SOC 4381 POPULAR CULTURE IN SOCIETY

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OFFICE HOURS
On Campus: MWF 12-1p
Virtual (BB): TTH 9a-12:30p
& By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This upper division selected topic course is designed to look at elements of popular culture from a sociological perspective, including such areas as music, sports, television & film, social media, advertising, computer gaming, gambling, dance, fashion, news outlets, and so forth. Topics and/or focus may vary each semester Prerequisites: None, but SOC 1301 is STRONGLY recommended.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS
Mix It Up: Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society, 2e (2017) by David Grazian
[Note: Do NOT buy the first edition. It has different content after the first chapter or two.]

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS
- Computer with MAC or Windows Operating System
- High Speed Internet Access
- Webcam
- Refer to Angelo State University’s Distance Education website for further technology requirements: http://www.angelo.edu/distance_education/

PRE-REQUISITE SKILLS
Accessing internet web sites, use of ASU Library resources, and proficiency with Microsoft Word and/or PowerPoint are required to successfully complete this Sociology course. Computer access requirements are further delineated in the Undergraduate Handbook. Tutorials for ASU Library and for Blackboard are available through RamPort. The ASU Undergraduate Student Handbook should be reviewed before taking this course. http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/20911-undergraduatetestudenthandbookaug2014-15pdf

BROWSER COMPATIBILITY CHECK
While this is an on-campus course, it will include online content on Blackboard and on the Internet in general. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the browser used to access course material on his/her computer is compatible with ASU’s Blackboard Learning System. The faculty reserve the right to deny additional access to course assignments lost due to compatibility issues. Students are responsible for reviewing the guidelines posted in this course regarding accessing Blackboard assignments. Problems in this area need to be discussed with faculty at the time of occurrence, either via a phone call (preferred) during posted acceptable hours for calling, or via email notification during times outside those posted for calls.
Be sure to perform a browser test. Select the “Support” tab from the Blackboard homepage (http://www.blackboard.angelo.edu) Select “Test your Browser” option.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assignment(s) or activity(ies) validating outcome achievement:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)</td>
<td>Reading, Videos, In-Class Assignments/Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories</td>
<td>Reading, Videos, In-Class Assignments/Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)</td>
<td>Reaction Papers, In-Class Assignments/Quizzes, Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view</td>
<td>Discussions, Photo Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers</td>
<td>Reaction Papers &amp; Photo Essay, Open Topics</td>
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**GRADING SYSTEM**
Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes. The following grading scale is in use for this course:

- A = 500-450 points
- B = 449-400 points
- C = 399-350 points
- D = 349-300 points
- F = 0-299 points (Grades are not rounded up)

**EVALUATION AND GRADES**
Graded assignments, activities and percent of the overall course grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>% OF GRADE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Assignments/Quizzes</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online-Discussions</td>
<td>100 (4 x 50 points each)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers</td>
<td>200 (4 x 50 points each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COURSE GRADE</td>
<td>500</td>
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</table>
**TEACHING STRATEGIES**

- Students are encouraged to stay current on the readings and turn assignments in on time. This will benefit them and others as they seek to participate meaningfully in the course.
- Students are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved *(beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course)* discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and experiences with their peers.
- Students are asked to seek help early if they have problems, questions, or concerns during the semester. Every student has something unique to offer to the discourse on popular culture. If one drops or disengages from the others, that decreases the diversity of the dialog for everyone.

**ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS**

**In-Class Assignments/Quizzes** are designed to help students build and test their understanding of the sociological concepts and principles underpinning the written and video material presented each week. Given the participatory nature of most of these assignments, students will not be allowed to makeup in-class work missed except mini-quizzes (for half credit). Regular class attendance will be vital in getting the most out of this course and enhancing the experience of classmates. This aspect of the course emphasizes that students are part of a [learning] community not just an isolated individual, a concept that is pervasive in current popular culture.

**Reaction Papers** are 1-4 page writing assignments that provide an opportunity for students to apply course concepts to their personal lives, to examples of popular culture they find interesting, and to the larger society.

**Discussions** offer students an avenue for synthesis of material / information. A Discussion Board is provided in this course as a way to help students’ process course materials, express thoughts, and engage others opinions and ideas in a healthy and productive learning environment that is available outside of the classroom.

**GENERAL POLICIES RELATED TO THIS COURSE**

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in the following documents:

- ASU Undergraduate Catalog located on the ASU website [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/16795-201213-undergraduate-catalog](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/16795-201213-undergraduate-catalog)

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**

As mentioned above, attendance and participation is mandatory. Just showing up is not enough. There are readings which you will have to complete to be able to adequately participate in individual and group assignments. In order to complete this course successfully, you need to participate in course activities i.e. discussion boards, course projects, reflective logs, etc. Students are expected to engage in course activities and submit work by due dates and times. The hope is that students will make substantive contributions which reflect integration of assigned materials as well as any outside readings as appropriate. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. For planning purposes, this class will probably require a minimum of 6-9 study hours per week on average.
COMMUNICATION
In most cases, Dr. Simpson will respond to your email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend messages may not be returned until Monday.

Written communication via Blackboard: It is an expectation of this class that you use formal writing skills giving appropriate credit to the source for your ideas. Follow APA (2010) 6th edition (2nd Printing or higher only) guidelines for referencing.

Written communication via email: All private communication will be done exclusively through your ASU email address. Check frequently for announcements and policy changes. Please start your subject line with “SOC POP” so your message does not get buried. I can search by that term instead of sifting through 300-400 emails.

Virtual communication: Office hours will be via Blackboard’s Connect! for now. May add skype later.

Use Good "Netiquette" for online discussions:
• Check the discussion frequently and respond appropriately and on subject.
• Focus on one subject per message and use pertinent subject titles.
• Capitalize words only to highlight a point or for titles. Otherwise, capitalizing is generally viewed as SHOUTING!
• Be professional and careful with your online interaction. Proper address for faculty is by formal title such as Dr. or Ms./Mr. Jones unless invited by faculty to use a less formal approach.
• Cite all quotes, references, and sources.
• When posting a long message, it is generally considered courteous to warn readers at the beginning of the message that it is a lengthy post.
• It is extremely rude to forward someone else's messages without their permission.
• It is fine to use humor, but use it carefully. The absence of face-to-face cues can cause humor to be misinterpreted as criticism or flaming (angry, antagonistic criticism). Feel free to use emoticons such as J or :) to let others know you are being humorous.

(The "netiquette" guidelines were adapted from Arlene H. Rinald's article, The Net User Guidelines and Netiquette, Florida Atlantic University, 1994, available from Netcom.)

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION
In this class, all assignments need to be submitted through the Assignments link in the Blackboard course site. This is for grading purposes. Issues with technology use arise from time to time. If a technology issue does occur regarding an assignment submission, email the professor at shirley.simpson@angelo.edu and attach a copy of what you are trying to submit. This lets her know you completed the assignment on time and are just having problems with the online submission feature in Blackboard. **Once the problem is resolved, you MUST submit your assignment through the appropriate link in a timely manner or you will get a zero.** This process will document the problem and establish a timeline. Be sure to keep a backup of all work.
LATE WORK OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

The course is divided into four modules or topic area of about 4 weeks each. For the purpose of clarity, a week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday for written assignments and discussions that are not done in class. Assignment due dates are shown on the calendar/schedule and/or posted within Blackboard. **Late assignments will not be accepted without PRIOR approval of faculty.** Your professor reserves the right to deduct points for late assignments that are accepted past the original due date. Under no circumstance will an assignment be accepted more than a week past due.

**Note:** Keep in mind that missed assignments, even one for 5 or 10 points, can mean the difference between one grade and a lower one at the end of the semester. It happens a LOT. Don’t ask to do extra credit to make up for required work you did not complete. Do not wait until the last week or two of the semester to scour the grade book for missing or incorrect grades. You should check grades as you go along. If you get a zero for an assignment you did or get a score you think is incorrect, you only have a week to point it out. After that, the grade becomes permanent. This policy is to prevent point “fishing” at the end of the semester when some students realize how close they were to a higher grade and are desperate to find points.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The Psychology, Sociology & Social Work Department adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php](http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php). The University "faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word for word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. We use the *APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association* as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Bb Safe Assignment or Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center [http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php](http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. “Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAAA), and subsequent legislation.”

2. The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the
student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

**INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY** (OP 10.11 Grading Procedures)
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required.

**STUDENT ABSENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS**
“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.” Please see ASU Operating Policy 10.19.

**COPYRIGHT POLICY**
Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

**SYLLABUS CHANGES**
The faculty member reserves the option to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content. If changes become necessary during this course, the faculty will notify students of such changes by email, course announcements and/or via a discussion board announcement. It is the student’s responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a daily basis.