Letter of introduction
- Journal 1: Topic exploration

Week of Jan 25

- Assignment 2: Writing in the social sciences/audience

Week of Feb 1

- Assignment 3: Evaluating resources

Week of Feb 8

- Journal 2: Final topic and thesis statement

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- Assignment 4: Digital polarization

Week of Feb 15

- Assignment 5: Citation practice

Week of Feb 22

- Assignment 6: Academic reading

Week of Mar 1

- Journal 3: Sources

Week of Mar 8

- Journal 4: Outline and thesis statement

Week of Mar 15

- SPRING BREAK – NO ASSIGNMENTS

Week of Mar 22

- Assignment 7: Plagiarism
- ETS Assessment

Week of Mar 29

- Assignment 8: Common writing issues

Week of Apr 5

- Social issue essay draft

Week of Apr 12

- Assignment 9: Proofreading practice

Week of Apr 19

- Assignment 10: Peer review

Week of Apr 26

- Presentations

Week of May 3

- Social issue essay

Week of May 10

- Course reaction issue