

Sociology 3550.900/950
Collective Behavior
Spring 2016

Dr. Nicole Dash
e-mail address: dash@unt.edu
Office: PACS Dean's Office
209 Chilton Hall

Online Office Hours: M 3pm -5pm
Face to Face Meetings can be set up by appointment
Skype meetings can also be set up by appointment
Phone: 565-2230

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 LEARN. It requires you to stay up and current on the material, and to motivate yourself to complete tasks and assignments. You can access Blackboard Learn at: <http://learn.unt.edu>. **Please read this syllabus carefully, and make sure you understand how this course is run, and all of the expectations.**

I extensively use the Blackboard Announcement tool in my online classes. Please make sure you check announcements regularly. Announcements will also be sent to the default email in the Blackboard system. Unless you change it, this will be your official UN/T email. You are responsible for all information in the announcements.

This course is structured so you have work to do each week. Keeping up in this class is critical for success. While I know some online courses allow you to complete all the work at one time during any point of the semester, this is not one of those classes. If you anticipate having a hard time keeping up with the weekly work and deadlines, you should consider dropping this course for another.

TEXTBOOK

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and Grading:

In Blackboard, you will see your grades under a link titled "My Grades." Blackboard will also give you some measure of how many points have been available in the course. **IGNORE** the total points that Blackboard gives you. The Total Points available in the class is listed below. If at any point, you are not sure how many points have been available to that point, please contact me. Blackboard, for example, will try to count any extra credit points like an additional grade. This is NOT how your final grade will be calculated. Your final grade will be calculated

simply by adding all your points together and comparing your points to the chart below. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Three (3) Exams (100 pts each):	300
End of Module Mastery Quizzes	120
Orientation Quiz	10
Group Discussions (5 at 20 points each)	100
One Short Essay	50
<hr/>	
Total Possible points	580

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

522 Points and Above =	A
464 – 521 Points =	B
406 – 463 Points =	C
348 – 405 Points =	D
347 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, 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.

You will be given a two day window to take exams. The exam period will start at 12:01am on the first day of the exam period and end at 11:59 on the following day. In this class, exam periods will be Saturday and Sunday of the exam week. So, you must take the exam anytime between 12:01am Saturday morning (which is technically Friday night) to 11:59pm Sunday night. You are not allowed to go into online modules once you start the exam. The system will record if you do this. Please don't put either of us in a very awkward position.

EXAMS ARE EXPECTED TO BE CLOSED NOTES. You will have one hour 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. Students complain about this more than any other rule in this class. Please think carefully about this before you stay in the class.

Before you remain in this class, please think carefully about how exams will be given in this class. If you are not happy about the time limit or that you can only move forward and not back, **PLEASE DROP the CLASS NOW.** While this is an online class, I expect the work to be as rigorous as any face to face class. I fully understand your other online classes might be taught differently, but this class is not, and I will not alter how I test.

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 first 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, True and False and fill in the blank questions. These assessments are each worth 10 points with each question worth 1 point. **You may take the quiz up to 4 times.** 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. After taking a quiz and assessing how well you know the material, to improve your grade you need to go back in and work through the module again. 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.

The questions asked on the quizzes are different than questions asked on exams. Quiz questions tend to be very fact based, while exam questions are much more applied. Exams will be harder than quizzes.

4. **SHORT ESSAY:** You will complete one short essay in this class (about 5 pages, double spaced).

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

Collective Behavior in the News DUE By March 27th at 11:59pm

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 (anything after January 19th).

While I am not picky over the length of the article, the article must have enough information to allow you to analyze the event. 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. If you choose Emergent Norm Theory, you must explain all of the emergent norm conditions along with the overall details of the theory. If you choose, Value Added Theory, you must explain each step of the theory sufficiently including explaining the precipitating event.

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 (5 pts); 4) Uniqueness of episode (5 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. Please make sure your link works before turning in your assignment. **You must turn in the assignment in either WORD or PDF format. I cannot read any other format. You will get a zero if you turn it in in another format.**

5. **Online Discussion:**

To help you process and make sense of different approaches to understanding collective behavior, you will have five(5) online discussions. You will randomly be put into discussion groups of 5 students to facilitate a thoughtful conversation. Each discussion period will be open for 1 week 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 20 points.

Your response will require more than just your opinion. You will need to cite information from the modules and your readings. Your language will need to be professional and academic. While I am not one to be a stickler for length, your initial answer must be thorough, and your follow up responses comprehensive. Each discussion will open on a Monday, **You will get 4 points for posting your initial response by Wednesday.** If you do not respond by Wednesday evening, you will automatically lose those 4 points. This is the equivalent of losing 20% of your grade, and starting at an 80%.

Discussions will be held weeks 5, 8, 10, 12 and 15. Weeks 5, 10 and 15 are exam weeks with no modules.

Groups will be established after the 12th day of class. Groups will be adjusted as needed if students choose not to participate. The discussions as a whole are the equivalent of an exam. For those of you who don't test well, this should help pull your grade up. For those of you who don't participate, this will negatively impact your grade. This is a critical aspect of this class, and the expectation is that you will be an active participant.

Additional Policies and Procedures

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.

Messages: Please use the Blackboard message center to contact me. I check Blackboard multiple times a day, every day, except Saturdays. I do my best to return messages the same day if received before 5pm. If after 5pm, then messages are usually responded to the next day. Messages sent on Saturdays, will be responded to on Sunday.

Discussion Boards: Graded discussions will happen in your groups. A variety of other discussion boards will be available to students to get clarity on topics or to have additional conversations about collective behavior happening around us. I check discussion boards on the same schedule as messages described above.

Important Information about Blackboard: The Learning Management System used by UNT, Blackboard Learn, 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.

Grades

You will get the grade you earn in this class. I am happy to give everyone As if that is what you earn. Many students receive high grades in this class, but grades are directly related to the amount of time and effort you give to the material in this course. This is not an easy blow off course. If that is what you are looking for, you should drop this course. Every time I teach, at the end of each semester students request additional work to improve their grade. Any extra credit opportunities will be made available to the entire class. I will not give any individual student a chance to improve their grade that I don't give everyone. I do understand that it is frustrating to be 10 or 15 points away from the next higher grade, but it is unfair to everyone else for me to offer one student a chance to improve their grade and not everyone. Please don't put us both in an awkward position by asking for individual help improving your grade.

LECTURE TOPICS AND READING SCHEDULE

(1) Module 1- 1/19-1/24:

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

(2)Module 2: 1/25 – 1/31:

History and Theories of Collective Behavior, Part I
Read: Barkan and Snowden, Chapter 1
Extra Credit 1 due by 2/2 at 11:59pm

(3) Module 3: 2/1 -2/7:

History and Theories of Collective Behavior, Part II
Read: Barkan and Snowden, Chapter 2

(4) Module 4: 2/8-2/14:

Riots
Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 3

Week 5 2/15 – 2/21:

Exam 1 Modules 1-4 (2/20-2/21)
DISCUSSION 1

(6) Module 5: 2/22 – 2/28:

Protest and Revolution
Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 4

(7) Module 6: 2/29 – 3/6:

Mass Hysteria
Witch Craze
Reading Online

(8) Module 7: 3/7-3/13

Hate Groups, Gangs and Survivalists

Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapters 7-8

DISCUSSION 2

~~SPRING BREAK MARCH 14-20~~

(9) Module 8: 3/21 – 3/27:

Y2K Hysteria

Reading Online

Collective Behavior in the New paper due 3/27 by 11:59pm.

(10) Week 10 3/28-4/3:

Exam 2 Modules 5 – 8 (4/2-4/3)

DISCUSSION 3

(11) Module 9: 4/4 – 4/10:

Collective Preoccupations: Fads and Fashion

UFOs

Readings Online

(12) Module 10: 4/11 – 4/17

Cults

Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapter 6

DISCUSSION 4

(13) Module 11: 4/18 – 4/24

Rumor, Urban Myths and Urban Legends

Readings Online

(14) Module 12: 4/25 -5/1

Terrorism

Read: Barkan and Snowden Chapters 5 and 9

NOTE: Shortened week due to final. Small module.

Extra Credit 2 due by 5/2 at 11:59 pm

(15) Week 15: 5/2-5/8

May 7-8: FINAL EXAM Modules 9 – 12

DISCUSSION 5