SOC 4381 Post-Apocalyptic Games
(SUM1 2020, Online, 6/1-7/1)

Dr. Shirley Simpson
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Contact: Please contact “Dr. Simpson” using the Forum (I have a question…), Email (Subject “PAGames”), or BB Connect! (by Appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this online course, students will use post-apocalyptic games (e.g., video games, board games, and role-playing games) as a vehicle to understand world-building from a sociological perspective. They will grapple with questions of social significance. For example, what happens after people survive a cataclysmic event? Where do they go? Who do they trust? How do they rebuild? How do their decisions affect their life chances and those of their progeny? While students will be asked to play video games, singleplayer and/or multiplayer, the emphasis will be on critical thinking and sociological analysis.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S): NONE (will be provided or available online)

OTHER REQUIREMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL COURSE COMPLETION
- Computer with MAC or Windows Operating System
- High Speed Internet Access
- Access to a Webcam, Digital Camera or other recording device
- Access to Post-Apocalyptic Video Games

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assignment(s) or activity(ies) best validating outcome achievement:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By completing all course requirements, students will be able to:</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Handouts, Videos, Articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Gaining factual knowledge</td>
<td>3 &amp; 5 Activities/Exercises/Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories</td>
<td>4 &amp; 6 Cyberlectures, Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Learning to apply course material</td>
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<td>4. Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing</td>
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<td>5. Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems</td>
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<td>6. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view</td>
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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. If students don’t come to class or refuse to engage others while in class, that decreases the diversity of the dialog for everyone.

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 = 100-90 points
- B = 80-89 points
- C = 70-79 points
- D = 60-69 points
- F = 0-59 points (Grades will not be rounded up)

EVALUATION AND GRADES

Want to do well? Complete all graded coursework on time and according to instructions, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises/Discussions</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming Activities</td>
<td>20</td>
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TOTAL COURSE GRADE 100

ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

- **Weekly Cyberlectures** are designed to give you an opportunity to learn, engage, clarify, and grapple with the basic concepts & principles of sociology.

- **Supplemental Material** (e.g., Videos/Articles/Images/Game Lists/Software links) are presented to help clarify and enrich your understanding of (post-apocalyptic) sociology and to provide more examples than we could cover in the traditional 50-minute class.

- **Weekly Exercises/Discussions** are designed to make you think critically about how course concepts relate to one another, to you and to a dismal (hopefully fictional) future. What forces have shaped who you are, what you believe, and how you live? How might your perspective differ from others? How might your perspective/behavior change in a post-apocalyptic environment/situation? What kind of world does this or that game/video present? What values and behavior does that worldview applaud, justify and/or condemn? How does that worldview differ from other game worlds? How do the common themes in PA games relate to reality? For example, would there really be a shortage of resources if most of a given population is wiped out?

- **Weekly Gaming Activities** are necessary if you are going to make meaningful connections between sociology and post-apocalyptic video games. It is okay if you are new to the PA genre or to video games in general. Course
content will point to an array of games for beginners as well as those more familiar with gaming environments. And, seriously, if you don’t want to play or think about PA games, why would you take this class? ;)

**Weekly Quizzes** in this course will have 2-10 questions and serve to test your competence in the essential concepts & principles of sociology AND your ability to apply those concepts & principles to fictional (and real-world) situations.

**COMMUNICATING WITH THE PROFESSOR**
Dr. Simpson does not hold on-campus office hours during summer sessions but will respond to your emails and/or forum inquiries within 12-24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. After-hour and weekend communication may take a bit longer. I encourage you to reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, or whatnot. That said, PLEASE do not send multiple messages about the same issue. If I don’t respond to the first one right away, sending 5 more within a 24-hour period isn’t going to get a faster response.

*Written communication via Blackboard:* There is a discussion on the forum to ask general questions.

*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 “PAGames” so your message does not get buried in my out-of-control university inbox. I can search by that term instead of sifting through 300-400 emails.

*Other communication methods:* Blackboard’s Connect! (by appointment only)

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**
Students are expected to login regularly, engage in course activities, and submit work by posted due dates. The goal is for students to 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 2-4 hours per day during the week.

**ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION**
Discussions and Gaming Activities in this course will be submitted via the forum (which time stamps everything). Remember DO NOT submit gaming videos directly to the forum. Use Kaltura Media Mashup. Weekly "quizzes" will be completed using Respondus Lockdown Browser with monitor (i.e., requires a webcam). Students should double check to be sure they actually posted an entry to the forum or submitted a completed quiz. The professor can't grade something that isn't there or reopen a quiz because a student forgot to hit submit before the deadline. Not there? Try again. If it still does not upload, contact IT support, or go to an on-campus lab for help.

Typically, the forum is the most reliable submission format, but if you cannot solve your technology issues, email the professor at ssimpson7@angelo.edu and attach a copy of what you were trying to post (nt videos!). Be sure to tell her what you attempted to solve the problem on your own. This lets her know you completed the assignment on time and are just having problems with the online submission feature in Blackboard. This process will document the problem and establish a timeline. Be sure to keep a backup of all work. Do NOT wait until after the deadline to send the email.

Please note that the professor can, at her discretion, reject assignments sent to her email, especially if the student submitted an assignment previously via email or has waited until the last minute to upload the assignment (i.e., later than 5 PM on the final due date). If she rejects your assignment or you send it late, you will receive a zero.
**LATE WORK OR MISSING ASSIGNMENTS POLICY**

**Late assignments will not be accepted.** We just don’t have that luxury during 4-week summer sessions.

*Note: Keep in mind that missed assignments, even one for 5 points, can mean the difference between one grade and a lower one at the end of the session. 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 days 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 24 hours after the grade is posted to point out the error. After that, the grade becomes permanent. This policy is to prevent point “fishing” at the end of the term when some students realize how close they were to a higher grade and are desperate to find enough points to bump them up.*

**PROBLEM WITH A BLACKBOARD GRADE?**

Check your grades regularly. If you do not have a score within 48 hours after the deadline, receive a zero on an assignment/exercise you completed, or get a score you think is in error, please do NOT wait until the end of the semester to point it out. Send a polite email so I can check it for you. My goal is to give you the grade you earned, not an erroneous one.

**General Policies Related to All Courses at ASU**

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

- [Angelo State University Student Handbook](#)
- [Angelo State University Catalog](#)

**Student Responsibility and Attendance**

*Online: This class is asynchronous, meaning you do not have to be on-line at a certain time. 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 do have to participate in all 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.*

**Academic Integrity**

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

The College of Health and Human Services adheres to the university’s [Statement of Academic Integrity](#).

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

ASU 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 of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the [Student Disability Services website](#). The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:
Incomplete Grade Policy

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. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. 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. 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. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center.

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. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information.

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.

Student Evaluation of Faculty and Course

Students in all programs are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and the faculty who teach them. Evaluations are most helpful when they are honest, fair, constructive, and pertinent to the class, clinical experience, or course. Faculty value student evaluations, and use student suggestions in making modifications in courses, labs and clinical experiences. Angelo State University uses the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) system administered through Kansas State University for all course evaluations. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment administers IDEA for the entire university, online and has established a policy whereby students can complete course evaluations free from coercion.

Title IX at Angelo State University

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:
Online: www.angelo.edu/incident-form
Face to face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
Phone: 325-942-2022
Email: michelle.boone@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator.

Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, without them sharing that information with others on campus, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171). You may also choose to contact the San Angelo Police Department or Police Department where the incident occurred.

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State’s policy please visit: www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

SYLLABUS CHANGES
The professor is acting in good faith to give students the best educational experience and quality possible, which sometimes requires her to adapt course material after the semester begins. Thus, the faculty member reserves the right to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content, including but not limited the total points available, number or length of assignments, deadlines, and so forth. This means that students should not, under any circumstances, skip assignments thinking it will be okay because there are still this or that many points remaining. Such behavior is unacceptable and may backfire.

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 daily.
Course Schedule with due dates

Week 1: Welcome to the Apocalypse

- Syllabus, Course Intro
- Cyberlecture 1
  - Definitions/Basic Sociological Concepts
  - Articles/Videos/Featured Game or Games
  - Professor’s Master Game List
- Graded Assignments: **Due by 11:59 PM, Sunday, June 7**
  - Self-Intro + Survey (10 points)
  - Gameplay Activity #1 (5 points + extra credit opportunity)
  - Quiz #1 (10 points)

Week 2: Post-Apocalyptic Games, Part 1

- Cyberlecture 2
  - More Sociological Concepts Relevant to PA Games
  - Articles/Videos/Featured Game or Games
- Graded Assignments: **Due by 11:59 PM, Sunday, June 14**
  - Assignment/Discussion (10 points)
  - Gameplay Activity #2 (5 points + EC op)
  - Quiz #2 (10 points)

Week 3: Post-Apocalyptic Games, Part 2

- Lecture/Discussion/Activities/Videos
- Cyberlecture 3
  - More Sociological Concepts Relevant to PA Games
  - Articles/Videos/Featured Game or Games
- Graded Assignments: **Due by 11:59 PM, Sunday, June 21**
  - Assignment/Discussion (10 points)
  - Gameplay Activity #3 (5 points + EC Op)
  - Quiz #3 (10 points)

Week 4: Surviving or Thriving

- Cyberlecture 4
  - Honing Our Sociological Analysis of PA Games
  - Articles/Videos/Featured Reviews
- Graded Assignments: **Due by 11:59 PM, Monday, June 29**
  - Review Assignment/Discussion (10 points)
  - Gameplay Activity #4 (5 points + EC op)
  - Quiz #4 (10 points) - Regular quiz (30-60 minutes)