**Soc 2020: Social Problems (Winter 2018)**

Course # 22477/Sec 010: 1125 Science Hall 1130am-2pm

**Instructor:** Salam Aboulhassan

**Office Location:** 2244 Faculty Administration Building (FAB)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 10am-11am, or by appointment, beginning January 15th

**Email:** [salam.aboulhassan@wayne.edu](mailto:salam.aboulhassan@wayne.edu)

\*Check your email regularly for class announcements, cancellations or other information. I can meet after class for a few minutes to answer quick questions. Best way to reach me is by email. Allow 24 hours for a response. Do not hesitate to contact me if you need help or have questions.

**Course Description**

This class introduces you to a variety of contemporary social problems. In addition to defining and establishing the prevalence of each problem, the course also explores their causes and consequences. We also consider possible interventions that could alleviate each problem. The course will begin by covering four major theoretical perspectives that have been used within the discipline of sociology to address and consider various social problems. In the weeks that follow, we will address specific social problems including issues related to poverty, race/ethnicity, gender inequality, crime, education, and war, among other social issues, using the four theoretical perspectives, providing you with key insights into how personal troubles that individuals face are social issues that are rooted in the operation of the larger society.

**Course Objectives**

1. Understand how sociologists define and study social problems.
2. Be familiar with the prevalence of social problems and the competing explanations of these problems that are based on individual and social explanations.
3. Understand the consequences and proposed solutions of social problems.
4. Critically think about your community and your role within it when accounting for the prevalence of social problems and potential solutions.
5. Recognize the importance of racial, ethnic, gender and class diversity within society and how these groups specifically experience social problem compared to others.
6. Proficiency in reading and comprehending scholarly texts while developing writing skills to construct or deconstruct complex ideas while connecting major ideas/concepts together.
7. Hone your research techniques by developing internet and computer skills needed for college-level work, while learning presentation time management skills that require you to present your argument to a large audience in an efficient/creative manner.

**Required Reading:** *Social Problems (6th Edition) John Macionis – Revel Access ISBN 9780134632612 or used textbook 978-0133909593*

**Other Readings:**There may be instances where articles are selected for facilitated discussions. They will be posted on blackboard. You must read the articles prior to coming to class.

**Attendance Policy**

Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences during the semester. Every absence over 2 will reduce your grade by 5%. Documentation is required you are unable to take an exam during the scheduled time or if you are unable to turn in an assignment when it is due. Documentation is needed if circumstances out of your control cause you to miss more than two days of class. It is your responsibility to get class notes from other students or seek clarification from me about what you missed. Check blackboard and your email for all major announcements and schedule changes.

**Course Expectations**

*Be respectful*. All rules of courtesy and respect are in effect during class. Refrain from talking to others and disruptive behaviors while we are engaged in lecture or class discussion, which includes being patient and courteous while others are talking, etc. Please arrive to class on time. Arriving to class for the last 20 minutes multiple times is unacceptable. I will not repeat lectures and will not give out copies of my lecture notes. Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated.

*Cell Phones, Pagers, iPhones, iPads, iTouches, etc.*: All phones, pages, and other electronic devices should be turned off (or turned to a silent ringer option) before you enter the classroom. Students should refrain from texting, facebooking, tweeting, or surfing the web during class. If you use a laptop during class time, use it for note-taking purposes only. I reserve the right to lower students’ participation and attendance grades if students are disruptive in class because they are online during class time.

*Responsibility for All Material Covered During Class:* Lectures will only cover some of the required reading. You are responsible for reading all weekly required readings before coming to class. I encourage dialogue and questions. Showing up to class is not enough. Your participation grade is based on engaging in class discussions and contributing your thoughts on the weekly readings. Get help when you need it.

**Changes to the syllabus**

I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus at any time. Changes will be announced in class and on blackboard. It is your responsibility to check blackboard for announcements if you miss class.

**Grading**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Three Exams  Group Project/Final paper | 150 points  100 points |
| Two Reading Responses | 30 points |
| Participation | 20 points |
| **Total Points Possible** | **300 points** |
|  |  |

**Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 100-93 A | 86.99-83 B | 76.99-73 C | 66.99-63 D |
| 92.99-90 A- | 82.99-80 B- | 72.99-70 C- | 62.99-60 D- |
| 89.99-87 B+ | 79.99-77 C+ | 69.99-67 D+ | 59.99-0 F |

*Concerns about the Course*: If you have any concerns about the course (grade-related or otherwise), you should speak to me immediately and directly about your concerns. However, class time will NOT be used to discuss your course concerns. The concerns you have about the course should be discussed PRIVATELY with the instructor, as they are *your* concerns and not your classmates’.

**Course Drops/Withdrawals**

In the first two weeks of the (full) term, students can drop this class and receive 100% tuition and course fee cancellation. After the end of the second week, there is no tuition or fee cancellation. Students who wish to withdraw from the class can initiate a withdrawal request in Academica. You will receive a transcript notation of WP (passing), WF (failing), or WN (no graded work) at the time of withdrawal. No withdrawals can be initiated after the end of the tenth week. Students

enrolled in the 10th week and beyond will receive a grade. Because withdrawing from courses may have negative academic and financial consequences, students considering course withdrawal should make sure they fully understand all the consequences before taking this step.

More information on this can be found at: <https://wayne.edu/students/register/dropping>

**Important Dates**

January 15, 2018 – No Class, MLK Day

January 22, 2018 – Last day to drop with full tuition reimbursement

February 4, 2018 – Last day to drop without instructor permission

March 25, 2018 – Last day to withdrawal with instructor permission

March 12-17, 2018 – Spring break, no classes.

\*It is the student’s responsibility to complete necessary paperwork to withdrawal from course. Students who stop attending class and fail to complete coursework and exams will receive a failing grade.

**Exams**

There will be three exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions worth 1 points each. Each exam is worth 50 points/~16% of your grade. Exams will be completed via blackboard and will be take home. You will have a three-day span to take the exam.

Make up exams are rarely given. If in an extreme circumstance you are unable to take the exam, you must provide documentation supporting your claim. You must contact me prior or immediately after the exam to obtain permission to reschedule an exam. All makeup exams must be completed within one week of exam date in my office. It is your responsibility to contact me to make necessary arrangements.

**Other Course Work:**

Information will be handed out in class and will be posted on blackboard before the first day of class or within first week. Calendar will also be available on blackboard which will let you know what we are covering every week.

**Incompletes**

Incompletes will be granted only in unusual circumstances (illness, hospitalization etc.) Please schedule an appointment with me immediately if you have any issues that prevent you from completing the course. University policy will be followed when considering incompletes.

**Academic Dishonesty – Plagiarism and Cheating**

Academic misbehavior means any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution or subvert the education process. All forms of academic misbehavior are prohibited at Wayne State University, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Students who commit or assist in committing dishonest acts are subject to downgrading (to a failing grade for the test, paper, or other course related activity in question, or for the entire course) and/or additional sanctions as described in the Student Code of Conduct. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment. If it happens again, student will fail course. Students caught cheating will automatically fail the exam. If it happens again, student will fail the course. University policy surrounding plagiarism, fabrication and cheating: Dean of Student’s Office website at (<http://doso.wayne.edu/academic-integrity.html>).

* Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use, or intentionally providing or attempting to provide, unauthorized materials, information or assistance in any academic exercise. Examples include: (a) copying from another student’s test paper; (b) allowing another student to copy from a test paper; (c) using unauthorized material such as a "cheat sheet" during an exam.
* Fabrication: Intentional and unauthorized falsification of any information or citation. Examples include: (a) citation of information not taken from the source indicated; (b) listing sources in a bibliography not used in a research paper.
* Plagiarism: To take and use another’s words or ideas as one’s own. Examples include: (a) failure to use appropriate referencing when using the words or ideas of other persons; (b) altering the language, paraphrasing, omitting, rearranging, or forming new combinations of words in an attempt to make the thoughts of another appear as your own.
* Unauthorized reuse of work product: submission for academic credit, without the prior permission of the instructor, of substantial work previously submitted for credit in another course. Example: submitting a paper in a current course that was written for, and submitted in, a previous course.
* Other forms of academic misbehavior include, but are not limited to: (a) unauthorized use of resources, or any attempt to limit another student’s access to educational resources, or any attempt to alter equipment so as to lead to an incorrect answer for subsequent users; (b) enlisting the assistance of a substitute in the taking of examinations; (c) violating course rules as defined in the course syllabus or other written information provided to the student; (d) selling, buying or stealing all or part of an un-administered test or answers to the test; (e) changing or altering a grade on a test or other academic grade records.

**Student Disabilities Services**

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 SDS office is located in the Adamany Undergraduate Library. The SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TTD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours or at another agreed upon time to discuss your needs.

**Student Services**

The Academic Success Center (Undergraduate Library) assists students with content in select courses and in strengthening study skills. Visit www.success.wayne.edu for schedules and information on study skills workshops, tutoring, and supplemental instruction (primarily in 1000 and 2000 level courses). The Writing Center is located on the 2nd floor of the Undergraduate Library and provides individual tutoring consultations free of charge. Visit clasweb.clas.wayne.edu/writing to obtain information on tutors, appointments, and the type of help they can provide. Library research assistance: Working on a research assignment, paper,

or project? Trying to figure out how to collect, organize, and cite your sources? Wayne State librarians provide on-campus or online personalized help. Contact them at http:library.wayne.edu/consult

**Class recordings**

Students need prior written permission from the instructor before recording any portion of this class. If permission is granted, the audio and/or video recording is to be used only for the student’s personal instructional use. Such recordings are not intended for a wider public audience, such as postings to the internet or sharing with others. Students registered with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) who wish to record class materials must present their specific accommodation to the instructor, who will subsequently comply with the request unless there is some specific reason why s/he cannot, such as discussion of confidential or protected information.