

First, I would like to say **THANK YOU!** I consider it an honor that you have chosen to be in our course. I want to thank you in advance for the time and hard work that you will put into this learning experience. One of the keys to being successful in college is to maintain communication with your instructors. Feel free to call, e-mail, or to make an appointment if I can help you be successful in this course. I hope that your grade in this course will reflect the effort you put into it.

The Common Course Syllabus is identical for all instructors of this course. The Course Information Sheet contains information for specific instructors.

Common Course Syllabus

Course-Specific Information

Department: Behavioral Sciences

Discipline: Psychology

Course Number: PSYC 2314

Course Name: Lifespan Growth and Development

Credit: 3 Lecture: 3 Lab: 0

Satisfies a core curriculum requirement? Yes, Behavioral or Social Science

Prerequisites: TSI reading compliance for INET

Available Formats: conventional; INET

Campuses: Levelland, Reese, Lubbock Center, Plainview, INET

Textbook: *Human Development: A Cultural Approach*, 2nd edition. Arnett, J. J., Pearson, 2016. (Some instructors require REVEL access code; See Instructor's Course Information)

Course Description: Life-Span Growth and Development is a study of social, emotional, cognitive and physical factors and influences of a developing human from conception to death.

Course Purpose: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the major theories and concepts in life span development including the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial changes that occur from conception till death.

Course Requirements: To maximize the potential to successfully complete this course, the student should attend all class meetings, complete all homework assignments in a timely manner, and complete all examinations including the final exam. Internet courses require the work to be completed in specific time periods.

Course Evaluation: Please see the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluation student performance.

Course Specific Instructions: go to Blackboard Learn 9 for INET classes

Student Learning Outcomes: Students who have successfully completed this course will be expected to:

1. Describe the stages of the developing person at different periods of the life span from birth to death.
2. Discuss the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that affect the development process of the individual.
3. Identify factors of responsible personal behavior with regard to issues such as sexual activity, substance abuse, marriage and parenting.
4. Explain the biosocial, cognitive and psychological influences throughout the lifespan as an ongoing set of processes, involving both continuity and change.
5. Describe the different developmental perspectives of the major theories of development (i.e. cognitive, learning, humanistic and psychodynamic).
6. Identify examples of some of the cultural and ethnic differences that influence development throughout the lifespan.
7. Discuss the various causes or reasons for disturbances in the developmental process.

Core Objectives addressed:

- **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 manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
- **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.

Coordinating Board Approval Number (CIP) 42.2703.51 25

Relevant SPC Policies & Procedures

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. 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 in 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 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 MySPC using his or her student online account. 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 for additions to the attendance policy. (See Catalog)

Academic 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. This policy relates to all forms of cheating and plagiarism. See Instructor’s Course Information for additions to the academic integrity policy.

Student Conduct: A high standard of conduct is expected of all students. Students are subject to federal, state and local laws, as well as South Plains College rules and regulations. Any student who fails to perform according to expected standards may be asked to withdraw. Failure to comply with 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 Catalog/Student Guide for full policy). See Instructor’s Course Information for additional policies related to student conduct.

Academic Appeals: The Vice President for Student Affairs is the South Plains College Title IX Coordinator and is designated to formally investigate student grievances, address inquiries and coordinate the College’s compliance efforts regarding student complaints and grievances. Whenever possible and safe, the problem or complaint should first be discussed with the individual involved in the complaint. If satisfactory resolution is not reached after discussion with the individual, the student should contact the individual’s direct supervisor to attempt to resolve the complaint. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the formal grievance process may be initiated. The College does not require a student to contact the person involved or that person’s supervisor if doing so is impracticable, or if the student believes that the conduct cannot be effectively addressed through informal means (See Catalog/Student Guide for full definitions and policy).

Disability Services: Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services

Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) & Lubbock Center 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

Diversity & Equal Rights: South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President of Student Affairs.

All students are entitled to equal rights under the affirmative action and equal opportunity laws. Students are also protected against unjust or biased academic evaluation, but at the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. (See Catalog/Student Guide for full definitions and policies)

Campus Concealed Carry Policy:

- Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at: (http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php)
- Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

Course Information Sheet

Instructor: Jeff Ross

Office: RC405H

Office Hours: MW-3:45-5:15, R 2:00-4:00, F: 9:00AM-12:00PM, or by appointment.

Schedule: MW-PSYC2314: Sec. 202-2:30-5:15, Sec. 203-5:30-6:45, in RC451, TR-PSYC2314: Sec. 208-5:30-6:45, and T only: Sec.209-6:00-8:50, in RC451

E-mail: jross@southplainscollege.edu

Telephone: (806) 716-4033

Textbook: *Human Development: A Cultural Approach*, 2nd edition. Arnett, J. J., Pearson, 2016. (Some instructors require REVEL access code; See Instructor's Course Information) I do not require the REVEL access code, but I do recommend it. I will talk more about this in class.

IMPORTANT: This is a blended course, and requires regular use of a computer with internet access. All course communications, online discussions, and projects will be conducted/submitted using SPC Blackboard. **Blackboard Learn 9** is the computer software used to deliver this course. You may log into your course at: <http://southplainscollege.blackboard.com/> . You may also use the link to Blackboard in the upper right-hand side of the SPC Homepage. It is recommended that you bookmark the Blackboard page as it is on a separate server and if the SPC website is down you can typically still access your Blackboard course if you use the URL or bookmark. Your log-in is the same as your MySPC log-in. It is essential that you have reliable computer and access to the Internet and you should have a backup plan in place should you encounter computer problems. There are open computer labs available to all enrolled SPC students on all campuses. 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 at blackboard@southplainscollege.edu or call (806) 716-2180. Be sure to include course and section number information when contacting technical support. A note, contact your instructor for any questions you have about course content as technical support is only for issues concerning computers or Blackboard performance. You will need to be able to check your SPC-Bb email at least 2-3 times a week, though daily would be preferable. It is also highly recommended that you check your SPC student email account regularly for SPC information.

It is recommended that you view the Student_Orientation: Blackboard Learn 9 Student Orientation, listed in your My Courses section of the MyBlackboard page.

Computer Requirements:

Browser Plug-ins and Security Software

Most Web educational experience will require the use of several additional browser plug-ins. The following links will take you to some of the most commonly used tools. It is very highly recommended that you have an anti-virus program on your computer. You will also need Adobe Acrobat for several readings and a multimedia player such as Windows Media Player.

The MINIMUM Software requirements:

Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or another word processing program capable of saving files in RTF (Rich Text Format).

Web Browser -- Internet Explorer is NOT recommended for this version of Blackboard. So, if you are using IE and experience problems, try using Firefox before you contact technical support. If you plan on using a browser supplied by your Internet service provider (for example, AOL or WebTV) make sure it is the most recent version. We cannot guarantee that all course features will function in all non-Internet Explorer browsers.

Your course may require special (free) plug-ins to access Streaming Media, PDF files, or other web components.

Antivirus software is also required.

Classroom behaviors: Cell phones and other electronic devices are disruptive; turn them off before class starts. If you are expecting an **urgent** call, engage the vibrator option and sit at the back of the room so that you may leave the room to answer the call with as little disruption as possible. If you are late to class, please come in quietly and sit as close to the door as possible to reduce disruption

If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered, for announcements made in your absence, and for acquiring any materials or assignments distributed in class.

Tobacco products may not be used in class, and smokeless cigarettes are considered to be electronic devices which are also prohibited.

This is a learning environment. It is important that we are all able to stay focused on the class lecture/discussion. For this reason, only one person at a time in the class should be speaking. Side conversations are distracting for surrounding students and the instructors. Also, it is very rude to read papers, sleep or work on assignments for other classes in this class. If you feel the need to do any of these things you may leave and return the next class. Failure to abide by policies may result in expulsion from the class and an "F" for the semester. As you can see, simple norms of courtesy should be sufficient to have our class run in the best interests of all of us. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Attendance (see Common Course Syllabus)

You are expected to attend class. Attendance is necessary as test questions will also come from the lecture, class discussion and other material received in class. Roll will be taken at each class session and a record of attendance maintained. Because of Financial Aid requirements due to student abuse of the system, **a student may be dropped from the course after 4 absences in a row, or 5 absences in total** (Each session for Section 205, which meets on Mondays only will count as two sessions, so missing two sessions in a row, or three during the semester meets the drop requirements) with a grade of "X" or "F" depending on your course average at that time.

Find out what you missed if absent from your fellow students.

I will call roll every session. All absences are counted, including ones that are due to illness or other events – so plan and save absences for any emergencies. This is a very valuable benefit that allows you to have more control over your grade and to boost your grade.

Tardiness: If you are tardy two times or if you leave class early two times that will equal one absence. Being late is very disruptive and rude to come to class late so allow enough time in your schedule to arrive a few minutes early to class. If you do arrive late, quietly take a seat closest to the entrance. Also, it is YOUR responsibility to let me know that you came in late, at the end of class, or you will be counted absent. This is IMPORTANT!

Course Work

- A. **Orientation Learning Module: This module is set up to make sure you can access and use the course resources to perform necessary work and actions within the Blackboard course environment. There are 50 points available in this LM.**
- B. **Chapter Quizzes(CQ):** There is a CQ for each of the 13 chapters. CQs are worth 20 points each.
- C. **Exams:** There will be four exams consisting of 50 multiple choice questions taken from lectures, readings, and videos. You will be allowed to drop one exam grade, except for the Exam 4. The Exam 4 will not be comprehensive. It will cover only the final chapters of the course.

There are no makeup exams allowed. If you miss an exam, Exam 4 can count as that exam also. If you miss two exams, you may be dropped from the course with an F or an X. If you can not take an exam at your scheduled time, you may take an exam with another section. I do understand that Life can interfere with your schedule. I do take such things

into consideration, so if you are going to be tardy or absent, please let me know as soon as possible, beforehand if you know in advance.

- D. **Class Participation:** A class participation score of up to 50 points can be earned by attending the class (2 points per session, or 1 point if tardy or if you leave early) and by participating in the 4 discussions, consisting of 1 Original post, and 2 replies to the original posts of others. Discussion postings and all other work will be made or submitted through Blackboard. A Discussion Rubric is included toward the end of this syllabus.
- E. **Discussions:** There are online discussion sets, one in each Learning Module. The discussion sets are worth 50 points each.
- F. **PowerPoint Presentation:** There is one presentation worth 100 points. Further information regarding the project will be provided for you in the future.

All written assignments and discussions should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English that is typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and informal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing. Writing instructors and professors in courses across the campus expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays. Each instructor may also add additional requirements regarding written assignments that are contained in your syllabus.

- Grading Policy/Procedure: There is an Orientation Learning Module worth 50 points. There will be four exams worth 100 points each for 400 points. One Chapter Quiz for each of the 13 chapters at 20 points each for 260 points. Class participation, which includes attendance (2 pts per day) for 50 points, and four discussion sets (50 points per discussion set), are worth 200 points. The presentation is worth 100 points. Semester grades will be determined by averaging the top exams, the presentation, and the participation grades. The total points available are 1060.
90-100% =A
80-89% =B
70-79% =C
60-69% =D
59% =F

Equal Opportunity: See Common Course Syllabus section. In addition, in this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

South Plains College strives to accommodate the individual needs of all students in order to enhance their opportunities for success in the context of a comprehensive community

college setting. It is the policy of South Plains College to offer all educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability or age. In addition, this instructor will not tolerate remarks nor gestures that can be construed to be sexist, racist, heterosexist or in any way disparaging to another person in this classroom. Students who exhibit such behavior will be dropped from the class with a semester grade of "F" regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or sexual orientation. . In short, "Bigotry will not be tolerated."

III. Course Calendar: Course Calendar is subject to change as needed with notification		Please notice that due days are not uniform. I recommend that you print this calendar out, and put it where you will see it.
PSYC2314	Course Calendar for Sections 204, 205, and 210-MW and TR sections	
Date	Lecture Topics	Due dates for coursework.
8/28&29	Class Intro/Syllabus	
8/30&9/31	Ch 1 A Cultural App. To Human Development	
9/4	Labor Day	
9/5	Classroom Activity	Orientation LM, and Chs 1&2 Quizzes, due by 11:59PM
9/6&7	Ch 2 Genetics and Prenatal Development	Orientation LM and Chs 1&2 Quizzes due 9/7 by 11:59PM
9/10		Unit 1 Original Discussion post due by 11:59PM
9/11&12	Ch2	Ch 13 Quiz due 9/12 by 11:59PM
9/13&14	Ch 2&13 Death and Afterlife Beliefs	
9/17		Unit 1 reply posts due by 11:59PM
9/18&19	Ch 13	
9/20&21	Exam 1, over Chs 1, 2& 13	
9/24		Unit 2 Original Discussion replies, and Ch 3 Quiz due by 11:59PM
9/25&26	Ch 3, Birth and the Newborn Child	
9/27&28	Ch 3	
10/1		Ch 4 Quiz due by 11:59PM
10/2&3	Ch 4	
10/4&5	Ch 4	
10/8		Unit 2 Discussion replies, and Ch 5 Quiz due by 11:59PM
10/9&10	Ch 5 Toddlerhood	Ch 6 Quiz due 10/10 by 11:59PM
10/11&12	Ch 5&6 Early Childhood	
10/16&17	Ch 6	
10/18&19	Exam 2, over Chs 3, 4, 5&6	
10/22		Ch 7 Quiz due by 11:59
10/23&24	Ch7 Middle Childhood	
10/25&26	Ch 7	
10/29		Unit 3 Original Discussion posts, and Ch 8 Quiz due by 11:59PM
10/30&31	Ch 8 Adolescence	
11/1&2	Ch 8	
11/5		Unit 3 Discussion replies due by 11:59PM
11/6&7	Review or catch up	
11/8&9	Exam 3, over Chs 7&8	
11/12		Ch 9 Quiz due by 11:59PM
11/13&14	Ch 9 Emerging Adulthood	Ch 10 Quiz due 11/14 by 11:59
11/15&16	Ch 10 Young Adulthood	
11/20&21	Class activity	
11/22&23	Thanksgiving Break	
		Ch 11&12 Quizzes due by 11:59
11/27&28	Ch 11 Middle Adulthood	
11/29&30	Ch 12 Late Adulthood	
12/4&5	Presentations	
12/6&7	Presentations & Review	

12/11,12&14	Exam IV over Chs 11, 12, 13,&14	
	After Exam IV, Presentations will completed, during the remaining time	
12/11	1:00-3:00, 5:30-7:30	
12/12	6:00-8:00	
12/14	1:00-3:00	
12/15	Final grades due in by 10:00 AM	
	*You may take Exam 4 with any section.	

Accomodations: See Common Course Syllabus

Academic Integrity: See Common Course Syllabus. Students found guilty of plagiarism in this course will receive a grade of zero (0) for the work in question for the first offense and will be dropped from the course with an "F" should a second offense occur. For further information and examples please see <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/information-for/current-spc-students/library/cslibrarylvl/plagiarism.php> or <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial> .

Student Appeals: See Common Course Syllabus section.

Student Conduct: See Common Course Syllabus section. Also, please note that this is an online environment and others will see your comments posted to the discussion board area and/or in e-mail communications. Do not post any pictures, comments or data that others may find offensive. Since this is an on-line classroom, any e-mails or correspondence sent by the instructor to a student or students are considered lawful directions.

Discussions

Discussion topics are the chapter readings, the videos listed for each section Discussions function, and/or other sources of information relevant to the chapter. To receive points for participation you must post an original message and two reply messages.

Original message requirements:

- Original posts must be at least 300 words in length.
- Do NOT simply tell what the textbook said, or what a video is about.
- Include personal experiences and/or reactions.
- Use appropriate academic spelling and grammar.
- Worth up to 20 points each.

Reply message requirements:

- Replies must be at least 100 words each, and you are encouraged/may do any or all of the following.

- Ask questions to encourage other students to think more deeply. Just asking, "What do you think?" will not earn full points.
- Share your own experiences that relate to the topic of discussion.
- Constructively disagree at times.
- Refer to class course work (text or video information) and apply the information or ask other students how they are applying course information.
- If you repeat yourself in your reply messages you will not earn full points.
- Worth up to 15 points each.

You will not be given full credit for postings that do not meet the above criteria. Also, the use of short, choppy sentences written down that do not show careful thought will NOT earn you full credit. It is appropriate to use sentences like, "I agree" but those sentences do not meet the requirements for grading purposes. See the Grading section for more information. All Discussion topics will be listed on Discussion page and in the Learning Module links.

- The primary goal of this portion of the course is to "talk" about what you are learning so it is more appropriate to be informal and conversational in these postings and spend more time polishing the weekly assignments.
- The postings will be graded within one week of the due date – you must post EACH deadline to receive credit for that week. Each deadline is divided into a separate Topic on the Discussion Board Page to help you keep up with the postings. Let me know if you have any questions.
- For each discussion topic (except Introduction post), you will post at least 3 times – an original post and two replies. You are also expected to read the posts of others – this is taken into consideration when grades are posted.

Grading

Original posts will receive up to 20 points and Replies will receive up to 15 points each for a possible 50 total points per discussion set. There will be 4 chapter discussions sets with a possible 200 points for this session

***RUBRIC/EXPECTATIONS** – to help you do the best you can, I am giving you a grading rubric for the discussion postings and replies.

Original Posts:

- Approximate 20 point post includes posts that have: thoughtful commentary that specifically includes references and/or discussion to the reading, video, and/or module material; personal connections when relevant; introduces new ideas and questions; and/or thoroughly addresses the topic. Post was on-time, includes at least the minimum word count, and is spelling/grammatically correct.
- Posts will be graded on word count with proportional points deducted for failure to meet the word count. Example, if the post has 150 words that is one-half the required word count and the most that point would earn would be 10 points.
- Points will also be deducted for spelling/grammar errors, use of judgmental terms, etc.

- 0 point posts includes incorrect or partial posts, no reference to relevant material, irrelevant ideas, frequent spelling/grammar errors, was not posted on-time, and/or no post.

Replies:

- Approximate 15 point reply (there will be at least two of these per deadline) point reply includes replies that explicitly references ideas in the post, gives personal commentary in a constructive way, may correct an incorrect posting in a respectful way, elaborates on the ideas and questions posed in the post, reflects a good understanding of the course material, and/or brings up course material that the original post did not include but was relevant. Post was on-time, and is spelling/grammatically correct.
- Approximate 10 point reply includes brief elaboration of the ideas and questions posed in the post and/or a personal response that may or may not clearly tie to the original post but relevant to the module. Post was on time, and contains a minimal number of spelling/grammar errors.
- Points will also be deducted for spelling/grammar errors, use of judgmental terms, etc.
- 1-5 point reply includes brief encouragement, a statement of agreement or disagreement, unclear or offensive responses, frequent spelling/grammar errors, was not posted on-time, and/or no reply.

****NOTE:** Simply restating what someone else has stated will not earn you points. You need to put thought into your postings, bring in course work, and a personal connection to receive the maximum points. Correct grammar or syntax is important so be sure that you spell/grammar check AND proofread your posts.

*Adapted from On-line Teaching: Best Practices, by Professor Marisol Clark-Ibanez, Ph.D and Linda Scott.

Late work policy: 10% per day will be deducted from any quiz or discussion grades completed after the due date. Learn Smarts do not allow for late submission, though they can still be used as study aids. If you miss the due date and time for a Learn Smart, you must complete the Alternative Chapter Quiz for credit.

ONLINE ETIQUETTE:

A few words about communication and online discussion are in order. As you imagine, some conversations easily become emotional, especially if we touch on people's deeply held beliefs. Unfortunately, online posting can mislead one into thinking that cyberspace is an "anything goes" kind of forum. This isn't the case. Civil interaction is as much expected here as in the "traditional" classroom. Below I provide some guidelines for communicating more effectively online. I will deduct points from posts that violate the spirit of these suggestions. **IF I DEEM THE COMMENTS ESPECIALLY OFFENSIVE I WILL DROP YOU FROM THE COURSE.**

Keep in mind:

- There will be disagreement and this is good, otherwise we will be bored.
- Disagreement can be very constructive; it encourages us to reconsider our own positions and either recommit, expand, or discard them.
- I must at all times hear/see you debating the IDEA and not making a personal attack on an individual. Note that this is a skill to learn like any other – how to debate and get your point heard.
- Personal insults and attacks impede the development of critical thought. Avoid "you" statements, which can be more easily interpreted as accusations ("you don't know what you're talking about", "the problem is people like you," etc., etc.). Try, instead, to use "I" statements ("I disagree with your position on "X" or "I find that Durkheim was actually saying blah...").
- In addition, people have to be given the benefit of the doubt on occasion. Because this is an online class and we cannot see each other's facial expressions or hear the tone in our voices, it is important to clarify issues that are confusing. Before jumping to a conclusion and putting words in someone's mouth, ask them to clarify their point. And if someone asks you to restate your opinion, do not be afraid to restate it.
- Finally, I will be most impressed with individuals who can incorporate course materials into their posts. A key skill you should leave college with is the ability to support your positions; this online forum is an appropriate place to hone this skill. Refer to readings and module material to support your points.

*Adapted from Soc 101: Introduction to Sociology An Online Course, by Professor Marisol Clark-Ibanez, Ph.D.