SOCI 200 Sociological Practice

COURSE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Peter Chua, Ph.D.
Email: Use Canvas <Inbox> for all communication
Office Location: Sweeney Hall (SH) 333, Desk L
Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 12 noon -1 p.m. & Thurs. 5:10-5:40 p.m. and by appt.
Class Days/Time: Thursdays 6-8:45 p.m.
Classroom: Hugh Gillis Hall (HGH) 223
Course Website: https://sjsu.instructure.com
Prerequisite: Graduate standing

ACCESSING THE COURSE WEB PAGE

SJSU operates a web-based learning management software called “Canvas by Instructure.” This course uses Canvas as its website to distribute reading materials, selected handouts and assignments, and other instructional materials and to submit selected assignments.

Make sure you have an appropriate and dependable web browser and software settings for your computer to access and use Canvas. To familiarize yourself with the login process and security, go to http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/index.html.

To log-in, use:
- Your 9-digit SJSU ID number as the username.
- Your SJSUOne password as the password.
To reset your password, go to https://sjsuone.sjsu.edu/sjsuone/resetpassword/

Communication

It is important to check your Canvas mail and Canvas announcements regularly.

Getting Support

For technical support, go to https://isupport.sjsu.edu/ecampus/ContentPages/Home.aspx.
Contact me if you have course-specific questions.
COURSE DESCRIPTION

SOCl 200 Sociological Practice introduces graduate students to the theoretically informed practices of sociology, with particular emphases on community and institutional research, policy advocacy, program evaluation, and undergraduate teaching.

This course develops core MA-level skills in applying sociology to address substantively relevant interpersonal, organizational, community, and societal issues and examines analytical, professional, and political perspectives in applying sociological theories and research.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, seminar participants will be able to:

CLO1: Apply appropriate sociological practice skills in research, teaching, public advocacy, and professional services,

CLO2: Develop research questions based on the evaluation of existing social research findings by:

• Identifying questionable claims in empirical studies, and
• Extracting valid and relevant conclusions from empirical studies,

CLO3: Design and implement basic and applied social research competently at the MA level by:

• Shaping research to meet practical objectives based on sociological questions, community problems, and organizational concerns, and
• Assessing what can or cannot be learned for various data collected and analyzed,

CLO4: Design and teach a student-centered undergraduate course in sociology effectively grounded in relevant concepts, research studies, and practical applications, and

CLO5: Communicate with greater effectiveness in oral and written form.

The following table indicates how this course supports in ensuring your successful completion of the M.A. sociology program outcomes (PLOs):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLO1: 1. To comprehend deeper current social issues and social problems in their cultural, historical, and socio-political contexts, and formulate potential solutions to them, drawing on relevant sociological literature</th>
<th>CLO1</th>
<th>CLO2</th>
<th>CLO3</th>
<th>CLO4</th>
<th>CLO5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLO2: To comprehend deeper the ways in which sociological theories and methods are used outside of academic settings in the practice of sociology and the production of positive social change.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO3: To use social theory to critically interpret and evaluate both published social scientific research and social policies and programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO4: To communicate and present effectively sociological knowledge using oral, written, and other technologically driven mediums</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO5: To conduct research (qualitative, quantitative, and/or evaluative) using theory-driven research questions and understand the ethical issues involved with various methodological approaches</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>PLO6: To demonstrate expertise in a select subfield of sociology</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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READINGS AND MATERIALS

Required Readings

- **Sociology 200: Sociological Practice Readings, Fall 2016.**
  
  Readings available at the Canvas site in PDF format for seminar participants.


Other Materials

- A dependable personal computer with capacity to access the Canvas site, library databases, and relevant websites.

- An office software suite with basic word-processing capacities as such [LibreOffice](http://www.libreoffice.org), [Google Docs](http://docs.google.com) or [Microsoft Office](https://drive.google.com).

- Class handouts to be distributed during the semester.

THE SJSU LIBRARY AND OUR LIBRARY LIAISON

The library provides online tutorials on using the library and academic integrity (see [http://library.sjsu.edu/online-tutorials/](http://library.sjsu.edu/online-tutorials/)). To get online access to library databases, see [http://library.sjsu.edu/get-library-card/my-library-account-pin-management](http://library.sjsu.edu/get-library-card/my-library-account-pin-management).

[Kathryn Blackmer Reyes](Kathryn.BlackmerReyes@sjsu.edu) (Kathryn.BlackmerReyes@sjsu.edu), the Library Liaison to sociology, is available by appointment and for consultation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

On active seminar participation: Everyone is expected to engage in regular discussion on the readings and contribute to meaningful understanding and dialogue during the seminar. Make sure to break improper habits of passive learning, passive notetaking, and regurgitation. Think for yourself and learn to take clear intellectual positions within the profession. This means you should verbally take risk to learn and talk in order to be formulate better your ideas.

Evaluation of seminar participation based on the following criteria: raising open-ended questions based on the readings, your attention to details in the readings, your ability to synthesize discussions, and your overall contribution to the discussion. Factors that aid in your participation include completing the assigned work before class, arriving to class on time and staying for the whole time, paying attention, and actively and respectively listening to the discussion. Factors that may limit your full participation include digital and mobile distractions (checking your phone, messages, emails, or online websites) and reading any materials not related to the discussion. You will not earn any credit related to participation if you miss four seminars.
**On facilitation of discussions:** For **four** of the weeks, you will take the role as seminar facilitator for the assigned readings. You are expected work collaboratively with your group to: (a) highlight the major *interrelated* points, themes, and debates from the readings, (b) raise meaningful and open-ended questions on the authors’ arguments, research method, contribution to the scholarship, and possible areas for improvement, and (c) evaluate and assess the readings’ treatment on major theoretical and methodological issues. *Do not summarize* each reading. This is not a formal presentation. Rather, this should be a conversation with the rest of the seminar participants since everyone is expected to complete the readings.

**On readings assignments:** You are expected to complete the weekly assigned readings before the seminar for every session.

**On skill-practice assignments:** You are expected to complete several short skill-practice assignments. Directions are listed below. Submit these assignments in class.

**On the research proposal:** Directions to complete this requirement will be provided during the semester. The proposal will be about 15-pages or more (over 4,000 words), using American Sociological Association (ASA) style and referencing system. Consider this major assignment as preparation for the graduate methods comprehensive exam.

**On the in-class presentation:** The presentation will be based on your research proposal. Directions will be provided during the semester.

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**GRADING INFORMATION**

**Evaluation Principles**

Your final grade derives from multiple methods of evaluation and several opportunities for practice, improvement, and learning with on meaningful feedback. Evaluation is fair and just, reflecting your effort and learning based on clear directions and criteria.

**Determination of Your Course Grade**

The satisfactory completion of the following requirements determines your overall grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Seminar participation and facilitation</td>
<td>Weekly from <strong>Aug 25 to Dec 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Readings and skill-practice assignments</td>
<td>Weekly from <strong>Sept 1 to Dec 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Course syllabus and lesson plan</td>
<td><strong>Due Dec 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Research proposal</td>
<td><strong>Due Dec 8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>In-class presentation</td>
<td><strong>Due Dec 8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>On <strong>Dec 15</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Grading Criteria**

- **A+** 98-100: Demonstrates excellent understanding of the course materials. Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is highly ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Consistently contributes in promoting class discussion and the learning of others and deepens learning that is self-initiated.
- **A** 93-97: Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Shows some gaps in argumentation, writing, and completed tasks. Contributes to class discussion, yet in a limited manner.
- **A-** 90-92:
- **B+** 88-89:
- **B** 83-87:
- **B-** 80-82:
C+  78-79  Demonstrates an acceptable yet uneven level of understanding of the course materials. Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is satisfactorily ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Shows major gaps in argumentation, writing, and completed tasks. Contributes to class discussion minimally.

C   73-77  Demonstrates poor but passing understanding of the course materials. Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is not quite ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Shows highly significant gaps in writing, assignments, and participation.

C-  70-72  Demonstrates serious deficiency in completing assigned tasks (including participation) at the appropriate level and unacceptable understanding of the course materials. Shows very limited effort to learn the material and succeed academically and professionally.

D+  68-69  Demonstrates poor but passing understanding of the course materials. Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is not quite ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Shows highly significant gaps in writing, assignments, and participation.

D-  60-62  Demonstrates poor but passing understanding of the course materials. Embodies a sociologist-in-training who is not quite ethical, competent, and professional or equivalent. Shows highly significant gaps in writing, assignments, and participation.

F   59 & below  Demonstrates serious deficiency in competing assigned tasks (including participation) at the appropriate level and unacceptable understanding of the course materials. Shows very limited effort to learn the material and succeed academically and professionally.

Request for an Incomplete Grade
To receive an incomplete for the course, you must inform the instructor in person seven-days before the last day of instruction. A grade of incomplete will only be considered for students who are (a) passing the course with a C or better, (b) present a legitimate, non-academic reason to the instructor, and (c) have only one major assignment left to finish.

PROMOTION OF CARING, ACCESSIBLE, ENRICHING AND MUTUALLY RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL

My pedagogical values...

- I have high expectations for your performance in class and on assignments and for every student to be competent sociologists. I believe you can do the work, and I will coach you though the process. I demand a lot from you because I seek to develop you further academically and professionally.
- I think learning should be fun, exciting, and challenging.
- I am interested in your academic development and personal well-being.
- I think that learning and teaching are complex, endlessly fascinating collaborations.

As the instructor, I expect myself...

- To work hard to help you succeed in the course
- To be available if you need extra help
- To share my knowledge, training, and professional experiences and show how to make use of course content
- To model professional skills, ethics, and values
- To treat all students fairly, justly, and reasonable, particularly related to grading
- To provide meaningful feedback on your work
- To take lead in maintaining a positive, challenging learning environment

As students, you are expected...

- To be motivated and have a positive attitude to learn the course materials
- To commit a reasonable amount of effort to complete the readings and assignments, persevere, and have fun in learning the materials and to grow from mistakes
- **To be prepared and participate verbally every class session.**
  The prerequisite for such active participation is attendance.
- To lead class discussion as part of your participation
- **To read the assigned materials before coming to the seminar so we can discuss** them in detail. This means that you are familiar with the assigned readings and are able to raise thoughtful questions that encourage an interactive-learning and student-centered discussion.

- **To complete required readings and assignments on time** — that is, before coming to class. Written work should be proofread and edited. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. There will be substantial loss of credit for late work. Do NOT email them to me. Do NOT turn them in to the department office; this is a College of Social Sciences policy. Do NOT slide them under my office door.

- To be responsible in your learning and conduct yourself professionally by:
  - Attending class regularly. If you missed class, talk with your peers to learn what happened and get notes. After talking to classmates, if you have additional questions, talk with me in person.
  - Not disrupting the learning environment and the learning by your peers

- To contribute in maintaining a positive, respectful, and challenging learning environment and ensure a thoughtful and respectful engagement with the subject matter

- To cooperate and collaborate with your peers in teams, in class, and outside of class

- **To practice academic integrity and your owned intellectual work.** Academic dishonesty such as plagiarism and cheating violates university regulation. It will not be tolerated. Do give proper acknowledgement to ideas, facts, and arguments that you did not initially construct or demonstrate. This applies to in-class discussions and all written work. Notwithstanding this warning, you are strongly encouraged to discuss the class readings with students in or out of class, but acknowledge the ideas you received from others regardless of how casually you come to such ideas. **Note:** Your written work in this course may be evaluated for plagiarism using Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection service contracted by SJSU

- To prevent class disruption and student inattentiveness resulting from the personal use of cell phones, smart phones, laptop computers, and other mobile communication devices during the class. Please leave the classroom to send and read text messages and make personal phone calls.

- To use laptop computers during class for note-taking and other class-related work only. Those using computers during class for work not related to that class must leave the classroom.

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**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/.
This is the tentative schedule, subject to change with fair notice through seminar announcements.

Key to readings:  
C = Course readings posted on Canvas website  
FC = Greenwood and Howard’s *First Contact.*  
SD = Luker’s *Salsa Dancing Into the Social Sciences.*  
HTD = Thomas’s *How To Do Your Research Project,* 2nd ed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>SEMINAR READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Approaches to Sociological Practices** | **Aug 25**  
| **Collaborating in the Development of Sociology with Varying Partners and Audiences** | **Sept 1**  
Brown, Phil. 2013. “Integrating Medical and Environmental Sociology with Environmental Health: Crossing Boundaries and Building Connections.” *Journal of Health & Social Behavior* 54(2):145-64. [C]  

**Assignment #1:** Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) discussing how you expect to practice sociology by incorporating readings from weeks 1 and 2. In this essay, consider these questions: which audiences are you interested in engaging with or responding to? how might you do this? what are some of the issues you think are most relevant related to your anticipated sociological practices? Use ASA reference style as appropriate.
Passing On Sociology: Teaching and Preparing To Teach

Sept 8

Chapters 2-8, pp. 19-126. [FC]

Assignment #2: Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) describing how you expect to teach an undergraduate sociology course by incorporating this week’s readings. In this essay, explain what is important for you in terms of student learning outcomes, your course design (major content, assignments, and assessment), and your teaching style and approach (student engagement with sociological materials). Use ASA reference style as appropriate in citing the week’s readings.

Honoring Your Ideas For Competent Sociological Practice

Sept 15

“1: Rethinking Introduction to Sociology,” pp. 1-18. [FC]
“1: Salsa Dancing? In the Social Science?” and “2: What’s It All About?,” pp. 1-39. [SD]

Assignment #3: Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) discussing major issues about the social world that worry and concern you by incorporating this week’s readings. In this essay, consider the following: what question, concerning the social world, would you like to investigate if you were absolutely guaranteed not to fail? Be ambitious, and true to your heart. For instance, consider: what kinds of specific questions are you interested in answering? what could you see yourself interested in studying for a semester? Use ASA reference style as appropriate in citing the week’s readings.
### Strategies, Paradigms & Designs in Developing Sociological Practices

**Sept 22**  

Oakley, Ann. 1998. “Gender, Methodology and People’s Ways of Knowing: Some Problems with Feminism and The Paradigm Debate In Social Science.” *Sociology* 32(4):707-731. [C]

**OPTIONAL:**  

**Assignment #4:** Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) examining different research strategies to answer possible variations of your research question (in assignment #3). Make sure to incorporate this week’s readings. In particular, consider how might positivist, interpretivist, or critical/transformative strategies differ, in terms of their understandings of the question and how to go about answering it. Use ASA reference style as appropriate in citing the week’s readings.

**Assignmen #5**: For your research question, draw yourself the daisy that Luker discusses, and then list of all of the “petals” of the daisy, noting which you think may overlap. Now use the strategies in the readings to identify at least four relevant empirically-based articles/books, and fit them into the (potentially overlapping) petals. Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) considering the following: what are the strengths and limitations of each article/book you identified in terms of conceptualization, perspective, and research strategy (briefly)? are there any works that fit in the middle of the daisy? and, what contributions do you think you could make? Use ASA reference style as appropriate.

### Developing Your Ideas, Reviewing the Literature, and Framing the Research Questions

**Sept 29**  

### Preliminary Literature Review Due

You will write a short double-spaced literature review (about 1,300-1,500 words) on your research topic. In this review, you will draw from approximately 7-10 sources, to contextualize the research question that you plan to ask in the proposal you will be writing. This requires that you have identified (a) a research question, and (b) some relevant sociological sources that provide the context for your question. Use ASA reference style as appropriate.

### Planning Your Research: Ethical Considerations, Writing a Research Proposal, and Gaining Grant Support

**Oct 13**

**Assignment #6:** Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) examining what ethical and power relations issues do you think might emerge for the research study you are designing by incorporating this week’s readings. In this essay, consider what are some ways of addressing these ethical and power relations questions. Use ASA reference style as appropriate.

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**Preliminary Literature Review Due:** You will write a short double-spaced literature review (about 1,300-1,500 words) on your research topic. In this review, you will draw from approximately 7-10 sources, to contextualize the research question that you plan to ask in the proposal you will be writing. This requires that you have identified (a) a research question, and (b) some relevant sociological sources that provide the context for your question. Use ASA reference style as appropriate.
“8: Field (and Other) Methods” and “9: Historical-Comparative Methods,” pp. 155-197. [SD]  
OPTIONAL:  
| Oct 20 | Oct 27 |
| Assignment #7: Assume you are using qualitative research for your research. Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) examining how might you study your project as a “case” by incorporating this week’s readings. Consider the following in this essay: how would you tweak your research question to be suitable for your method? How would you sample for this study? How do you expect to collect quality data to answer your research question? How might you “generalize” from the data you plan to collect for your project? Use ASA reference style as appropriate. |

| Nov 3 |
| Assignment #8: Assume you are using survey method for your research. Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) examining how would you tweak your research question to make it more suitable for your method by incorporating this week’s readings? How would you sample for this study? What concepts would drive your study, and how would you best measure them? How might you develop positivist hypotheses about your research question? What are some alternative hypotheses to yours? How might you test these hypotheses? Use ASA reference style as appropriate. |
Answering Research Questions (II): Sources and Practicalities in Data Analysis

Nov 10


Assignment #9: Write a double-spaced analytical essay (about 600-650 words) examining how might you analyze the data you plan to collect for your project by incorporating this week’s readings. Consider how might you extrapolate – either theoretically, empirically or both – from your data? Discuss this extrapolation with reference to this and previous week’s readings. Use ASA reference style as appropriate.

Writing Up, Presenting, and Engaging Our Social World

Nov 17


Mini-Proposal Due: Develop a double-spaced mini-proposal that describes and situates an issue in which you are interested. The mini-proposal will include a short literature review (about 2,000-2,200 words), drawn from your earlier literature review, and a short double-spaced section (about additional 600-650 words) on research design (research questions, plan for data collection, and plan for data analysis). Use ASA reference style as appropriate.
### Assessing the Quality and Impact of Sociological Practice

**Boaz, Annette, and Deborah Ashby. 2003. Fit For Purpose?: Assessing Research Quality for Evidence Based Policy and Practice. London: ESRC UK Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice. [C]**

**Tracy, Sarah J. 2010. "Qualitative Quality: Eight “Big-Tent” Criteria For Excellent Qualitative Research." Qualitative Inquiry 16(10): 837-851. [C]**


**Delucchi, Michael. 2000. "Don't Worry, Be Happy: Instructor Likability, Student Perceptions of Learning, and Teacher Ratings in Upper-Level Sociology Courses." Teaching Sociology 28(3)220-231. [C]**


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**Sociology Syllabus with Rationale Due:** Develop a syllabus for an undergraduate course for “Introduction to Sociology” (see First Contact) or “Social Problems.” Provide a rationale for your course design in terms of what you want students to learn (content and skills), how you expect to teach, your assigned readings and learning activities, and the assessment of student learning.

**Lesson Plan Due:** Develop a lesson plan (see lesson plan chart) for a 75-minute undergraduate class session on introductory sociology topic that you select. Determine appropriate readings for students and key readings for the instructor based on literature. Determine appropriate teaching method, student learning activities/assignments, and assessment of student learning.

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**Presentations Dec 8**

**Proposal Due:** Using feedback on your mini-proposal, write a full proposal that suggests how you would go about researching your topic. The proposal will include a short literature review and a methods section that specifies research design (see detailed assignment sheet). You will also briefly present this proposal to the class.

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**Final Exam Dec 15**

- 5:15 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
FIRES, EARTHQUAKES AND OTHER DISASTERS

- **Call 9-1-1** or use a blue light telephone to summon University Police assistance for any campus police, fire, or medical emergencies. Give your **name**, the nature of the emergency, and your specific **location**. Stay on the line until the University Police Dispatcher tells you to hang up.
- Use extinguishers for **minor fires**. If a fire appears **uncontrollable**, **close all room doors** to confine the fire, **pull** the building fire **alarm lever**, **evacuate** the area or building, and then **call 9-11**.
- **Remain calm** during an earthquake. “Duck, cover and hold” under a desk or table, or stand in a doorway or against an interior wall. Wait at least two minutes after shaking stops before leaving a building. Move to a clear area well away from structures or overhead hazards such as trees or power lines.
- Help **disabled persons** evacuate the building. Follow instructions of Building Emergency Team members and University Police. Do not use elevators.
- **Tune to radio** station KSJS 90.5 FM for campus information. A campus information line will be set up as soon as possible after a major emergency -- **call 924-SJSU (924-7578)** for instructions, information, and updates.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

- **Call 9-1-1**. Give your name, the nature of the emergency, and your specific location. Tell the University Police Dispatcher what assistance you need (ambulance, paramedics, etc.).
- **Assist the victim** until help arrives. If you, or someone in the area, are trained in CPR, perform CPR if necessary. Stop bleeding with direct pressure to the wound. Do not move a victim unless his or her life is in immediate danger. **Do not leave victims unattended**. Be careful about contaminating yourself and others if hazardous materials may be involved.
- For **minor first aid**, report in person to the Student Health Center weekdays from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. or **call University Police** at 924-2222.

BUILDING EVACUATION

- **Leave** by the nearest safe exit when you hear the building emergency alarm (fire alarm), or if you are told to do so by University Police or a Building Emergency Team member.
- **Take keys**, books, **wallets**, prescription **medicines** and important personal belongings with you in case you cannot re-enter immediately. Move at least 150 feet away from all structures. **Do not smoke**.
- **Use the stairs**. Do not use elevators--in case of fire or earthquake, many elevators stop in place and you may be trapped or exposed to deadly smoke.
- Re-enter a building only after University Police or Building Emergency Team members tell you that it is safe to do so.

**POLICE - FIRE - MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

**DIAL**

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For further information visit the University Police Web site at:

http://www.sjsu.edu/police/