

Course information

Course number: SOCI 311

Course title: Social Change

Section: 299

Time: Online

Location: Online

Credit hours: 3 (three)

Course website: <http://www.ernestoamaral.com/soci311-25summer.html>

This website provides this syllabus, slides, details about assessments and grades, videos, extra readings, external links, and other materials, which will be uploaded throughout the semester.

Canvas website: <https://canvas.tamu.edu/courses/370915>

I will utilize Canvas to write announcements to students, receive assignments, quizzes and exams, and post grades. **If students want to communicate with me, you should email me. I do not check messages sent to my Canvas Inbox.**

Recorded lectures: <http://www.youtube.com/c/ErnestoAmaralPhD>

Lectures will be recorded and uploaded to the YouTube channel.

Instructor details

Instructor: Ernesto F. L. Amaral, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
(<http://www.ernestoamaral.com>)

Office: West Campus Social Sciences Building (WCSS) 320
(<https://aggiemap.tamu.edu/?bldg=1609>)

Phone: (979)845–9706

Email: amaral@tamu.edu

Office hours: <https://tamu.zoom.us/my/amaral>

I will provide office hours by appointment. Students must request appointments by email at least 48 hours in advance. When you enter this Zoom session, you will be placed in a waiting room. I will add you to the chat after I finish talking to the previous student.

Course description

This course offers a comprehensive survey of major transformations in American and Western societies, exploring the forces that drive social change and the tensions that arise as a result. Through historical and contemporary perspectives, students will analyze how political, economic, environmental, and cultural dynamics have shaped global development and inequality. The course emphasizes global interdependence and the evolution of social institutions in response to shifting power structures and ideologies. Students will explore dynamics of development and globalization, with a focus on how these processes shape social, political, and environmental realities across the globe.

The course content is structured around the following core topics:

1. Development
2. Contextualizing the development project (late 1940s to early 1970s): Colonialism, anticolonial struggles, and decolonization
3. The development project: An international framework in global context
4. Instituting the globalization project (1980s to 2000s)
5. Experiencing the globalization project: Processes and implications
6. The globalization project in crisis (2000s to present)
7. Global reorderings
8. Development climate, or the nature of development
9. Public and local green initiatives
10. Toward sustainable development

Through lectures, readings, and online discussions, students will critically assess the challenges and possibilities of social change in a rapidly transforming world. Course material will be assessed through quizzes, a final exam, and online discussions on key topics. You are expected to read the textbook chapters before taking the quizzes and final exam, as these will test your ability to describe and explain the course content. Lectures should be viewed prior to completing the Perusall assignments to help you critically analyze and engage with the material more effectively.

Course prerequisites

Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

Course learning outcomes

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. **Describe** key historical and contemporary processes that have shaped social change in American, Western, and global contexts. (*Remembering*)
2. **Explain** the development project and the globalization project, including their origins, goals, and social impacts. (*Understanding*)
3. **Analyze** the effects of colonialism, decolonization, and neoliberal globalization on different world regions. (*Analyzing*)
4. **Evaluate** competing perspectives on sustainable development and the environmental consequences of global development models. (*Evaluating*)
5. **Compare and contrast** local and global initiatives aimed at addressing climate challenges and development inequalities. (*Analyzing*)
6. **Develop** a critical perspective on current global reorderings and propose informed responses to contemporary development crises. (*Creating*)

Textbook and resource materials

The following textbook is **required** for this course. There are several options to buy or rent (new, used or digital) copies of this book. As a student at Texas A&M you are not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from independent retailers, including online retailers.

(M) McMichael, Philip; Heloise Weber. 2025. **Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective**. Thousand Oaks: Sage. 8th edition. ([VitalSource eBook](#)) ([Amazon](#))

Grading policy

Grading scale: The course follows the standard rules of the university regarding the letter grading scale (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule10>).

| Assessment | Percent of final grade | Details | Grading scale | Percent |
|----------------------|------------------------|---|---------------|---------|
| Perusall assessments | 50% | 10 assessments, 5 points/assessment, at least 5 comments/assessment | A | 90–100% |
| Quizzes | 30% | 20 quizzes, 3 questions per quiz, 0.5 points per question | B | 80–89% |
| Final exam | 20% | 100 questions, 0.2 points per question | C | 70–79% |
| Total | 100% | | D | 60–69% |
| | | | F | 0–59% |

Do not miss assignments, quizzes, and the final exam. Every point is important to your grade.

All assessments will not be graded on a curve.

Grades will not be rounded up (e.g., 59.9 is an F, 69.9 is a D, 79.9 is a C, 89.9 is a B).

Plagiarism: All students who commit plagiarism are assigned zero for the assessment.

Study groups: You are not competing with others in this class for a grade. Feel free to form study groups to review course materials. However, assignments, quizzes, and exams are not group projects. Students should complete all graded activities individually. Students should not prepare or compare their answers to these activities with the work of others before submitting for a grade.

Perusall assessments: Perusall is a tool that aims to change how students view the reading of material from a solitary experience to one that is engaging and collaborative with classmates and instructors. **You access these assessments directly on Canvas.** Perusall automatically grades students' engagement with the assigned materials and once prompted, will upload grades to Canvas.

Due date: The **due dates** of Perusall assessments are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus. These assessments are **open through Canvas from the beginning of the semester until 11:59pm of the due date.**

Comments: Basically, I ask you to read the textbook chapters throughout the course. You should write comments and engage in discussions with your colleagues in order to get points for these activities.

Goal: For each Perusall assignment, **your five highest quality comments will be graded.** I recommend that you contribute more than five comments to improve your chances of earning a good score. You should write comments distributed throughout the chapter, not only on a specific portion of the assigned material. You should also interact with other students, since a portion of your grade comes from starring other comments and engaging in dialogues with your classmates.

Zero if no comments: Students who just open the chapter, but do not write any comments, will earn a zero on the specific assessment.

Engaging with others: If you want to hear from another student, just make an annotation with names following the "@".

Hiding comments: You might want to read the chapters without comments from other students. This will create a “clean copy” that will allow you to focus on your reading and then enable the comments when you are ready to interact. To temporarily hide highlights from other students, click on the “All comments” dropdown in the top navigation bar and select “No comments.”

Perusall grading: Students will earn their grades on each Perusall assessment according to the following grading criteria:

| Grading criteria for each Perusall assessment | Points |
|--|-------------|
| Quality of comment 1 | 0.81 |
| Quality of comment 2 | 0.81 |
| Quality of comment 3 | 0.81 |
| Quality of comment 4 | 0.81 |
| Quality of comment 5 | 0.81 |
| Comments distributed throughout assessment | 0.45 |
| Reading/watching the entire material | 0.50 |
| Maximum possible points per Perusall assessment | 5.00 |

Quizzes will be available on Canvas (**open from 12:00am until 11:59pm of the due date**) and will consist of multiple-choice questions and/or other types of questions. Students will answer the quiz online on Canvas. The content of the quiz can cover any topic we discussed throughout the course up to the day of the quiz. You will be allowed to look at your notes and class material to answer the questions. The **dates** of quizzes are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

The **Final exam** will be given online on Canvas and will consist of multiple-choice questions and/or other types of questions. There will be no face-to-face class on the final exam day. You will be allowed to look at your notes and class material to answer the questions. This exam will be given during final examinations week in accordance with the schedule published by the Office of the Registrar (<https://aggie.tamu.edu/registration-and-records/classes/final-examination-schedules>). The **date** and **time** of the final exam are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

Guide for online quizzes and final exam

Students should read the **following instructions** about online quizzes and the final exam before starting them on Canvas. The **dates** of quizzes, exams, and the final exam are available in the calendar of activities of this syllabus.

1. Main information about your online quiz:

- 1.1. Three questions at 0.5 points each for a total of 1.5 points.
- 1.2. The quiz will be available on Canvas from 12:00am until 11:59pm of the due date.
- 1.3. However, once you begin, you will have **five minutes to complete the quiz**.
- 1.4. One minute and 40 seconds per question (3 questions, 5 minutes in total).

2. Main information about your online final exam:

- 2.1. 100 questions at 0.2 points each for a total of 20 points.
- 2.2. The final exam will be available on Canvas from 12:00am until 11:59pm of the due date.
- 2.3. However, once you begin, you will have **two hours to complete the final exam**.
- 2.4. One minute and 20 seconds per question (100 questions, 120 minutes in total).

3. More information about quizzes and exams:

- 3.1. **No password** is required.
- 3.2. The **questions will be randomly selected** by Canvas from a pool of questions that I created. Thus, these questions will not be the same for all students.
- 3.3. The quiz or exam will **shut down once the time limit has been reached**, so pay attention to the clock.
- 3.4. The quiz or exam will **close once the deadline has been reached**, even if you only just started it.
- 3.5. You will only see **one question at a time**.
- 3.6. You **cannot go back to the previous question** once you submit your answer.
- 3.7. Use a **good internet connection** to take the quizzes and exams, such as the wireless connection at Texas A&M University.
- 3.8. **If you do lose your internet connection**, I recommend that you close your browser and then sign back into Canvas. You should be able to continue the test where you left off. Please note that the clock will continue to run, so do not assume that you have lots of time to utilize.

4. If you have problems, tell me:

- 4.1. If you have any problems at all, please contact me as soon as possible through email.
- 4.2. I will be available throughout the day to help you.
- 4.3. Do not wait 20–30 minutes before contacting me about any problems.
- 4.4. I want to know immediately so that I can help.

Course schedule (tentative)

The tentative calendar of activities below includes dates, course topics, readings, and assessments due dates for this course. Changes will be indicated during classes and will be posted on the course website.

| Lecture | Date | Topic | Reading Author.chapter | Assessments |
|-------------|----------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| JULY | | | | |
| 01 | 07/02 (Wednesday) | Syllabus & Development | Syllabus & M.1 | |
| 02 | 07/03 (Thursday) | Development | M.1 | |
| — | 07/04 (Friday) | No class: Independence Day | — | — |
| 03 | 07/07 (Monday) | Development | M.1 | |
| 04 | 07/08 (Tuesday) | Contextualizing the development project (Last day to add/drop courses) | M.2 | |
| 05 | 07/09 (Wednesday) | Contextualizing the development project | M.2 | Quiz 1 Perusall 1 |
| 06 | 07/10 (Thursday) | Contextualizing the development project | M.2 | Quiz 2 |
| 07 | 07/11 (Friday) | The development project | M.3 | Quiz 3 Perusall 2 |
| 08 | 07/14 (Monday) | The development project | M.3 | Quiz 4 |
| 09 | 07/15 (Tuesday) | The development project | M.3 | Quiz 5 |
| 10 | 07/16 (Wednesday) | Instituting the globalization project | M.4 | Quiz 6 Perusall 3 |
| 11 | 07/17 (Thursday) | Instituting the globalization project | M.4 | Quiz 7 |
| 12 | 07/18 (Friday) | Instituting the globalization project | M.4 | Quiz 8 |
| 13 | 07/21 (Monday) | Experiencing the globalization project | M.5 | Quiz 9 Perusall 4 |
| 14 | 07/22 (Tuesday) | Experiencing the globalization project | M.5 | Quiz 10 |
| 15 | 07/23 (Wednesday) | The globalization project in crisis (Q-drop deadline) | M.6 | Quiz 11 Perusall 5 |
| 16 | 07/24 (Thursday) | The globalization project in crisis | M.6 | Quiz 12 |
| 17 | 07/25 (Friday) | Global reorderings | M.7 | Quiz 13 Perusall 6 |
| 18 | 07/28 (Monday) | Global reorderings | M.7 | Quiz 14 |
| 19 | 07/29 (Tuesday) | Development climate | M.8 | Quiz 15 Perusall 7 |
| 20 | 07/30 (Wednesday) | Development climate | M.8 | Quiz 16 |
| 21 | 07/31 (Thursday) | Public and local green initiatives | M.9 | Quiz 17 Perusall 8 |

| Lecture | Date | Topic | Reading Author.chapter | Assessments |
|---------------|----------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| AUGUST | | | | |
| 22 | 08/01 (Friday) | Public and local green initiatives | M.9 | Quiz 18 |
| 23 | 08/04 (Monday) | Toward sustainable development | M.10 | Quiz 19 Perusall 9 |
| 24 | 08/05 (Tuesday) | Toward sustainable development | M.10 | Quiz 20 |
| 25 | 08/06 (Wednesday) | Final exam (once you begin in Canvas, you will have two hours to complete the exam) | | Final exam Perusall 10 |

Department of Sociology Civility Statement

The Department of Sociology supports Texas A&M University's commitment to civility and welcomes individuals of all ages, citizenship, abilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, languages, military experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences (see <http://diversity.tamu.edu/>). As this is a social science class, discussions are to be research-based and should always be presented in a respectful manner when engaging with fellow students, teaching assistants, and instructors. This applies both inside and outside of the classroom and includes online spaces. The Student Conduct Code Rule 21 regarding appropriate classroom behavior will also be strictly enforced (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule21/>). If a student is being disruptive or disrespectful (rude, inappropriate, unprofessional, and/or harmful to others) either in the classroom or during class-related communications outside of lecture (online or in-person), the instructor or teaching assistant will address this behavior following the department and university disciplinary guidelines. See (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/home-page/civility/>) for a more detailed discussion of these principles and the rules of conduct.

Learning resources

The mission of the University Writing Center (UWC) is to help you develop and refine the communication skills vital to success in college and beyond. You can choose to work with a trained UWC peer consultant in person or via web conference or email. Consultants can help with everything from lab reports to application essays and at any stage of your process, from brainstorming to reviewing the final draft. You can also get help with public speaking, presentations, and group projects. The UWC's main location is on the second floor of Evans Library; there's also a walk-in location on the second floor of West Campus Library. To schedule an appointment or view our helpful handouts and videos, visit <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu>. Or call (979)458–1455.

Office hours

Office hours are intended to assist students who are seeking help understanding course materials (lectures, readings, lab classes, etc.) and to mentor students. Office hours do not substitute for attendance in class. I will not discuss missed classes unless the student missed those classes because of an authorized excuse. University rules related to excused and unexcused absences are located online at [Student Rule 7](#). As Student Rules state: (1) it is the student's responsibility to attend class; and (2) if I used office hours to substitute for attendance in class, it would be a disservice to students who wish to use office hours to enhance their academic success.

Late work policy

Students are not allowed to submit their course work after the due date. Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy (see [Student Rule 7](#)).

Extracts from Student Rule 7

I provide below some important information extracted from Texas A&M [Student Rule 7](#). I simply follow the rules established by the university.

From 7.1 Notification of absences

– The student must provide notification of excused absences to the instructor in writing (e-mail is acceptable) prior to the day of absence.

– In cases where advanced notification is not possible, the student must provide notification by the end of the second business day after the last date of the absence. This notification must include an explanation of why notice could not be sent.

From 7.2 Absences

– Only excused absences defined by Texas A&M University are accepted (check the list on [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2](#)).

From 7.3 Absence documentation and verification

– The student is responsible for providing documentation substantiating the reason for the excused absence, including the reasons stated in Section 7.2.

– This documentation must be provided within three business days of the last date of the absence, unless otherwise stated in this rule.

From 7.4 Make up work

– Make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 30 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence.

In summary

– *Student must submit explanation about excused absence by email to professor with attached documentation, listing the exact item within Section 7.2.2 of Student Rule 7 that refers to the absence.*

University policies

Attendance policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup work policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

Academic integrity statement and policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Resources office on your campus (resources listed below) Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

Disability Resources is located in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu.

Title IX and statement on limits to confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, a person who is subjected to the alleged conduct will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on mental health and wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing available resources and services on your campus

Students who need someone to talk to can contact Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) or call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Academic freedom

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning.¹ Each faculty member is entitled to full freedom in the classroom discussing the subject which the faculty member teaches.² Texas A&M will not penalize or discipline members of the faculty because of their exercise of academic freedom.

Along with this freedom comes responsibility. It is the responsibility of faculty members to ensure that topics discussed are related to the classroom subject. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.³ It is not the proper role of the university or any outside agency to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive.⁴ Engaging with new ideas and perspectives helps students grow intellectually and is beneficial to the educational process.

¹ 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

² Texas A&M System Regulation 12.01: Section 1.2.

³ American Association of University Professors Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students.

⁴ The Chicago Statement.