

**WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Winter Semester 2015**

**SOC 2020 – 002**  
**Social Problems**

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**#20360**  
**DAYS:** Monday and Wednesday  
**TIME:** 8:00 to 9:25 a.m.  
**ROOM:** 206 State  
**PROFESSOR:** Grant Friley, Ph.D.  
**PHONE:** 313-577-2930, Office  
**EMAIL:** [gfriley3@yahoo.com](mailto:gfriley3@yahoo.com)  
**CREDITS:** 3

**TEXT:** **SOCIAL PROBLEMS**  
5<sup>th</sup> Edition  
John J. Macionis

## Sociology and Common Sense

### Sociology and Common Sense

Many people mistakenly believe that sociology is the study of the obvious. They claim that sociology is nothing but the application of common sense. But equating any science with simple common sense could not be further from the truth! Common sense is not always "common," nor "sensible." Statements like "Birds of a feather flock together" and "Opposites attract," while supposedly based on common knowledge, contradict each other. Because common sense does not always accurately predict reality, people need something else.

Not every sociological finding is revolutionary; many findings do appear consistent with common sense. By systematically testing common sense beliefs against facts, sociologists can sort out which popular beliefs hold true and which do not. To accomplish this, sociologists use a variety of social science research designs and methods.

Sociology as a discipline is more than common sense. Sociology is a method of inquiry that requires the systematic testing of beliefs against evidence. Sociologists, therefore, make determining whether specific ideas are fact or fiction their job.

### **Class Conduct:**

It is expected of each student to carry themselves in a manner respectful, not only to the professor, but to fellow students as well. Eating meals in class is prohibited. Children are NOT allowed in the classroom. Being respectful of other students while they are talking or expressing their opinions/ideas during the discussion session of the course is a constant expectation. Cell phones must be turned off during the class period.

### **Class Expectations for Each Student:**

1. Attend each class.
2. Report to each class on time.
3. Report to each class prepared.
4. Demonstrate preparedness and flexibility.
5. Readily undertake new tasks and assignments.
6. Participate in class discussions by contributing thoughtful and responsive input.
7. Take assignments seriously.
8. Turn in quality assignments.
9. Turn in quality assignments on time/assigned due date.
10. Follow directions on assignments.
11. Demonstrate a non-judgmental and respectful attitude towards all classmates.
12. Demonstrate a non-judgmental and respectful attitude toward the professor.
13. Accept critiques in a mature and constructive manner and use it for personal and professional improvement.
14. Contribute to group efforts by focusing on tasks and contributing to the assignments.
15. Be attentive and not disruptive.
16. Is articulate, both orally and in writing.

## Student Disability Services

Please have faculty place the following statement on syllabi:

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services' mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

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### SDS News:

Effective Fall semester 2010 Student Disability Services will be implementing a revised alternative testing form when a student schedules classroom exams/quizzes administration at SDS. As before the student and instructor each have a portion to complete. Exams are to be mailed to a new password protected email address: [sdsexams2010@wayne.edu](mailto:sdsexams2010@wayne.edu).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Jane DePriester-Morandini  
Interim Director  
Student Disability Services  
1600 Undergraduate Library  
313.577.1851

# GRADING SCALE

100	-	94	=	A
93	-	90	=	A-
89	-	87	=	B+
86	-	84	=	B
83	-	80	=	B-
79	-	77	=	C+
76	-	74	=	C
73	-	70	=	C-
69	-	67	=	D+
66	-	64	=	D
63	-	60	=	D-
59	-	0	=	F

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# SOC 2020

## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are 12 social problem topics that you may choose from for your term paper. This reflective term paper should demonstrate understanding of reading assignments as well as the implications of new knowledge. This ten (10) page paper should integrate readings and class discussions into work and life experience. It may include explanations and examples from previous experience, as well as implications for future application.

Focus of this reflective paper is to encourage the organization and presentation by each participant of thoughts and conclusions concerning one of the learning outcomes of this course.

### The term paper must contain the following:

1. Must be ten (10) double spaced pages in length and formatted according to APA style, as outlined in your syllabus.
2. Must include an introductory page with a succinct thesis statement.
3. Must address the topic of the paper with critical thought.
4. Must conclude with a re-statement page of the thesis and a conclusion.
5. Must use the APA style as outlined in the approved APA style guide to document all sources.
6. Must include on the final page a reflective list that is completed according to the APA style as outlined in the approved APA style guide.

### TERM PAPER TOPICS

1. **Abortion:**
  - a. What limits are responsible
  - b. What limits are realistic
  - c. How to protect abortion doctors, pregnant woman and the unborn
  - d. Partial birth abortions
  - e. Unborn victims of violence
2. **Drugs:**
  - a. Community safety vs. legalization
  - b. Punishment or treatment
3. **Date rape:**
  - a. Mutual consent vs. exploitation
4. **School violence:**
  - a. School responsibility vs. parental responsibility
5. **Computer crime:**

# COURSE SCHEDULE

## Monday – January 12, 2015:

Orientation:

- a. Attendance policy
- b. Participation
- c. Individual presentations
- d. Chapter summaries (14)
- e. Examinations (4)
- f. Term paper

**NOTE:** ALL assigned chapters are to be summarized according to the directions in the syllabus. The chapter summary must be typed and turned in on the assigned date in your syllabus. NO chapter summary will be accepted after the due date. You will use your summary for class discussion and tests.

## Wednesday – January 14, 2015:

Lecture and discussion:

- a. What is a social problem?
- b. What is a social issue?
- c. What is a social movement?
- d. What is a social policy?
- e. A review of general theory
  - i. Functionalist Theory
  - ii. Conflict Theory
  - iii. Symbolic Interactionist Theory
- f. The history of social problem theory
  - i. The medical model
  - ii. Absolutist approach to understanding social problems
- g. Modern studies of deviance
  - i. Merton-social strain theory
  - ii. Labeling theory
- h. The subjective nature of social problems
- i. Official definitions of social problems
- j. Public opinion and the media
  - i. The powerful control media
  - ii. Conditions that effect the powerless are ignored
- k. Types of social problems
- l. Social conditions
- m. Institutionalized deviance

Jan 19:

NO class.....MLK Holiday!

**Jan 21:**  
Conclusion of January 14<sup>th</sup> lecture.

**Jan. 26:**  
Examination on class lectures.

**Jan 28:**  
**Lecture and discussion of Chapter One (1):**

- a. Sociological imagination
- b. Social constructionist approach
- c. Problems in social movements
- d. Stages in social movements
- e. Eight (8) social problems assertions
- f. The Chicago School
- g. Social conflict approach
- h. Problems of racial and ethnic inequality
- i. The feminist approach
- j. The symbolic interaction approach
- k. Responding to social problems
- l. Constructing problems and defining solutions
- m. Social issues
- n. Economic issues

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**Feb. 2:**  
Continue lecture and discussion from 1/28/2015.  
**Turn in Chapter One (1) summary.**

**Feb. 4:**  
Lecture and discussion of Chapter Two (2):

- a. Economic inequality
- b. Rich and poor; a social profile
- c. The poor
- d. The poverty line
- e. The poverty gap
- f. Who are the poor
- g. Age, gender, family and region
- h. The working poor
- i. The non-working poor
- j. The underclass

**Feb. 9:**  
Continuation of discussion on Chapter Two (2):

- a. Poor health
- b. Substandard housing
- c. Homelessness
- d. Limited schooling



- e. Crime and punishment
- f. Responding to poverty and the welfare system
- g. The history of welfare
- h. Colonial, industrial, twentieth century and the 1996 welfare reform
- i. Theories of poverty
- j. Social pathology, social disorganizational theory, modern functional theory and symbolic reaction
- k. Marxist theory
- l. Feminist analysis

**Turn in Chapter Two (2) summary.**

**Feb. 11:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Three (3):

- a. Race and ethnicity
- b. Patterns of majority-minority interaction
- c. Social standings of U.S. minorities
- d. Prejudice, racism, institutional racism, multi-culturalism and institutional discrimination
- e. Affirmative action
- f. Theories of racial and ethnic inequality.

**Turn in Chapter Three (3) summary.**

**Feb. 16:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Four (4):

- a. What is gender?
- b. Gender and social institutions
- c. Gender and education
- d. Gender and the mass media
- e. Gender and politics
- f. Gender and religion
- g. Gender and the military
- h. Gender and work
- i. Gender stratification
- j. The glass ceiling
- k. Violence against women
- l. Types of feminism

**Turn in Chapter Four (4) summary.**

**Feb. 18:**

Examination of Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4.

**Feb. 23:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Five (5):

- a. Growing old
- b. Individual aging
- c. Graying of the USA

- d. Problems of aging
  - e. Age stratification
  - f. Death and dying
- Turn in Chapter Five (5) summary.**

**Feb. 25:**  
Individual social problem presentations

**March 2:**  
Individual social problem presentations.

**March 4:**  
Individual social problem presentations.

**March 9:**  
Conclusion of individual social problem presentations.

**March 11:**  
Lecture and discussion of Chapter Six (6):

- a. Norms, law and crime
- b. The extent of the problem
- c. Crime statistics
- d. Types of crime
- e. Street crime
- f. Crime problem
- g. White collar, corporate, organized and victimless
- h. Violence
- i. The criminal justice system.

**Turn in Chapter Six (6) summary.**

**March 16 – 21, 2015:**  
**NO classes.....spring break.**

**March 23:**  
Lecture and discussion of Chapter Seven (7):

- a. What is sex?
- b. Sexual attitudes
- c. Sexual revolution
- d. Sexual orientation
- e. Sexual harassment
- f. Prostitution
- g. Teenage pregnancy
- h. STDs

**Turn in Chapter Seven (7) summary.**

**March 25:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Eight (8):

- a. What is a drug?
- b. Extent of drug use
- c. Why do people use drugs
- d. Types of drugs
- e. Depressants
- f. Hallucinogens
- g. Prescription drugs
- h. Steroids
- i. Drugs and other social problems
- j. Responding to drug problems

**March 30:**

Conclusion of lecture of Chapter Eight (8).  
**Turn in Chapter Eight (8) summary.**

**April 1:**

Examination of Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

**April 6:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Twelve (12):

- a. What is family?
- b. Controversies over family life
- c. Living together
- d. Parenting
- e. Child support
- f. Gay and lesbian families

**Turn in Chapter Twelve (12) summary.**

**April 8:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Thirteen (13):

- a. Problems in education
- b. Education in the USA
- c. Problems of education in the USA
- d. Effects of home and school
- e. School segregation and busing
- f. Disabilities
- g. Teacher shortage
- h. School violence

**Turn in Chapter Thirteen (13) summary.**

**April 13 and 15:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Fourteen (14):

- a. Cities; then and now
- b. Problems of today's cities

- c. Poverty
- d. Racial segregation
- e. Homelessness

**Turn in Chapter Fourteen (14) summary on April 15.**

**April 20 and 22:**

Lecture and discussion of Chapter Seventeen (17):

- a. War and peace
- b. Economics and war
- c. Social class and the military
- d. Mass media and war
- e. Strategies for peace
- f. Terrorism
- g. Cost of terrorism

**ALL term papers due.**

**April 27:**

Conclusion of lecture of Chapter Seventeen (17).  
**Turn in Chapter Seventeen (17) summary.**

**Distribution of take home final examination.**  
**Chapters 12, 13, 14 and 17.**

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**April 29:**

**Return of take home final examination.**



# INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION SUBJECTS

**NOTE:** You will be assigned one of these presentations. Your presentation will consist of a three (3) to five (5) minute oral presentation to the class.

1. ABORTION
2. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
3. AGE DISCRIMINATION
4. ALCOHOLISM
5. BINGE DRINKING
6. BULLYING
7. CAMPUS CRIME
8. THE DEATH PENALTY
9. DATE RAPE
10. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
11. RACISM
12. SEGREGATION
13. DISCRIMINATION
14. GAY RIGHTS
15. GANG VIOLENCE
16. GUN CONTROL
17. HATE CRIMS
18. HIV/AIDS
19. HUNGER
20. HOMELESSNESS
21. OBESITY
22. MASS MURDER
23. RAPE
24. PORNOGRAPHY
25. POVERTY
26. PRAYER IN SCHOOLS
27. RACIAL PROFILING
28. SAME SEX MARRIAGE
29. THE SEX TRADE
30. SINGLE PARENTING
31. DIVORCE
32. SMOKING
33. MARIJUANA USE
34. MEDICAL MARIJUANA
35. HEALTH CARE IN THE USA
36. STERIOD USE IN SPORTS
37. TEEN PREGNANCY
38. VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS
39. UNEMPLOYMENTS
40. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

41. ILLITERACY
  42. CRACK COCAINE
  43. HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS
  44. CAR JACKING
  45. TERRORISM
  46. PRISON RAPE
  47. POLYGAMY
  48. CHILD LABOR
  49. EATING DISORDERS
  50. EUTHANASIA
  51. HAZING
  52. HOME FORECLOSURES
  53. ID THEFT
  54. THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION (NRA)
  55. PRISONS
  56. THE AVAILABILITY OF HANDGUNS
  57. ROBBERIES
  58. BURGLARIES
  59. PEDOPHILIA
  60. WHITE COLLAR CRIME
  61. ORGANIZED CRIME
  62. CORPORATE CRIME
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