

South Plains College: Common Course Syllabus

Department: Behavioral Science

Discipline: Sociology

Course Number: Sociology 1306

Course Title: Social Problems

Semester Hour Credit: 3 Hours; 3 Lecture Hours; 0 Lab Hours (3:3:0)

This course satisfies a core curriculum requirement: Yes (Behavioral Science)

Prerequisites: none for campus; TSI reading compliance for Internet

Available Formats: Conventional and Internet

Textbook: This course uses an Open Education Resource textbook. This textbook is free and is linked in Blackboard. Author information is not available.

Supplies: Textbook access, a computer/laptop and Internet access for all course formats and campuses. Note: Cell phones and tablets may be used for accessing some functions in Blackboard but do not work well with all functions. It is not recommended to use a cell phone for online courses.

Course Specific Instructions:

Internet classes access Blackboard from South Plains College homepage on the first day of the semester. Campus classes may use Blackboard for course material, see instructor's course information sheet for specifics.

For information regarding official South Plains College statements about intellectual exchange, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title V Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>.

Course description: Application of sociological principles and theoretical perspectives to major social problems in contemporary society such as inequality, crime and violence, substance abuse, environmental issues, deviance, or family problems.

Course Purpose/Rationale/Goal: The purpose of the behavioral science component in the core curriculum is to enable the students to understand and apply sociological theories and concepts as they examine potential problems in human society. To master sociology, students will be able to identify and apply the concepts and principles in the study of group life, social institutions, and social processes.

Course Requirements

To maximize the potential to complete this course, students should attend all classes, log into Blackboard multiple times per week, read required textbook/course materials, complete required

homework/assignments and/or examinations. See instructor's course information sheet for specifics.

Course Evaluations

Refer to Instructor's course information sheet for specifics coursework and grading.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. For internet classes, this means watching all lectures and logging into Blackboard regularly to read and submit coursework. The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus.

When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the instructor. Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first-class meeting.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and/or receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through Texan Connect. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

See instructor's Course Information Sheet for additions to the attendance policy.

Student Identification Verification Pictures

EFFECTIVE SPRING 2026: In order to comply with institutional identity-verification procedures, students enrolled in courses at South Plains College must have a current photo available in the College's student information system. Approved photos are used solely for instructional, advising, and security purposes and are protected under applicable privacy laws. Students without a photo on file must update their record during the first week of class.

Pictures may be uploaded using these [instructions](#).

Academic Integrity Policy

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Cheating:

Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the text- book or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating. Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to assignments and examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

Plagiarism:

Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identifiable expression of material taken from books, Internet resources, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of a fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism. See *South Plains College Student Guide* and *South Plains College General Catalog* for more information. Also, see instructor's course information sheet for more information.

More Information About Plagiarism and Cheating:

Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill.
- Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation.
- Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
- Missing in-text citations.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion.
- Using Artificial Intelligence.
- Discovering the content of an examination before it is given.
- Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment.
- Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage.
- Taking an examination for another.
- Altering grade records.
- Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment.
- Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's.
- Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

Student Conduct Policy

Classroom Conduct: Failure to follow lawful direction of a classroom teacher relative to maintaining good order is considered misconduct on the part of the student. Repeated violations of disrupting a class may result in the student being dropped from that course.

See *South Plains College Student Guide* for full policy covering other areas of conduct including penalties for misconduct and procedures for disciplinary action.

COVID-19 Statement

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing

- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

Please also notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376. Proof of a positive test is required. A home test is sufficient but students must submit a photo of the positive result. The date of test must be written on the test result and an ID included in the photo. If tested elsewhere (clinic, pharmacy, etc.), please submit a copy of the doctor's note or email notification. Results may be emailed to DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN at dedens@southplainscollege.edu.

Tobacco Products

South Plains College prohibits the use of any tobacco product, electronic cigarette, or vapor device throughout all indoor areas and within a 25-foot perimeter around all facility entrances, exits and HVAC air intake vents under the control of SPC, including sporting facilities and SPC vehicles. Included in this ban are tobacco products of all types (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff and all other kinds and forms of tobacco prepared in such a manner to be suitable for spit tobacco use, smoking, or both). This ban also includes herbal tobacco products and simulated tobacco products that imitate or mimic tobacco products such as e-cigarettes, vapor cigarettes, pipes or other types of inhalation devices.

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.

Compliance with South Plains College Policies:

Policies regarding the appropriate use of AI in South Plains College courses are set by instructional departments and individual instructors. Appropriate use of AI may range from strict prohibition to assignments they may require the use of AI. Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in disciplinary action, including academic penalties. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the specific course policies regarding the use of AI and adhere to them throughout the semester.

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.

Grade and Academic Discipline Appeals:

South Plains College provides two procedures which allow students the opportunity to address grievances of an academic nature.

Appeal Restrictions:

Only final grades or dismissal resulting from academic discipline will be considered. The instructor's teaching ability or expertise will not be considered during the hearing. No grade or disciplinary action can be formally appealed after a period of six (6) months from the date that the student is informed.

Informal Appeal:

1. The student should schedule an appointment with the instructor of the course to discuss the final grade or disciplinary action.
2. If the student is still not satisfied, she should schedule an appointment with the appropriate departmental chairperson to discuss the situation. The chairperson may request that the instructor also be present.
3. If the student is still not satisfied, he she should schedule an appointment with the Divisional Dean to discuss the situation. The dean may request that the chairperson also be present.
4. If the student is still not satisfied, he she should be advised of the formal appeal process.

Formal Appeal:

1. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the informal appeal, s/he should provide the following information, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs:
2. A request for a formal appeal hearing.
3. A brief statement of what is being appealed.
4. The basis for the appeal.
5. Pertinent facts relating to the appeal.

The agenda of the appeals hearing will include only those factors documented in the student's appeal request letter. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will determine the date, time and place of the hearing, and notify the student accordingly.

The Hearing Composition of the appeals committee:

- Vice President for Academic Affairs will preside over the hearing.
- Faculty member of the student's choice.
- Faculty member and student selected by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- President of Student Government Association.

- Dean of Students.
- Other persons who should be available at the hearing:
- The student who requested the hearing.
- The faculty member involved.
- Anyone the student or faculty member wishes to be present to substantiate the case.
- Chairperson and Divisional Dean.

Hearing procedure:

The committee will hear the student's appeal during which the parties to the controversy and such representatives as desired will present all facts relating to the case. By majority vote, the committee will decide to sustain, amend or reverse the previous decision.

The decision of the committee is final and completes the academic appeals procedure.

See *South Plains College Student Guide* for more information. More information regarding SPC's Title IX policy on Sexual and Gender-based Misconduct can be found at <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/about/campussafety/sah.php>.

Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Describe how the sociological imagination can be used to explain the emergence and implications of contemporary social problems.
2. Explain the nature of social problems from at least one sociological perspective, e.g., critical, functional, interpretive, etc.
3. Identify multidimensional aspects of social problems including the global, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of social problems.
4. Discuss how solutions to social problems are often contentious due to diverse values in society.
5. Describe how the proposed solutions to a social problem, including social policies, may bring rise to other social problems.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: See instructor's course information sheet for information on assessment that may include the following: pretests and posttests, quizzes, discussions, essays and/or other types of assessment tools.

Core Objectives:

- Communication 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 skills- to include the ability to apply, analyze, and draw conclusions based on scientific and mathematical concepts.

- Social Responsibility- to include the demonstrated intercultural knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

- Texas Coordinating Board Approval Number..... 45.1101.52 25

Instructor Syllabus Information

Dr. Sherley Rios

srios@southplainscollege.edu

Welcome to the course! My goal is to create a respectful, supportive community where we learn and work together. I'm honored you've chosen this class and thank you in advance for your effort. Stay on top of assignments and the fast pace of the course, and your grade will reflect your commitment. Success in college can depend on communication—please email me so I can support your learning.

General Policies Regarding All Required Coursework Submissions

- It is required to read and watch lectures/media for this course.
- All submitted work must represent the student's own original thinking and writing. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, assignments must be completed independently. Unauthorized assistance, copied work, or the submission of AI-generated content as original work will be regarded as plagiarism and/or cheating. See the Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy sections for more information.
- Proper spelling, grammar, and academic writing standards are expected in all written coursework. Assignments written in text-message format, lacking proofreading, or containing excessive grammatical errors may receive point deductions.
- Assignments must be submitted in approved file formats only (.doc, .docx, or PDF unless otherwise instructed). Google Drive links, Apple Pages files, handwritten/scanned work, screenshots, emailed assignments, blank files, corrupted files, or unsupported file formats will not be accepted or graded.
- Students are responsible for verifying that assignments are successfully uploaded and submitted in Blackboard before the deadline. Technical submission failures, incorrect uploads, blank files, or corrupted files do not excuse missed deadlines.
- Coursework submitted after the deadline without an approved extension will receive a zero. See the Deadline and Extension Policy for more information.
- The instructor reserves the right to request verification of authorship and understanding for submitted work. Students may be asked to discuss, explain, revise, or otherwise demonstrate mastery of submitted coursework in order to verify originality.

Office Hours

Should you have questions that need immediate and/or private attention, email is the preferred method of contact. These “office hours” are open and continuous given the nature of this course. So, I will be available throughout the term as needed by students. You may also schedule an appointment by email, and we can visit virtually. I will respond as quickly as possible, however if you contact me between the hours of 8 pm and 8 am or on a holiday, please allow until the following morning for me to respond.

Communication with Instructor via Email

SPC email is the official method of communication for this course. Students are responsible for regularly checking both SPC email and Blackboard announcements throughout the semester. Students are expected to communicate professionally in all course correspondence. Emails

should include the student's name, course information, and a clear explanation of the question or concern. The instructor will generally respond to emails within 24 business hours. Response times may be longer during weekends, holidays, or institutional closures.

Communication with Students

The instructor does not use Blackboard Messages. Communication with all students about class assignments, exams, or other information, will be done via Course Announcements. These will automatically populate when you open the course in Blackboard Ultra. If you see an announcement in Blackboard, simply click on the announcement link and it will reroute you to the specific announcement contents. It is important that you check these announcements when they are sent out, which means frequent logging into Blackboard and your SPC email account.

Textbook & Required Materials

All students have access to the textbook and assignment material related to the textbook for this course through an Open Education Resource. Reliable internet access and a computer with access to Blackboard Ultra website is required.

Course Plan Information & Delivery

This class will be following a traditional online asynchronous model where assignments have deadlines, but you do not have set dates and times you are expected/required to be logged in. Most modules will have a prerecorded lecture(s) available covering the material listed in the schedule. These lectures may be from another course section and year. There will be reading and writing assignments due each week which will replace traditional attendance. See Attendance Policy for requirements.

Course Requirements

This course is 100% online. You are responsible for viewing and reading all lecture material, assigned readings, and assignments. You are expected to read the syllabus and be familiar with its contents. It is your responsibility to manage your time and develop a schedule to complete all work ON TIME.

It is essential that you have reliable access to the Internet. It is not necessary to purchase or own your own computer, but you should have a backup plan in place should you encounter computer problems. Firefox is the recommended and supported browser for Blackboard. It is also the student's responsibility to have the required computer skills to complete this course. Should you encounter technical difficulties contact the instructor first, and/or the SPC technical support call (806) 894-9611, ext. 2180. Be sure to include course and section number information when contacting technical support.

Methods for Assessing the Expected Learning Outcomes

The expected learning outcomes for the course will be assessed through application assignments, discussions, quizzes, film assignment, and exams. Grades are based on demonstrated mastery of course concepts and assignment requirements, not the existence of a submission. This means that grades are earned based on the student's proof of mastery.

Grading:

Course Agreement (5 extra credit points)

Syllabus Quiz (15 extra credit points)

4 Exams worth 40%

Chapter Quizzes worth 20%

Application Assignments worth 30%

Film Assignment 10%

A = 90% – 100%

B = 80% – 89.9%

C = 70% – 79.9%

D = 60% – 69.9%

F = 0% – 59.9%

***Please expect a 4-day grading turnaround. Final grades will not be rounded up.**

Deadline & Extension Policy

To promote fairness and consistency, all coursework is expected to be submitted by the deadline listed in the course schedule. Coursework submitted after the deadline without an approved extension will receive a zero.

Extensions are not automatic and are granted at instructor discretion. Extension requests must be submitted through SPC email within 24 hours of the original assignment deadline and must include:

- the assignment name,
- the reason for the request, and
- a proposed submission date and time that cannot exceed one week from the original due date.

Extensions are not permitted for exams or after Week 4's deadlines. Responsibility for meeting the approved extension deadline rests entirely with the student. Failure to submit the assignment by the approved extension deadline will result in a zero (0).

Technical issues, vacations, transportation problems, work schedules, extracurricular activities, forgotten deadlines, or high school activities do not excuse missed coursework or qualify for extensions. **Dual Credit students** are expected to manage their time independently, monitor deadlines through the course schedule, and communicate professionally.

Exams & Assignments

Reading Assignments

It is expected that you read the assigned chapter readings before submitting coursework. This will facilitate class discussion and activities. If it is clear to me that students are not completing their reading assignments, I reserve the right to alter the syllabus to add pop quizzes into your final grade. Assigned readings are listed in the schedule located in the Syllabus and Schedule folder in Blackboard.

Chapter Quizzes

There are quizzes throughout the term. The quizzes are accessed in the folders in Blackboard. You have 3 attempts for each quiz, provided they are submitted by the scheduled deadline, and the average grade across all attempts will be recorded.

Application Assignments

Throughout the course you will be required to work on various application assignments. These assignments typically will be media-based (either video or podcast) or prompt-based and include application of concept questions for students to answer. Assignments must be done independently. Proper spelling and grammar are necessary for college course writing. If spelling and grammar are not written academically (i.e., in text message format, not spell and grammar checked, etc.) point deductions will be incurred. Google docs (cloud word documents) or .pages documents, hand-written and scanned, emailed, or late assignments without an approved extension will NOT be accepted. Students will submit these assignments in Blackboard.

Discussions

Discussions are intended to promote academic engagement with course material and meaningful interaction with classmates. The discussion board provides students with an opportunity to exchange ideas, apply course concepts, and practice critical thinking skills related to the weekly topics.

To actively participate in discussions, students should log into the course multiple times throughout the week in order to remain current with discussion activity and contribute thoughtfully to the conversation. Students are expected to complete all discussion requirements by the posted deadlines. Late discussion postings without an approved extension are not accepted.

Unless otherwise noted, discussion requirements include an initial response to each discussion prompt, and at least one substantive reply to a classmate for each discussion prompt. Initial discussion posts should directly answer the discussion question, incorporate course concepts, and reference at least one assigned reading, lecture, video, or other course resource from the week in APA or MLA formatting. Initial posts should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the material and meet any assignment-specific requirements listed in Blackboard.

Substantive replies should meaningfully contribute to the academic discussion rather than simply agreeing or offering brief statements. Strong responses may include: asking thoughtful or probing questions, introducing additional insight or perspective, respectfully supporting or challenging ideas, connecting course material to research, personal experience, or current events, expanding on a classmate's interpretation, or applying sociological or humanities concepts to the discussion.

Examples of non-substantive responses include statements such as "I agree," "good post," "totally agree," "LOL," or similar comments that do not meaningfully advance the discussion.

Students are expected to communicate respectfully and professionally at all times. Disruptive, hostile, discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate behavior in discussions or course communications may result in removal of discussion posts, grade penalties, referral to Student Conduct, administrative withdrawal from the course, or other disciplinary action depending on the

severity or repetition of the behavior. Discussion posts should remain focused on academic discussion and respectful exchange of ideas, even when viewpoints differ.

Film Assignment

During the semester, students will complete a film/media analysis assignment that applies sociological concepts and theories to a selected film or documentary. Using media as a sociological case study, students will examine how social structures, culture, institutions, inequality, identity, and power shape individual experiences and group interactions.

Students will select one approved film or documentary from a list in Blackboard and complete a written reflection and/or course-based analysis using concepts from the textbook, lectures, and class discussions. Assignments may include a combination of written reflection, short answer responses, and applied sociological analysis.

Students are expected to move beyond simple summary and instead demonstrate sociological thinking by applying concepts such as socialization, deviance, stereotypes, stratification, institutional discrimination, group dynamics, symbolic interactionism, structural functionalism, conflict theory, and the sociological imagination.

Written reflections must:

- Reference at least one textbook chapter by name or number.
- Apply specific sociological concepts, theories, or frameworks from class.
- Use concrete examples from the film or documentary to support analysis.
- Connect individual experiences in the media piece to broader social patterns and social problems discussed in class.
- Successful assignments will demonstrate strong analytical thinking, accurate use of sociological vocabulary, and meaningful connections between course material and the media selected.

Exams

There will be four exams during the term. Exams may include multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer, and/or essay questions covering lectures, readings, videos, discussions, and other assigned course materials. Exams must be completed by the posted deadline. Late exams are not accepted.

Make-up exams are rare and granted solely at instructor discretion for documented emergencies or official institutional absences. Whenever reasonably possible, students must notify the instructor before the exam deadline if they cannot complete the exam as scheduled. Make-up exams may differ in format from the original exam. The final exam will only be administered during the scheduled final exam period.

Feedback Policy

Feedback in this course is primarily provided at the class level through general feedback announcements, rubrics, or summary video posts addressing common strengths and areas for

improvement. Individualized written feedback is not guaranteed on every assignment, especially for those graded assignments with 85% or higher.

Students seeking specific feedback on their work must request it via email within **2 days** of the assignment being graded. Requests made after this period may not be accommodated. Feedback in this course is intended to support learning and improvement on future assignments, not to revisit or negotiate grades already assigned. Students are encouraged to develop independence, professional communication skills, and self-evaluation habits consistent with college expectations. **For Dual Credit Students:** High school obligations, school activities, or parental communication do not replace the student's responsibility to request feedback directly.

Writing Center Help

If you need feedback on written work, please visit the SPC Writing Center. For information about locations at each campus and making an appointment, visit the writing center's website at: <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/writingcenter/>

What to bring to your SPC Writing Center appointment:

Bring the instructions for your assignment, two hard copies of your writing draft, a laptop (if you have one), and questions for the writing center staff to help you with specific needs other than "How can I make this better?" Keep in mind that writing is a process, and it takes time to become a proficient writer.

Attendance & Administrative Drop Policy

Attendance in this online course is measured through active participation and timely submission of coursework. Failure to complete assignments, discussions, quizzes, or exams may count as an absence. Students are expected to log into Blackboard regularly, review course announcements, complete assigned readings, and submit coursework on time.

In accordance with South Plains College attendance policies, students who fail to regularly participate or submit a substantial portion of required coursework may be administratively withdrawn from the course and assigned a grade of "X" or "F" where appropriate.

Students remain responsible for all coursework, deadlines, and course announcements regardless of absences, technical issues, work schedules, extracurricular activities, or personal obligations unless otherwise approved by the instructor.

Extra Credit Activities

There are additional points given for the Course Agreement and Syllabus Quiz added to your grade upon completion (See Grading section for breakdown of points). Very rarely will additional extra credit be given. Please note that if extra credit is given, the points may not be significant enough to bump your grade up a letter but will be enough to supplement an assignment's low grade. Do not depend on extra credit to completely "fix" your overall grade.

Class Withdrawal / Dropping the Course

It is the full responsibility of the student to personally withdraw from the course if needed. Students should discuss progress and grades with the instructor prior to making a withdrawal decision. A

student who has already missed or has had difficulty completing modules, assignments, discussions, exams, and/or anticipates difficulty in completing the course to his/her satisfaction is encouraged to give withdrawal all the consideration it is due.

Open Computer Lab

There is an Open Computer Lab located on the Levelland campus in the Technology Center. It is available to all students, with priority given to those students enrolled in computer classes. Computers are also available on the Reese Center, Lubbock, and Plainview campuses. Check with libraries and labs for hours.

The SPC Help Desk located on the first floor at the Lubbock Downtown Center will have laptops you can borrow should you need one for the day or semester.

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 in the pull-down, or you can type or copy the address into the address window of your computer. I recommend bookmarking Blackboard on your computer for quick, efficient 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.

Computer Requirements

It is recommended to use a computer for this course and not a tablet or cell phone. Most Web educational experience will require the use of several additional browser plug-ins. It is very highly recommended that you have an anti-virus program on your computer. You may also need Adobe Acrobat for readings and a multimedia player such as Windows Media Player. Firefox is the supported browser for Blackboard. SPC students are offered Office 365 which includes Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and storage on OneDrive. Please download and use it! Since coursework and material is entirely online, participants are expected to have at least an elementary knowledge of their microcomputer operating system and basic knowledge of software and tools such as a word processor, e-mail, an Internet browser, and search engines.

Technology Requirements and Technical Support

This course requires reliable internet access and regular access to Blackboard using a computer or laptop. The use of tablets or cell phones is not recommended, as some Blackboard functions may not operate correctly on mobile devices. Firefox is the recommended browser for Blackboard. Students are responsible for maintaining compatible technology, updated software, and backup plans for technical problems.

Technical issues do not excuse missed deadlines, incomplete submissions, or failure to participate in the course. If technical problems occur, students should contact SPC Blackboard Technical Support as soon as possible:

- Phone: (806) 716-2180
- Email: Blackboard@southplainscollege.edu

Students should also notify the instructor promptly regarding serious technical issues affecting coursework submission.

Course Material Sharing Policy

Course lectures, assignments, quizzes, exams, discussion prompts, announcements, study guides, instructor-created materials, and other course content may not be copied, recorded, uploaded, distributed, sold, shared, or posted to outside websites, tutoring services, AI systems, study-sharing platforms, or social media without instructor permission. Unauthorized sharing of course materials constitutes academic misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Academic Integrity

In addition to the policies outlined in the South Plains College Common Course Syllabus, students found responsible for cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or academic dishonesty will receive a zero on the assignment and may be reported to South Plains College. A second violation may result in being dropped from the course with an “F.”

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- submitting another person’s work as your own,
- copying material without proper citation,
- unauthorized collaboration,
- sharing quiz or exam content,
- uploading course materials to outside websites or study-sharing platforms,
- submitting AI-generated writing as original work,
- receiving unauthorized assistance on coursework or exams, or
- using unauthorized materials during assessments.

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all phases of coursework.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resource Policy:

Artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Gemini, Claude, and similar programs may be useful for brainstorming, outlining, grammar review, or general research support. However, AI-generated writing, analysis, discussion responses, reflections, quizzes, exams, or assignment answers may not be submitted as original student work unless explicitly authorized by the instructor. Students are responsible for ensuring that all submitted coursework reflects their own understanding, analysis, writing, and engagement with course material.

The instructor reserves the right to request verification of authorship and mastery of submitted work. Students may be asked to provide drafting history, explain concepts verbally, revise assignments, or otherwise demonstrate understanding of submitted material. Failure to demonstrate authorship or mastery of submitted work may result in a grade of zero for the assignment and additional academic integrity consequences. Any repeated misuse of AI-generated work may result in removal from the course with an “F” and/or referral to the Dean of Students.

Civility in the Classroom

Although this course is online and disruptions are unlikely, class time must be reserved strictly for learning. All devices (cell phones, AirPods, listening devices, etc.) should be silenced and put away, and background noise (music, talking, etc.) should be avoided to maintain a respectful and focused learning environment. Students are expected to contribute to a civil, non-disruptive forum at all times. The following behaviors are prohibited during class or course assignments (e.g., exams, papers, group projects): use of cell phones or listening devices, offensive remarks, reading non-class materials, sleeping, loud or excessive talking, talking during exams, tobacco use, or any other distracting behavior.

Violations will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment and may include removal from class, disciplinary proceedings, or being dropped from the course. Repeated violations or serious misconduct may result in further sanctions as outlined in the South Plains College Student Conduct Guide. If you must keep your phone available for emergencies, please consult the instructor in advance.

Sensitive Nature of Humanities and Behavioral Science Courses

Given the dynamics of individual, relational, familial, societal, and cultural development and issues, behavioral studies courses address many sensitive issues; this course is no exception. Lifespan and relational issues occur in the context of sexual, racial/ethnic, political, religious/spiritual, economic/social class, and disability/challenge concerns. The discussion of such issues will increase the student's knowledge of developmental conditions in the modern world, but the information can be emotionally charged. It is also likely that the student will be exposed to diverse viewpoints; some viewpoints might differ from the student's personal views. If a student chooses to remain in class, then they will be expected to respect the diverse viewpoints represented in course material, as well as the viewpoints of their classmates. If the student is easily offended by discussion of such issues, then should consider whether to remain enrolled in the course.

Revelation of Personal Information

This course covers personal topics. Participation in discussions is encouraged but sharing personal information is not required. Students should use discretion when disclosing information, as confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. You are responsible for what you share and should avoid sharing anything you do not want others to know.

Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus if necessary. Students will be notified of any changes in advance.