

Social Problems
Fall 2014
Saturday-9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Wayne State University
Oakland Center
Room 0326

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Office Hours: Available immediately before or after lecture or by appointment.

Required Text: Social Problems 5th ed. Macionis. ISBN-10: 0205881394

Course Description: Consideration of major contemporary social problems which reveal structural strains, value conflicts, deviations and changes in society. Analysis of socio-cultural factors creating problems and of possible solutions.

Course Objectives:

- Use the sociological imagination to identify social problems that exist in society.
- Identify and understand causes, outcomes and proposed solutions to social problems.
- Learn and explain the how theoretical perspectives and policies influence our definition of social problems.

General Course Policies and Guidelines

Attendance: Please plan to attend every class. Please note if you miss class you may miss an unannounced quiz. If you miss the quiz, you will not be allowed to make it up. Exceptions will only be made if you have an emergency that causes you to miss class. If you have such an emergency, you must notify me prior to class or as soon as possible. If excused, you will be given time to make up the missed quiz provided you arrange a make-up within 24 hours.

Otherwise, I do not provide an opportunity to make-up quizzes. All make up quizzes are in short essay format.

Cell Phones/ Laptops/Tape Recorders: Using a cell phone in any shape and form is absolutely prohibited in the classroom. Please place all cell phones on vibrate/silent during class. If you must answer the phone or place a phone call, please leave the room quietly. Students who insist on using their cell phone during class for any reason will be asked to leave. Students are welcome to use their laptop to take notes during class. However, if I find that a student is using the laptop to work on assignments for this course, other classes, or is accessing the internet, I will ban the use of laptops for **ALL** students as the maximum consequence. You may not record the class lecture.

Missed Lectures and Office Hours: I will not repeat lecture material during office hours. If you

miss a class for any reason, make sure that you have done the reading and get lecture notes from a classmate. Office hours are to be used as a time to address specific questions about course material, course assignments, or your general performance. Come prepared to meet with me with a list of your specific questions. I will not conduct an “office visit” over email.

Plagiarism/Cheating: See Wayne State’s Policy on Academic Integrity.

Grading Policy

Final course grades are the result of your collective scores from the following: Four unannounced quizzes, two examinations, your performance on two article summaries, and a presentation. There are 500 total points possible during this course.

Grading Breakdown:

Exam 1=100 Pts

Exam 2=100 Pts

Quizzes=100 Pts

Article Summaries=100 Pts

Presentation: 100 points

Total Points: 500 Points

Quizzes: Four short and unannounced quizzes will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes are multiple choice. Each quiz is worth 25 points and all four are worth a total of 100 points. **Quizzes cannot be made up at a later date unless you have an approved absence for the day. Make up quizzes are in short essay format.** When the first person to complete the quiz submits, quizzes will no longer be distributed to anyone arriving late. There will be no make-up for those arriving too late to write the quiz.

Examinations: You will have two online examinations. Each exam is worth 100 points. The questions in each exam cover all the material assigned to that point. All exams will be multiple choice and given to students via Blackboard. If you know that you are going to miss an exam, please contact me at least 24 hours before the scheduled exam (if possible) to make arrangements to take the exam. If you fail to provide advanced notice and miss an exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam unless you have extenuating circumstances which must be verified.

Extra Credit: Extra credit assignments will not be given in SOC 2020. Students will however be allowed to obtain extra points because extra questions will be placed on the two examinations given during the semester. There is an opportunity to earn a maximum of 25 extra credit points in this course. Ten extra credit questions will be placed on exam #1 and 15 extra credit questions will be placed on exam #2. **No other extra credit will be given to students in the class.**

Article Summaries: Each student is required to select two articles from any peer-reviewed journal about a social problem of interest. Each summary is worth 50 points and should include the following: purpose of the research, hypotheses, data and methods, and your opinion of the article/research. Indicate in your summary if you think this research is important and explain your position. Each summary submitted should be 3-5 pages in length and formatted in APA. Papers that are not formatted appropriately will not be graded. Please pay attention to grammar,

punctuation and spelling. **Article summary number one is due by 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 27, 2014. Article summary number two is due by 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 25, 2014. Summaries must be submitted via Blackboard. Summaries will not be accepted via email. Summaries will not be accepted late.**

Presentation: Select a social problem of interest to you. Prepare a 10-15 minute presentation on the topic. The presentation should clearly identify your topic of interest. A minimum of five sources are required for this assignment. A maximum of two popular sources are allowed. Students should upload their presentations and reference sheet to Blackboard before the due date. **The presentation is due by 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2014. Late presentations are not allowed.**

Course Final Grade: Your grade will be based on a total of 500 points possible for the course outlined above, with the final grade assigned on the basis of the table below.

<u>Points Earned</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>	<u>Grade</u>
475 – 500	A	400 – 411	C+
468 – 474	A-	380 – 399	C
447 – 467	B+	360 – 379	C-
430 – 446	B	325 – 359	D
412 – 429	B-	Less than 325	F

Challenging Grades: If you believe that you have been graded unfairly on any assignment, you must address your concerns to me in **writing**. You should provide specific points. For example if you believe that a multiple-choice question was graded incorrectly, you must provide evidence from the course book(s) to document your statement. Once I have reviewed your request for a grade change, one of several things may happen: If you are able to show that you are correct your grade will be changed. I may request an in person meeting if I need more clarification on your argument. If you still feel after this process that your grade is not reflective of your effort, your next line of appeal would be through the Sociology Department. Be advised that challenged grades can result either in an increase, a decrease or no change in the grade.

Policy for Grade of Incomplete: As noted in the Undergraduate Bulletin, “An Incomplete is given (to a student) when he/she has not completed all of the course work as planned for the term and when there is, in the judgment of the instructor, a reasonable probability that the student can complete the course successfully without again attending regular class sessions. The responsibility for completing all course work rests entirely with the student. The mark of ‘I’ will be changed to a grade only when the student completes the course work as arranged with the instructor....” The mark of ‘I’ which is not converted to a letter grade within one calendar year from the time it was received will be considered failure under the new rules.

An Incomplete will be granted only in unusual circumstances, such serious illness or hospitalization. The plan for removing the incomplete will be stated in writing and this document will be signed by both the student and the instructor.

Withdrawals: Students who find they are not doing well in the course should withdraw from the course. It is the student's responsibility to initiate action for a formal withdrawal. Students who do not officially withdraw but stop attending class and/or do not take scheduled exams will receive a failing grade. **No withdrawals are permitted after Sunday, November 9, 2014.**

Class Announcements: It is the student's responsibility to inquire about announcements made in class as well as the subject material if you are absent from class.

Student Disability Services: If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services 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](tel:313-577-1851) or [313-577-3365](tel:313-577-3365) (TTY: telecommunication device for the deaf; phone for hearing impaired students 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 WSU.

Undergraduate Library (UGL) Writing Center: If you need assistance with writing this semester, I encourage you to visit the UGL Writing Center. The UGL Writing Center at Wayne State takes walk-ins (but prefers appointments). Please view the link below for the center's hours of operation. Students may also email papers / essays to the Writing Center. The Writing Center will provide feedback within three days of submission. The email address is engwc2310@wayne.edu. UGL Writing Center: <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/writing>.

Changes to the Syllabus: I reserve the right to make adjustments to this syllabus throughout the course if I deem it necessary. Please pay close attention to all announcements in class and on Blackboard.

Class Schedule

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic(s) & Chapter(s)</u>
August 30, 2014	Introductions, Syllabus, Social Problems - 1
September 6, 2014	Poverty & Wealth, Inequality (Racial/Ethnic)-2,3
September 13, 2014	Inequality (continued)-4,5
September 20, 2014	Inequality (continued) Crime-6
September 27, 2014	Sexuality-7
Article Summary #1 Due by 9:00 a.m. on September 27, 2014. Submit via Blackboard	
October 4, 2014	Alcohol, Drugs, Health-8,9
October 11, 2014	Health (continued)-8,9
October 18, 2014 Exam 1 –ONLINE-NO CLASS. DEADLINE: 5:00 p.m.	
October 25, 2014	Urban Life (Guest Speaker: Mr. Brandon Ivory, MSW)-14
Article Summary #2 Due by 9:00 a.m. on October 25, 2014. Submit via Blackboard	
November 1, 2014	Family, Education-12, 13

November 8, 2014	Family, Education (continued), Workplace- <i>12,13,11</i>
November 15, 2014 Presentations	
November 22, 2014	Workplace (continued) 11, Economy, Global Problems- <i>10, 15,16,17</i>
November 29, 2014 NO CLASS-HOLIDAY	
December 6, 2014	Global Problems (continued) -10, 15,16,17
December 13, 2014 Exam #2 –ONLINE. NO CLASS. DEADLINE: 5:00 p.m.	