



**PCHS Syllabus
Course Information Sheet
Soci 1301 – Introduction to Sociology**

Instructor: Professor Morgan Keener

Email: morgan.keener@plainviewisd.org – *please utilize this email as my primary contact method*

Location: PCHS, Room 106

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays during 3rd period home room

Study Hall in PCHS Cafeteria: Monday through Thursday, 7:30-8:00 am & 4:00-4:30 pm

Course Overview: The scientific study of human society, including ways in which groups, social institutions, and individuals affect each other. Causes of social stability and social change are explored through the application of various theoretical perspectives, key concepts, and related research methods of sociology. Analysis of social issues in their institutional context may include topics such as social stratification, gender, race/ethnicity, and deviance.

Core Curriculum Objectives addressed:

- Communications skills—to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Empirical and quantitative competency skills—to manipulate and analyze numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- Social Responsibility—to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Approval number 45.1101.51 25

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Compare and contrast the basic theoretical perspectives of sociology.
2. Identify the various methodological approaches to the collection and analysis of data in sociology.
3. Describe key concepts in sociology.
4. Describe the empirical findings of various subfields of sociology.
5. Explain the complex links between individual experiences and broader institutional forces



Required Text: N/A – Resources will be made available on Blackboard.

Course Materials: Access to a computer, or fully charged laptop, and the internet; paper and writing utensil.

How this Course is conducted: This course is a blended course, which means that you will attend face to face, in a regular classroom setting, on Tuesdays and Thursdays for lectures and instruction; but you will access Blackboard for all your course work and for your grades. Any class time, in which the professor is not present, should be spent working in Blackboard on the course material.

Policies/Procedures: This course adheres to the PCHS student code of conduct; all policies and procedures regarding student behavior, campus rules and regulations, cell phones, discipline, etc. will be maintained and enforced within this course.

Logging into Blackboard: To access your course, go to <https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com/> or go to the SPC Homepage and click on the “Login to” link in the top right-hand portion of the page and then click on the Blackboard link on the pull-down or you can type or copy the address into the address window of your computer. I recommend that you bookmark Blackboard on your computer for quick access. You can also log into MySPC and there is a Blackboard link there. Once you reach the site you will click "Log In". The log-in screen will come up asking for your username and password. Simply follow the instructions on the screen.

Technical Problems/Support: If you are having computer problems, you must let me know. I will try to help you in any way that I can. Please remember that it is your responsibility to have a backup plan if your computer goes down. Please have this plan in place now and do not wait until it is a crisis. If you lose your course work due to bad flash drives, Internet service down, computer crash, or your dog ate your homework, there is nothing I can do about it. THIS IS YOUR WARNING TO HAVE A BACKUP PLAN IN PLACE.

IMPORTANT: Most tech issues are related to failure to update java, using the incorrect internet browser (Google Chrome is the only acceptable browser) and/or not deleting browsing history files daily. Most issues are related to computer issues, not Blackboard. Please note that this instructor does NOT recommend the use of any handheld devices for taking this course. Cellphones are wonderful but not for course work done on the Internet. Reminder - bookmark the Blackboard login page on your computer.

SPC Technical Support Contact: Call (806) 716-2180 or email at Blackboard@southplainscollege.edu for student technical support. I am your course work support contact. Only call or e-mail technical support with questions about Blackboard or computer functioning. There is Technical Support information in the Start Here area of your



Blackboard course. It contains links to Student Tutorials and the Student Orientation Course for Blackboard. Contact me for any course content information.

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/technology/it-help-desk.php>

PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO TURN COURSE WORK IN OR YOU MAY HAVE PROBLEMS! Remember the saying "TECHNOLOGY HAPPENS"!

Anti-virus Software: Please make sure that your computer has an up-to-date antivirus software program installed.

Academic Integrity: In addition to the policy in the Common Course Syllabus, students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will earn a zero on the work in question. If you continue to plagiarize, you will be dropped from the course with an "F". Any amount of dishonesty is subject to these consequences, whether a lot or a little; this can include but is not limited to one copied sentence of a written assignment, a missing citation, an entire paper copied from someone/somewhere else, one plagiarized post on a discussion board, one copied exam item, looking at the scantron of another student during an exam or an exam or other coursework completed by someone other than yourself. You have also committed academic dishonesty when sharing course content/items/answers. This includes sharing course content with classmates or future students as well as sharing course content on websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, or similar "study applications." For further information and examples please see the Catalog, Student Guide, or refer to www.plagiarism.org

Artificial Intelligence Statement:

Purpose of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Applications: AI applications such as ChatGPT, OpenAI, Bard, Grammarly, WordTune and others are advanced language models designed to aid and engage in meaningful conversations, as well as generate and revise content. AI is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities.

Academic Integrity: Using AI to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of SPC academic integrity policies. Plagiarism undermines the learning process and is strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that their work reflects their own ideas, research, synthesis, and analysis and appropriately cites all sources, including AI.

Collaboration and Consultation: While AI can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility. Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on AI for solutions without actively engaging in the learning process is discouraged and can be grounds for academic integrity violations. Utilizing AI as a tool for



brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.

Critical Thinking and Originality: AI usage can provide suggestions and information, but it is essential to critically evaluate the responses and exercise independent thought. Relying solely on AI for answers deprives students of the opportunity to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills. In assignments where originality, creativity, and independent thinking are valued, AI would be detrimental to the student learning process. Critical thinking and originality emphasize the importance of independent thinking in all academic endeavors as part of the student's learning experience apart from outside influence and offers the student the opportunity to refine their unique, individual voice through academic discourse with other students and faculty.

Ethical Use and Bias Awareness: AI is trained on large amounts of data from the internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the responses provided by AI. Therefore, when using AI, just like with using any other database, students must verify that the information is from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral, peer-reviewed sources.

Responsible Engagement: Students should engage with AI in a respectful and responsible manner and avoid using offensive language, discriminatory remarks, or engaging in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior. Students should also uphold the standards of respectful communication in addressing both AI and fellow classmates.

Remember, AI can be a tool to support your learning in certain courses and assignments, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your overall academic growth.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resource Course Policy: If the student submits work obtained by using AI or is suspected of utilizing AI, it will be considered plagiarism and receive a grade of zero for the work. This course policy will be provided as feedback for said coursework, letting the student know that AI is suspected, or plagiarism has occurred. It is the student's responsibility to follow up with the instructor within 3 days of the posted grade if work has been incorrectly flagged for AI use. The student can discuss the coursework in question with the instructor by virtual appointment to earn credit. In these cases, the student will need to verbally provide mastery of concepts related to the work in question. Any further attempts at using artificial intelligence as one's own work will continue to earn zeroes for those attempts or may result in a course drop with an F by the instructor. The incidents will also be detailed to the Dean of Students for disciplinary actions.



Attendance Policy: The following is in addition to the Common Course Syllabus: You are expected to attend class in person and remain for the entire class. Attendance is required. If you are late, it is your responsibility to speak with the instructor to see if you missed an important announcement or assignment at the beginning of the class. Please communicate with me if you plan to be absent – this is your responsibility as a student.

Blackboard “participation” in this class is **mandatory** – this is how you earn your grade. *There are numerous assignments which should force you to log-in continuously – even when you are not in class.* I understand that each of you has your own schedule and will be logging-in at different times. That’s fine. All that is expected of you is that you GET THE WORK DONE!! Each assignment and discussion have a dictated due DATE and TIME. It is your responsibility to get the work done and submitted to me by the designated time/date.

If you are unable to log-in or complete your work for any reason, YOU MUST CONTACT ME ASAP! Excuses such as “The network was down,” or “I could not figure out how to send the assignment through the assignments function” are not acceptable. In short, plan ahead and do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments. It is always okay to turn in assignments early although discussion board postings should be done with the calendar schedule.

Plainview ISD Cell Phone Policy

To promote the best possible learning and social environment in Plainview ISD, students in grades 7-12 are expected to refrain from using their cell phones and smart watches at any time during the school day (including on-campus lunch and passing periods) unless provided permission from a campus administrator during the instructional day. Cell phones and smart watches are not to be activated, used, displayed, or visible. The intent of the cell phone and smart watch policy is to establish a cell phone-free environment, avoid cell phone distractions from learning as well as causing a loss of instructional time, and foster face-to-face conversation amongst students. (If brought to school, students will be permitted to keep their cell phones off and in their backpacks.)

If a student uses their cell phone during the instructional school day without the explicit permission and presence of a campus administrator, the result will be the confiscation of the cell phone and adherence to the following graduated offenses stated below. Authorized district employees who will be responsible for cell phone confiscation will include administration and teachers only.

1st offense:

- Cell phone or smartwatch will be confiscated and kept in the office for the remainder of the day. The parent/guardian is contacted.



- Student can retrieve the device at the end of the school day, 3:55 p.m.
- Offense is noted in Skyward.
- Parent is notified that the next cell phone violation will result in 1 day of ISS.

2nd offense:

- Cell phone or smartwatch is confiscated and turned into the office.
- Parent/guardian is contacted.
- Parent/guardian can retrieve the device at the end of the school day, 3:55 p.m.
- \$15 fine must be paid.
- Student will serve 1 day of ISS.
- Offense noted in Skyward.
- Parent/guardian signs an acknowledgment that the next cell phone violation will result in 2 days of ISS and an additional fine.

3rd offense:

- Cell phone or smartwatch is confiscated and turned into office.
- Parent/guardian is contacted.
- Parent/guardian can retrieve the device at the end of the school day, 3:55 p.m.
- Student must serve 2 days of ISS.
- \$15 fine must be paid.
- Offense is noted in Skyward.
- Parent/guardian signs acknowledgment that the next cell phone violation will result in a permanent cell phone/smartwatch ban for the remainder of the year.
- Violations of the cell phone and smart watch policy beyond the third offense may result in the assignment of additional fines and additional days of in-school suspension (ISS) and/or out-of-school suspension (OSS) at the discretion of the campus administration.

The use of cell phones and any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at school-related/school-sponsored events.

Confiscated devices that are not retrieved by the student or student's parent/guardian will be disposed of after the notice required by law. See policy FNCE for more information.



PCHS Discipline Procedures:

Tardy Policy

- 1st tardy: lunch dhall
- 2nd tardy: lunch dhall
- 3rd tardy: lunch dhall
- 4th tardy: lunch dhall
- 5th tardy: ISS

Discipline Referral Policy

- 1st offense: verbal warning
- 2nd Offense: teacher dhall
- 3rd offense: administrative referral, lunch dhall, parent conference
- 4th offense: office referral

COURSE POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS

This is what you need to do to earn your grade:

Course Work: Your course work will include an

- Introduction Module
- Chapter quizzes
- Application Assignments
- 4 Discussions
- 4 Exams
- Final Exam

All coursework will be submitted through Blackboard. The due dates for all course work will be on Mondays (every Monday, unless otherwise stated on the course calendar) at 11:59pm, except for exams. The module week will run Tuesday through Monday.

Further information concerning these assignments:

~ Chapter quizzes are open book and are just meant to make sure you are viewing your reading material and resources.

~ Exams will be given online through Blackboard, are timed, and will all be multiple choice – a proctor will watch you take the exam in class. Refer to course calendar for specific dates for exams.



~Application Assignments will be shorter chapter assignments that discuss a specific topic of my choosing. More information and details can be found on Blackboard.

~ Class Participation/Discussion Board postings: You MUST post your original message before you will be able to view the posts of other students.

See below information about discussion expectations - failure to meet minimum word count for discussion assignments and replies will result in a point reduction of half the total grade.

Original discussions requirements:

- Do not use file attachments for discussions.
- You must post your original discussion message before you will be able to see the posts of other students.
- Be made before the deadline stated on the course calendar/checklist.
- **Contain a minimum of 250 words.**
- Be thoughtful, organized, and analyze the information in the video/prompt.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the video/prompt and the course material.
- Contain more than just your opinion: justify your statements using course materials.
- Do NOT simply state a recap of the video/prompt. Everyone should have watched/read the material, and I am looking for a deeper level of thought than just stating what was in the video/prompt.
- Incorporate and cite information from the textbook, outside academic sources, credible websites, etc. Textbook citations should include the page number(s) and other sources should include citations to show where you located the information. Note: Wikipedia is NOT an academic source.
- You may include personal experiences and/or reactions. CAUTION: remember to use the sociological perspective in all your course work.
- Utilize appropriate language, grammar, and spelling

Responses to Original discussions should:

- Do not use file attachments for discussions.
- Be made before the deadline stated on the course calendar/checklist.
- **Contain a minimum of 50 words.**
- Include at least two responses to classmates.
- Add to the overall value of the discussion (simply posting a statement like “I thought this week’s ideas were interesting” or “I agree”) will not count towards your points for a grade.
- Ask questions to encourage other students to think more deeply. Just asking, “What do you think?” will not earn full points here.
- Share your own experiences that relate to the topic of discussion.
- Constructively and/or respectfully disagree at times.



- Refer to class course work (text or video information) and apply the information or ask other students how they are applying course information.
- If you repeat yourself in your reply to messages you will not earn full points.
- Utilize appropriate language, grammar, and spelling

Grading criteria for student's final grade in the course: It is possible to earn up to 1,000 points in this course. Your grade will be calculated on a cumulative point total based on the following scale:

- A = 900 - 1000
- B = 800 – 899.99
- C = 700 – 799.99
- D = 600 – 699.99
- F = 0 – 599.99

Grades are NOT automatically rounded up, which means if you earn 899 points, you will receive an 89% or a B as your overall grade, no exceptions.

By PCHS standards, the minimum passing grade is a C, which means you must earn at least 700 points to pass this course. If your grade dips below a 75 at any point in the semester, you must attend mandatory study hall to bring this grade back up to a 75.

Grades will be available in Blackboard Only. Parents will not have access to Blackboard, unless their student provides them with access. This is a college course and Blackboard is a college platform; in this respect, your student is considered a college student. Blackboard access will NOT be given to parents by the instructor of this course.

If you have any questions about any of the course work, grading policies, or anything about the course material do not hesitate to speak to me during office hours, before/during/after class, or via e-mail.

Extra credit opportunities will be made available during the semester. I recommend that you take advantage of those opportunities as they become available as I will not make extra credit available on individual request.

Online Etiquette: A few words about communication and online discussion are in order. As you imagine, some conversations easily become emotional, especially if we touch on people's deeply held beliefs. Unfortunately, online postings can mislead one into thinking that cyberspace is an "anything goes" kind of forum. This isn't the case. Civil interaction is as much expected here as in the "traditional" classroom. Below I provide some guidelines for communicating more effectively online. I will deduct points from posts that violate the spirit of these suggestions.



Keep in mind:

- There may be disagreement, and this is okay, otherwise we will be bored.
- Disagreement can be very constructive; it encourages us to reconsider our own positions and either recommit, expand, or discard them.
- I must always hear/see you debating the IDEA and not making a personal attack on an individual. Note that this is a skill to learn like any other so learn how to debate and get your point heard.
- Personal insults and attacks impede the development of critical thought. Avoid "you" statements, which can be more easily interpreted as accusations ("you don't know what you're talking about", "the problem is people like you," etc., etc.). Try, instead, to use "I" statements ("I disagree with your position on "X" and then explain your viewpoint using course material to validate that viewpoint or "I find that Durkheim was actually saying ...").
- In addition, people must be given the benefit of the doubt on occasion. Because this is an online class and we cannot see each other's facial expressions or hear the tone in our voices, it is important to clarify issues that are confusing. Before jumping to a conclusion and putting words in someone's mouth, ask them to clarify their point. And if someone asks you to restate your opinion, do not be afraid to restate it.
- Finally, I will be most impressed with individuals who can incorporate course materials into their posts. A key skill you should leave college with is the ability to support your positions; this online forum is an appropriate place to hone this skill. Refer to readings and module material to support your points.

**Adapted from Soc 101: Introduction to Sociology An Online Course, by Professor Marisol Clark-Ibanez, Ph.D*

All written assignments should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. (This means no "texting" abbreviations or shortcuts!) This includes discussions.

Writing Tips for all written work in the course:

1. All written work should be typed or computer generated, double spaced, with one-inch margins in a standard 12 pt. font. Please use Word for attachments and do not use Google docs. Do not use attachments for discussions.
2. Any references used should be listed at the end of the paper using APA style and within the body of the text according to APA procedure. Using reference material without proper documentation constitutes plagiarism which is a serious academic offense. Wikipedia is not considered a valid academic source. Do not use it!



3. For the assignments in this class, it is better to write using first- or third-person pronouns. Therefore, it is appropriate to use "I, me, mine" or "he, she, their, we." It is not appropriate to use "you" or "your." Please avoid writing in 2nd person.

4. Be sure to proofread your work for grammatical and spelling errors. Use the "enable html" button within the email, assignments, and discussion functions to run a spell check. Also remember that "healthy" paragraphs are usually comprised of at least three sentences organized around a central idea.

Sociological perspective: Students will use what is termed as the Sociological Perspective since you are now students of Sociology. This perspective stresses the social context in which people live and steps away from what is termed "person blaming." Sociologists look beyond individuals and individual experiences. This perspective strives to understand human behavior by placing it within its broader social context. Depending on a person's characteristics such as gender, age, race, sexual orientation and religion among others, we each have different experiences. Sociologists using this perspective (and that includes you, the student) evaluate people and behaviors in terms of what is typical or atypical (or not typical) by studying society and finding general patterns of behavior. They do NOT judge others or their behaviors with terms such as good/bad, moral/immoral or right/wrong. Do NOT use these terms in your assignments or discussion posts or you will lose points.

This course will discuss relevant (or hot button) topics as this is a sociology course, and we are studying society. Some of those topics include race, gender, sexuality, poverty, social media, politics, etc. Due to our current cultural climate, these topics may be uncomfortable for some students. Nonetheless, it is not the aim of this course to change or challenge any student's values or beliefs or to expose any personal information at the student's expense; instead, this is an educational course, which provides students with new knowledge and different perspectives that can serve them as they see fit. This classroom is a safe space, in which everyone is viewed as important. If you have any questions about the course or the content, please feel free to email me at morgan.keener@plainviewisd.org

The Course Calendar with due dates is located below. Please note that this calendar is subject to change. If changes occur, you will be notified by your instructor. It is advised that you keep a copy of this calendar and the associated due dates, as I am under no obligation to remind you to do your work. Remember this is a college course, you will be treated like a college student.

The course week runs Tuesday – Monday, as I will be in the classroom lecturing on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Every Monday you will have a module due by 11:59pm. This means that you have an entire week (including a weekend) to complete your homework modules. There is no



excuse for late work. Exam will be given in class – please see calendar below for specific due dates.

The calendar below references both PISD and SPC. These two institutions do not run on the same schedule. This class goes by the SPC schedule. This means that you may have homework due on Blackboard even when PISD is closed.

| Week | Topic | Homework /Assignment/Test | Important Info |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| Aug 12 – Aug 18 | Introduction Policies Procedures Syllabus | Introduction Module – due Monday Aug 18 by 11:59pm | |
| Aug 19 – Aug 25 | Intro to Sociology | Chapter 1: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 1 – due Monday Aug 25 by 11:59pm | |
| Aug 26- Sept 1 | Research Methods | Chapter 2: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 2 – due Monday Sept 1 by 11:59pm | Monday, Sept 1 – Labor Day School Holiday |
| Sept 2 – Sept 8 | Culture | Chapter 3: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 3 – due Monday Sept 8 by 11:59pm | |
| Sept 9 – Sept 15 | Review (1-3) | Exam 1 – Thursday Sept 11 Discussion 1 with 2 replies – due Monday Sept 15 by 11:59pm | |
| Sept 16 – Sept 22 | Self and Socialization | Chapter 4: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 4 – due Monday Sept 22 by 11:59pm | |



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| Sept 23 – Sept 29 | Groups and Organization | Chapter 5: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 5 – due Monday Sept 29 by 11:59pm | |
| Sept 30 – Oct 6 | Deviance, Crime, and Social Control | Chapter 6: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 6 – due Monday Oct 6 by 11:59pm | Monday, Oct 6 starts Fall Break |
| Oct 6 – Oct 13 | | Fall Break – Nothing due | |
| Oct 14 – Oct 20 | Review (5-7) | Exam 2 – Thursday Oct 16 Discussion 2 with 2 replies – due Monday Oct 20 by 11:59pm | |
| Oct 21 – Oct 27 | Social Stratification | Chapter 7: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 7 – due Monday Oct 27 11:59pm | |
| Oct 28– Nov 3 | Race and Ethnicity | Chapter 8: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 8 – due Monday Nov 3 by 11:59pm | |
| Nov 4 – Nov 10 | Gender and Sexuality | Chapter 9: Reading, Chapter Quiz, and Application Assignment 9 – due Monday Nov 10 by 11:59pm | |
| Nov 11 – Nov 17 | Review (8-10) | Exam 3 – Thursday Nov 13 Discussion 3 with 2 replies – due Monday Nov 17 by 11:59pm | |
| Nov 18- Dec 1 (2 wk module) | Social Institutions | Chapters 10-12 & 15 &16: Reading, Chapter Quizzes, and Application Assignment 10 – due <u>Monday Dec 1</u> by 11:59pm | Thanksgiving Break – Monday Nov 24 – Friday Nov 28 |



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| Dec 2 – Dec 8 | Review (10-12 and 15 - 16) | Exam 4 – Thursday Dec 4 Discussion 4 with 2 replies – due Monday Dec 8 by 11:59pm | |
| Dec 9 – Dec 11 (Tues – Thurs) | Finals Weeks | Final Exam – Tuesday Dec 11 Make-up Final Exam – Wednesday Dec 12 | ASU Finals SPC Finals Friday, Dec 12 – ASU & SPC grades due |