

**Sociology 3550.001
Collective Behavior
Spring 2011**

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Please use the Blackboard email system

Online Office Hours: M 3pm – 5:00 pm; W 8pm -10pm
Face to Face Meetings can be set up by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a survey course on collective behavior, the sociological specialty devoted to the study of innovative, unstructured social phenomena such as emergent behavior in crowds; collective violence; individual, group, and organizational behavior in disasters; collective preoccupations, and social movements. The course will focus on two types of collective episodes: types of collective violence such as terrorism and riots and unusual events and beliefs such as fads and UFO sightings. The course begins with an overview of theories applied to collective episodes and later applies these theories to a variety of different events.

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ To understand the influence of localized, spontaneous collective actions on society and the individual.
- ❖ To distinguish between normative and collective behavior episodes
- ❖ To understand how dispersed collective behaviors affect society and the individual.
- ❖ To understand how society affects the consequences of collective actions
- ❖ To recognize collective behavior in your own life
- ❖ To critically think and analyze the world around you

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This course is an online course using BLACKBOARD VISTA. It requires you to stay up and current on the material, and to motivate yourself to complete tasks and assignments. You can access Blackboard from the UNT webpage: <http://www.unt.edu> or through <http://ecampus.unt.edu>

TEXTBOOK

Collective Violence (2nd Edition) by Steven E. Barkan and Lynne L. Snowden
Other readings will be available in the modules

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Three (3) Exams (100 pts each):	300
End of Module Mastery Quizzes	120
Orientation Quiz	10
Two Short Essays (50 Points Each):	100
Seven (7) Online Discussions (10 pts each)	70
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Total Possible points	600

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

540 Points and Above =	A
480 – 539 Points =	B
420 – 479 Points =	C
360 – 419 Points =	D
359 or Below Points =	F

DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENTS:

1. **EXAMS:** You will be given three exams in this class. Each exam is worth 100 points. Exam questions will be based on assigned readings, learning modules, assigned online discussions and any videos and/or films or other media included in the modules.. Exams will be mostly multiple choice, but may include True/False, short answer, essays or matching. Exams 1 and 2 will open on Friday morning of the exam week and close the following Saturday night 11:30 pm. With a two day exam window, there should be no reason you miss an exam. There will be no make-up exams given unless the student contacts me **in advance** with an excused University absence. Online modules will close before the exam period starts. **EXAMS ARE EXPECTED TO BE CLOSED NOTES. You will have 40 minutes from the time you start the exam to finish. You will only be able to move forward in an exam. In other words, once you see a question, you must answer it. You cannot go back to it once you move to the next question.**
2. **Orientation Quiz:** You will start this semester by going to the ‘Start Here’ link on the main page. This module will go over how to set up your computer and other important information including introduction to me and the syllabus. At the end of this module, you will have to complete a quiz. You must get 8/10 questions correct on this quiz to move on to the first module. The module will be available to you after you successfully complete the quiz.
3. **Module Mastery Quizzes:** At the end of each learning module, you will have a quiz that will consist of multiple choice and fill in the blank questions. These assessments are each worth 10 points with each question worth 1 point each. You may take the quiz up to 5 times with at least 60 minutes between attempts. You will get the highest grade you earn as your final grade as long as that grade is over 70% or 7 out of 10 questions correct. If you get less than 7 out of 10 correct you will receive a zero (0). At the end of each attempt, you will get your score, but you will not know which questions you got wrong or right. These quizzes are to help you learn and master the material. For this method to work, you cannot wait until the last moment to work on modules. Students who have been most successful in classes I’ve taught this way, not only read through modules, but take notes of important information just as they would do in a lecture class. Paying attention to the course material and doing well on these quizzes will overall help your final grade in the class.
4. **SHORT ESSAYS:** You will complete two short essays in this class (about 5 pages each). You must pick two of the following assignments to complete. **These are due by March 25 (Assignment 1) and by April 30 (Assignment 2) by 8am.**

Your assignments must be turned in through the TurnItIn Assignment tool in Blackboard. You will see this assignment available in the Assignments folder. Assignments that plagiarize at all will receive a zero. TurnItIn will analyze each essay for plagiarism. Make sure you cite any websites or other sources that you use for your assignments. However, these papers are to be your original thought. The only information that should be from sources is the news story you are analyzing and information on the fashion/fad you are analyzing. Ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism. If you are unsure of how

to cite or what needs to be cited, please contact me before you make a costly mistake. Each assignment type has clear instructions. **MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS.**

NO LATE PAPERS OR EMAILED ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PLAN AHEAD. Papers must be turned in via the proper link.

ASSIGNMENT 1: Collective Behavior in the News DUE By March 25, 8am

Collective Behavior is actually constantly happening around us. For this assignment, you need to find an example of collective behavior in the news and analyze the episode based on either Emergent Norm Theory or Value Added Theory. This episode of collective behavior must take place during the course of the semester.

While I am not picky over the length of the article, the article must have enough information to allow you to analyze it. A short blurb probably will not be very effective. In your essay, you must first describe the episode and explain why you think the episode is collective behavior. You should explain it using the language of the course and of collective behavior. Your explanation of why you think it is collective behavior is a critical aspect of your overall paper grade. (See how your grade will be assessed below) Once you explain why it is collective behavior, you must apply one of the two theories to the episode. In other words, in the second half of your essay, you are trying to explain why the episode happened. Again, you must use correct theoretical language, and apply all the parts of the theory.

Your grade will be based on 1) explanation of episode and correct identification of an episode as collective behavior (15 pts); 2) ability to apply collective behavior theory to the episode (25 pts); 3) readability and following directions (10 pts). . While this is not an English class, you must use correct sentence structure and spelling. Should you need help writing an essay, please seek assistance from the UNT Writing Lab.

Your essay must have a link at the end to the article you are using as the basis of your paper. If you find the article in an actual newspaper or magazine, rather than online, please scan the article and include it in your paper. Papers without working links or a scanned copy of the article will receive a zero.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Project Fad or Fashion Due by April 30, 8am.

For this assignment your focus will be on a specific fad or fashion. Pick a fad that has happened in the last 100 years or so, and research it. You may use newspapers, magazines and legitimate websites to get information on the fad. In the first half of your paper you should describe the fad/fashion (what it is, when it was popular, etc.) and its rise (such as why it was so popular) and fall (unless it continues). During the first part of this assignment, you may include pictures of the fad/fashion or copies of advertising you may find in regards to it. In the second part of your essay, you should apply either the Emergent Norm Theory to the fad/fashion or the Value Added theory to explain why it became a fad at the time. In other words, you'll have to put the fad or fashion into historical perspective, and apply each part of the theory to it. In your last paragraph, predict what you think may be the next fad/fashion to take off and why. You must include at least one picture of your fad or fashion embedded into your essay.

You may not do any fads or fashion that we are discussing in class.

You will be graded as follows: 1) Description of fashion/fad (10 points); 2) Discussion of the rise and fall of the fad/fashion (10 points); 3) application of emergent norm or value added theory (25 points); 4) readability (5 points)

5. **Online Discussion:** To help you process and make sense of different approaches to understanding collective behavior, you will have seven online discussions. You will randomly be put into discussion groups of about 25 students. You will have your discussions in these groups. Each discussion period will be open for 1 week (except for your first which will be open for 2 weeks) and are as scheduled in the syllabus. Each discussion will open with a question posed to you that you must address in an initial post. To get maximum points, you must respond to three (3) other posts during the course of the week's discussion. In other words, you cannot post your initial thoughts and your responses all on one day and expect to get full points. When your first discussion opens, you will see a grading rubric attached to the discussion that will give you a more precise description of how you will be graded. Each discussion is worth 10 points.

Additional Policies and Procedures

Extra Credit: No extra credit assignments are anticipated during this course. As such, I highly recommend you attend class and turn in all your assignments. Do not anticipate that extra credit given at a later date will help your final grade.

Cheating: Cheating will not be tolerated. You are expected to do your own assignments. I highly recommend that you DO NOT copy another person's work. If you are caught cheating, you will fail this course, and be turned into the university for cheating.

Important Information about Blackboard: The Learning Management System used by UNT, Blackboard-Vista, has a powerful tracking tool built in to the system. With this tool, I can see everything you do while you are online in this course. This includes how often you log in, what you do while logged in, how much time you spend logged in and how long it takes you to answer each question on the exams. It likewise can analyze and determine if you are on the same network and system while taking exams, including how close you are sitting next to each other in a computer lab. In other words, if needed, I can pretty much catch and thwart most attempts at cheating. I can do this because I've caught students in the past. I don't like doing this. The purpose of getting a degree is not only to learn the subject, but to also improve critical thinking skills which includes your ability to discern right and wrong. If this is a class you hope to blow off, this is the wrong class for you.

University Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

The University of North Texas is very clear on this point. Students must do their own work. Cheating on exams, quizzes, plagiarism, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Detailed explanations of the UNT's standards of academic integrity for students may be found in the *UNT Policy Manual* at <http://policy.unt.edu/policydesc/student-standards-academic-integrity-18-1-16>.

Students Requiring Special Accommodation

If you have a condition that requires accommodation in this course, please notify the instructor during the first week of class. Any necessary or appropriate accommodations will be made provided that timely notice is received, and that the arrangement is consistent with recommendations from Disability Services, when applicable. Students who require this type of assistance should contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) at (940) 565-4323, or at TTY (940) 369-8652 to make appropriate arrangements. Information on the services provided by the ODA as well as application procedures are available at

<http://www.unt.edu/oda/index.html>. Information on UNT's policies related to disability accommodations is available at <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/18-1-14>.

Please note that disability accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations will be made only after a disability is officially verified.

LECTURE TOPICS AND READING SCHEDULE

(1-2) Module 1- 1/18-1/30:

Topics: Getting Started; Syllabus Review
What is collective behavior?

Online Discussion (1)

(3)Module 2: 1/31- 2/6:

History and Theories of Collective Behavior, Part I
Read: Barkan and Snowden, Chapter 1

(4) Module 3: 2/ 7 -2/13:

History and Theories of Collective Behavior, Part II
Read: Barkan and Snowden, Chapter 2
Online Discussion this Week (2)

(5) Module 4: 2/14-2/20:

Riots
Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 3

Week 6 2/25 – 2/26:

Exam 1 Modules 1-4

Online Discussion this Week (3)

(7) Module 5: 2/28 – 3/6:

Protest and Revolution
Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 4

(8) Module 6: 3/7 – 3/13:

Mass Hysteria
Witch Craze
Reading Online

~~SPRING BREAK MARCH 14-20~~

(9) Module 7: 3/21-3/27

Hate Groups, Gangs and Survivalists
Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapters 7-8
Online Discussion this Week (4)
ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE by 3/35, 8am

(10) Module 8: 3/28 – 4/3:

Y2K Hysteria

Week 11 4/8-4/9:

Exam 2 Modules 5 - 8

Online Discussion this Week (5)

(12) Module 9: 4/11 – 4/17:

Collective Preoccupations: Fads and Fashion
UFOs

Readings Online

(13) Module 10: 4/18 – 4/24

Cults

Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 6

Online Discussion this Week (6)

(14) Module 11: 4/25 – 5/1

Rumor, Urban Myths and Urban Legends

Readings Online

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE by 4/30, 8am

(15) Module 12: 5/1-5/6

Terrorism

Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapters 5 and 9

Online Discussion this Week (7)

May 7-8: FINAL EXAM Modules 9 – 12