

“Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed.”

CARMEN SHURTLEFF
Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Work

UHS 109
Monday - virtual or by appointment
Tuesday - 1:30-3:30
Wednesday - 10:00-5:00
Thursday - 1:30-3:30
Friday - off campus

cshurtleffentcc.edu 903.434.8307 carmenshurtleff

This syllabus documents all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.

Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.

Course Description: 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. Three credit hours.

Prerequisite(s): None

Student Learning Outcomes:

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.

Evaluation & Grading Policy

The assessments in this course are designed to evaluate students' understanding and application of key sociological concepts. Each component aligns with course learning objectives to assess comprehension, critical thinking, and the ability to apply sociological theories to real-world issues.

Assessment	Points
Social Issue Paper	100 points
Data Workshops	100 points
Discussions	100 points
Mid-term Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points

Total Possible Points 500 points

Grading Scale:

- A = 90% to 100% of possible points
- B = 80% to 89% of possible points
- C = 70% to 79% of possible points
- D = 60% to 69% of possible points
- F = 59% and below

Grading Criteria & Expectations:

- "C" grades represent an acceptable level of work.
- "B" grades indicate substantial effort and above-average performance.
- "A" grades are awarded for outstanding efforts and quality in required work.

Assignment Guidelines:

- Detailed rubrics for the Social Issue Paper, Data Workshops, and Discussions are available in the Course Resource Folder in Blackboard.
- Assignments must follow APA (7th edition) formatting, including 12-pt font, double spacing, and proper citations.

Required Textbook(s):

The Real World; An Introduction to Sociology 9th ed. Kerry Ferris. Jill Stein. W.W. Norton and Company, 2016. Publisher: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

ISBN Number: 978-0-393-41933-7

Course Structure and Overview:

Course Structure and Overview: This is a sixteen-week online course where students must access graded activities on the Blackboard Learning Management System.

Online Coursework Student Expectations

- Complete all assigned readings from the required e-book chapters
 - Watch instructional videos to reinforce learning
 - Complete the online chapter activities in Blackboard
-

Technology and Time Commitment

- Regular access to a computer and the internet is required. Technical difficulties will not be accepted as an excuse for late submissions.
 - Students should expect to dedicate 3-6 hours per week to this course, including both in-person and online activities.
-

Assignment Deadlines & Participation

- **Late Assignment Policy:** Assignments are expected to be submitted by the designated due date. However, any late submissions will incur a daily point deduction. If an assignment is more than seven (7) days late, the student must contact the instructor via email to request an extension. Approval of an extension is at the instructor's discretion and may require documentation or additional justification. To stay on track, students are encouraged to review deadlines carefully and reach out in advance if they anticipate any challenges in meeting due dates.
- Active participation in class is required. In-class speaking drills and activities are essential for skill development and will directly impact your success in this course.

Completion of the online portion is mandatory. You cannot pass this course without fully engaging in both the in-person and online component

Assignments:

Written Assignment Guidelines

All written assignments must be formatted according to the current (7th edition) APA style and adhere to the following requirements:

- **Font & Spacing:** Use a legible font such as 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Arial, or 11-point Calibri, double-spaced.
- **Margins:** One-inch margins on all sides.
- **Title Page:** Required, formatted according to APA 7th edition guidelines (include the title, student name, institution, course, instructor, and date).
- **Headings:** Use APA-style headings where appropriate to organize content.
- **Citations & References:** In-text citations and reference lists must follow APA 7th edition format. Include a References page for all sources cited in the assignment.
- **Indentation & Spacing:** The first line of each paragraph should be indented 0.5 inches.
- **Page Numbers:** Include page numbers in the top-right corner of each page.
- **Running Head:** Not required for student papers unless specified by the instructor.

Before submitting, students should proofread their work to ensure it is spell-checked and free of grammatical errors. Assignments that do not meet these formatting and writing standards will receive point deductions.

For additional guidance on APA formatting, refer to the current APA 7th Edition Manual or visit www.apastyle.org.

Social Issue Paper (SLO 5, CT2 & EQS3)

100 Points

In this assignment, you are tasked with selecting a social issue that interests you and analyzing it through the lens of the three significant sociological theories. Functionalism Theory, Conflict Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism. The goal is not to provide an exhaustive explanation of the chosen social issue but to demonstrate your understanding of how each theoretical perspective can be applied to explain different aspects of the issue. The purpose of the assignment is for the student to be able to explain the complex links between individual experiences and broader institutional forces. Some social issues you may choose could be:

Economic problems and bailouts, Climate change, Gender inequality, Poverty, Political Gridlock, Oil Exploration. Students will then write a **three to four-page** paper in APA style and submit it online on blackboard.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES ARE LOCATED IN BLACKBOARD

Discussions (SLO1 & SLO 3)

100 points

5 discussions- 20 points each

Discussion Board Guidelines and Expectations

Discussions are an essential component of this course, providing opportunities for active engagement, peer learning, and deeper understanding of course material. Participation in discussions ensures that you remain involved in the learning process and allows you to develop critical thinking, analytical, and communication skills.

Participation Expectations

Each student is expected to fully participate in all discussions and related activities. This may include:

- Summarizing assigned readings
- Responding to questions from the textbook or course materials
- Watching and providing insightful commentary on multimedia resources

There will be at least five (5) discussions, each worth 20 points.

Posting Requirements

To receive full credit for each discussion, you must complete the following:

Initial Post

- Due: Thursday by 11:59 PM (CST)
- Minimum Length: 100 words
- Your response should clearly address the discussion prompt, demonstrate critical thinking, and incorporate relevant course concepts.
- Citations required: Support your response using course materials, assigned readings, or credible external sources, formatted in APA style (7th edition).

Response Post

- Due: Monday by 11:59 PM (CST)
- Minimum Length: 75 words

- Respond to at least one (1) peer's post, providing meaningful engagement by:
 - Offering a new perspective
 - Asking a thought-provoking question
 - Providing additional supporting evidence
 - Expanding on their ideas with relevant connections to course material

Grading Criteria

Discussion board participation is graded based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Expectations	Points
Relevance	Posts directly address the discussion topic, contribute meaningful insights, and demonstrate an understanding of the course material.	5
Engagement	Thoughtfully responds to at least one classmate, adding depth to the conversation and fostering peer learning.	5
Quality of Writing	Posts are well-organized, use appropriate academic language, and are free from spelling and grammatical errors. APA included with citing sources.	5
Respectful Communication	Interactions are professional, respectful, and contribute constructively to the discussion. Inappropriate or disrespectful comments will not be tolerated.	5
Total Points	20	

Additional Guidelines

- Posts that do not meet the word count requirement or lack citations will receive point deductions.
- All students must follow netiquette guidelines, ensuring respectful and professional communication.
- Further details and expectations can be found in the Course Resource Folder in Blackboard.

By following these guidelines, you will contribute to a rich, engaging, and academically stimulating discussion environment that enhances learning for everyone.

Data Workshops (SLO 2)

100 points

4 Data Workshops – 25 points each

Sociology Data Workshops

Sociology data workshops are designed to provide hands-on experience in analyzing and interpreting sociological data, helping students apply key concepts and research methods in real-world scenarios. These workshops foster a deeper understanding of sociological theories and equip students with essential skills for data analysis and critical thinking.

Workshop Structure & Expectations

- Students will complete at least four (4) data workshops throughout the course.
- Each workshop is worth 25 points and contributes to your overall course grade.
- Workshops will include:
 - Practical exercises focused on sociological research methods and data interpretation.
 - Data analysis activities to apply course concepts.

- Reflective questions to encourage deeper engagement and critical thinking.

Formatting & Submission Requirements

- All workshops must be formatted in APA (7th edition) style.
- Minimum word count: 250 words per workshop.
- Students must provide clear, well-structured responses that demonstrate understanding of the material.
- Proper citations and references are required when incorporating external sources.

Evaluation Criteria

Workshops will be graded based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Expectations	Points
Application of Concepts	Demonstrates understanding by applying sociological theories and research methods appropriately.	10
Data Analysis & Interpretation	Uses data effectively to support arguments and insights.	5
Critical Thinking & Reflection	Provides thoughtful responses to reflective questions, demonstrating analytical reasoning.	5
APA Formatting & Clarity	Meets formatting requirements, is well-organized, and free from grammar/spelling errors.	5
Total Points	25	

Additional Guidelines

- Workshops should be completed independently, though students may discuss general concepts with peers.
- Further details and expectations can be found in the Course Resource Folder in Blackboard.

By engaging in these data workshops, students will develop critical analytical skills, enhance their ability to interpret sociological research, and apply sociological frameworks to real-world issues.

Exams (TEST) (SLO 3 & CT1) 100 Points per Exam:

There will be two tests (100 points each). Everyone must take the exams. Exams will include multiple-choice, matching or definitions, and short essay questions. As a rule, make-up examinations will not be permitted unless the student's absence is excused in advance. A grade of incomplete ("X") will not be given unless the student contacts the instructor to make special arrangements for making up the required work. Only an emergency that prohibits the student from completing the course as planned will warrant consideration of the grade of "X". **EXAMS on released on the date above and students are provided 48 hours to complete the exam.**

Communication:

Instructor Communication & Feedback Plan

The college's official means of communication is via your campus email address. Emails will be responded to within 48 hours (Monday-Friday). However, for faster communication, this course uses primarily Microsoft Teams and Blackboard announcements to keep students informed outside of class.

Preferred Communication Method: Microsoft Teams

To improve communication and accessibility, Microsoft Teams will be the primary tool for announcements, discussions, and quick responses. All students are strongly encouraged to:

- Download the Microsoft Teams app on their personal phones or computers.
- Enable notifications to receive important updates regarding the course.
- Log in using your NTCC email and password via the mobile app, desktop application, or web browser at [Microsoft Teams Login](#).

Typical response to Teams messages within one hour during weekdays, but response time may be up to 24 hours depending on availability. If you need additional help, email me at cshurtleff@ntcc.edu.

Instructor Availability & Response Time

Communication Method	Expected Response Time
Microsoft Teams Messages	Within 1-24 hours (faster response)
Email (NTCC Email Address)	Within 48 hours (Monday-Friday)
Blackboard Discussion Posts	Within 48 hours after the discussion closes
Assignment Feedback	Within 5-7 days after submission
Virtual Office Hours	Scheduled weekly (details in syllabus)

Feedback on Assignments & Discussions

- Discussions: individual and general feedback within 48 hours after the discussion closes.
 - Sociology Data Workshops & Writing Assignments: Expect detailed, constructive feedback within 5-7 days, including:
 - Strengths in analysis and writing
 - Areas for improvement
 - Suggestions for deeper engagement with course material
 - Exams & Quizzes: Auto-graded exams provide immediate feedback, while written responses will be graded within one week with individualized comments.
-

Opportunities for Additional Interaction & Support

- 📌 Weekly Announcements – I will post weekly updates and reminders to help students stay on track.
 - 📅 Virtual Office Hours – Available for one-on-one meetings via Microsoft Teams. Details will be posted in Blackboard.
 - 📧 Instructor Check-Ins – I will periodically check in through announcements or discussion boards to address common misconceptions, highlight student contributions, and reinforce key concepts.
-

Where to Find These Expectations

These communication and interaction expectations are clearly outlined in:

- ✔ The syllabus (under "Instructor Communication & Feedback Policies")
- ✔ Course orientation materials (in the introductory module)
- ✔ Weekly announcements (to reinforce deadlines and updates)

By providing clear expectations for communication and feedback, I ensure that students receive regular, meaningful, and substantive interaction throughout the course.

- 🔴 Please download Microsoft Teams and enable notifications to stay connected!

Minimum Technology Requirements:

Below are some technical requirements for using Blackboard that will help your experience in this course. You will see the NTCC Tech Support email address and phone number below. Please contact them if you run into any technical problems during the semester. Please let your instructor know you are having difficulties as well. If you need further NTCC technical support services, please contact IT at IT@ntcc.edu or 903.434.8140.

Blackboard will work on both a Mac and a PC. (Chrome Books are known to have issues with Blackboard.) Accessing Blackboard through Fire-Fox or Chrome as your web browser is best. If you have trouble with improper activities, you might change your web browser as your first solution. The Default Browser in Windows 10 is Edge. This browser does not do well with Blackboard! If you go to Windows Accessories, you will find Internet Explorer still on your computer, but it is not your default browser. If you struggle to navigate with Edge, close it and go to Internet Explorer. You can download Blackboard Student for your smartphone from the Play or App stores. More information is available for Technology Requirements and Support under the Student Resources – Technical Support Tab in Blackboard.

Required Computer Literacy Skills:

The ability to communicate via email, including sending attachments; navigate the World Wide Web using a Web browser such as Internet Explorer; use office applications such as Microsoft Office (or similar) to create documents; willingness to learn how to communicate using a discussion board and upload assignments to a classroom Web site. In addition, students need to be comfortable uploading and downloading saved files; navigating blackboard, including using the email component within Blackboard.

For more information or technical assistance on using the Learning Management System, please refer to the Home Page, Orientation Module in Blackboard's critical technical requirement, information, and support folder.

Institutional/Course Policy:

Late work will only be accepted with prior approval by the instructor. Students are always expected to be respectful toward classmates and professors! Review Student Conduct in the Student Handbook., which can be located at <https://www.ntcc.edu/sites/default/files/2024-12/NTCC%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>. It is the student's responsibility to check Blackboard for important information/announcements regarding the course. Students should be working on course material via Blackboard every week. Do not wait until the last minute to complete and submit assignments in case of technical issues.

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure and/or Alternate Course Delivery Requirements:

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Northeast Texas Community College to move to altered operations. During this time, Northeast Texas Community College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to, online through the Blackboard Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor NTCC's website (<http://www.ntcc.edu/>) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, Blackboard for each class for course-specific communication, and NTCC email for important general information.

Additionally, there may be instances where a course may not be able to be continued in the same delivery format as it originates (face-to-face, fully online, live remote, or hybrid). Should this be the case, every effort will be made to continue instruction in an alternative delivery format. Students will be informed of any changes of this nature through email messaging and/or the Blackboard course site.

NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:

NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach, using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion, is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

Artificial Intelligence Statement:

Individual instructors may allow or disallow any use of AI software for coursework. It is the student's responsibility to follow any AI classroom policy and the course's guidelines set forth by the instructor. Integrating AI into the course can undoubtedly bring numerous benefits and advancements. However, any use of AI software must be cited, or it could constitute **academic dishonesty (plagiarism)**. Recognizing the potential risks and ensuring that AI technologies are implemented responsibly and ethically is crucial. Students are fully accountable and responsible for any content, AI or non-AI, used in an assignment that is submitted. If any student has any questions surrounding the use of AI, please reach out to the instructor.

ADA Statement:

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. More information can be located at, <https://www.ntcc.edu/student-services/eagle-assist/classroom-accomodations>. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special population's page on the NTCC website.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law protecting student

education records' privacy. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable U.S. Department of Education program. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when attending a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." A parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the student's written consent. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the student's written consent unless the student requests in writing. Directory information is defined as the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, the field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

Student Social Support Resources:

At Northeast Texas Community College, we understand that students may encounter challenges that can create barriers to success. If you need support or guidance, NTCC offers Eagle Assist—a comprehensive hub where you can access resources beyond the classroom.

<https://www.ntcc.edu/student-services/eagle-assist>. Services available through Eagle Assist include classroom accommodation, mental health counseling, tutoring, the CARE Center, financial literacy, and emergency assistance. NTCC is committed to alleviating barriers and fostering student success, regardless of your lived experiences. To access these services, please email eagleassist@ntcc.edu.

Additionally, if you need further community resources, please visit www.ntcc.edu/carecenter

Title IX Statement:

Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC) is committed to maintaining an educational environment free from discrimination based on sex, in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX prohibits sex-based discrimination in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. This includes, but is not limited to, acts of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and interpersonal violence. Title IX is a federal law that ensures no individual is subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex under any education program or activity. At NTCC, this commitment extends to all students, faculty, and staff, promoting a safe and inclusive campus community. If you or someone you know has experienced any form of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment or violence, NTCC encourages prompt reporting to ensure appropriate support and resources are provided. You can find more information at <https://www.ntcc.edu/about-us/police-department/information-statistics/sexual-harassment>.