

Soc 2020: Social Problems

Course # 11224 Sec 003

Fall 2015

128 State Hall

Instructor: Salam Aboulhassan

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*Check your email regularly for class announcements, cancellations or any other relevant information.

Office Hours: Tues 1:45-2:45 or by appointment. I can also meet after class for a few minutes to answer quick questions. You can also reach me by email. Please allow 24 hours for a response. I will usually respond quickly, but if you don't hear from me within 24 hours, please resend the email. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need help or have any questions.

Required Reading: *Social Problems (6th Edition) John Macionis ISBN 978-0133909593*

Course Description

This class introduces you to a variety of contemporary social problems. Topics include issues related to poverty, race and ethnicity, gender inequality, crime, education, and war, among other social issues. 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.

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.

Attendance Policy

Students are allowed 4 unexcused absences throughout the semester. Documentation is required for any absences after 4 or your grade will be impacted. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class. It is your responsibility to get class notes from other students or seek clarification from me about what you missed and to check blackboard and your email for all major announcements and schedule changes.

Course Expectations

Be respectful of those around you. Refrain from talking to others while we are engaged in lecture or class discussion. Refrain from any disruptive behavior. Please try to arrive to class on time. I will not repeat lectures and will not give out copies of my lecture notes. Please set phones to silent and do not use them during class. If you bring a laptop to class, please use it only in a manner that contributes to class learning. If I feel like you are using technology in an inappropriate way, I will ask you to leave.

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 make adjustments to this syllabus throughout the semester. Changes will be addressed in class and announcements will also be made on blackboard. It is your responsibility to check blackboard for all announcements if you are not in class.

Grading

Attendance	10 points
Participation	40 points
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Final Project: Presentation	50 points
Final Project: Paper	100 points
Total Points Possible	500 points

Grading Scale

100-93 A	86-83 B	76-73 C	66-63 D
92-90 A-	82-80 B-	72-70 C-	62-60 D-
89-87 B+	79-77 C+	69-67 D+	60-0 E

Important Dates

September 16, 2015 – Last day to drop with full tuition reimbursement

September 30, 2015 – Last day to withdrawal without instructor permission

November 15, 2015 – Last day to withdrawal with instructor permission

*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.

Participation

Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Students are required to email me by Monday night at 10pm with 2 questions related to the scheduled reading. Questions must be submitted for a total of 7 weeks to get full credit. Questions can relate to chapter readings to further clarify content, to specific local events or news that relates to class discussions and other relevant questions. Students are required to bring these questions to class to help facilitate discussions. Submitting the questions does not guarantee full participation credit. The purpose is to engage in discussion relevant to class lectures and topics of discussions.

Exams

There will be three exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions and two short essay questions. You will select one to answer and you have the option to answer the second one for extra credit. Study guides will be handed out prior to each exam and we will have a review session the class period before exam day. Exams will be completed in class.

Make up exams are rarely given. If in an extreme circumstance you are unable to attend class to take the exam, you must provide documentation supporting your claim that you cannot attend class. 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.

Final Project

The final project is broken up into two parts, a social agency presentation worth 25 points and a 5-7 final paper that is worth 75 points. You will select a social problem to investigate utilizing course materials and external resources.

Social Agency Presentation: You will partner up with two class members to present a social issue. Groups will present a social issue by providing real world examples of activists or organizations that are trying to solve the issue. You should determine a brief history of 2-3 organizations, services provided, unique characteristics, activities, concerns and controversies. You can interview staff of an organization, obtain flyers, talk to individuals who are impacted by the social issue etc. Be as creative as possible. Your group will present for approximately 10 minutes. You can create a PowerPoint presentation, a poster board, engage in a debate, etc.

Final Paper: 4-7 pages using 4-6 citations. You can use your book as one citation. 4 citations must be scholarly articles, preferably from sociological journals. Double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font and 1 inch margins. APA format for citations. For help with citations, you can visit the writing center or visit the Purdue Owl website at (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>).

Your paper will include:

1. **Problem Description:** Introduce the problem and sub-problems (if relevant). Analyze the problem by potentially discussing the history or background, the effects or consequences of the problem, values, beliefs and norms that are considered and what stands are taken.
2. **Causes of the Problem:** What sociological assumptions fit this problem? What social factors are involved? What deviance patterns are blamed?
3. **Solutions to the problem:** What stage of protest is the problem in? What solutions are proposed by whom (individuals, groups, ideologies, perspectives)? Which causes are addressed and why? Which are not? What solutions have been tried? Have they worked? Use research support. What additional problems do the solutions raise, if any?
4. **Summarize and take a personal position:** What conclusion can you draw about the problem? What position do you take and why? What do you think is the best solution?

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 Integrity

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>).

Education Accessibility Services

Any student with a documented disability or a condition that compromises their ability to complete the course requirements or attend class should notify me as soon as possible. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs. You can contact EAS at (313)577-1851 to discuss accommodations in private. They are located at the David Adamany Undergraduate Library in Room 1600. You can also visit their website at <http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/>.

Writing Center

English department tutors are available to assist students if they need help with writing their papers. You can call them at (313)577-2544 or visit their website to schedule an appointment at <http://clasweb.clas.wayne.edu/writing>

FERPA

“The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designated to protect the privacy of a student’s education records and academic work. The law applies to all schools and universities which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education and is applicable to students at WSU. All files, records, and academic work completed within this course are considered educational records and are protected under FERPA. It is your right as a student in this course to expect that any materials you submit in this course as well as your name and other identifying information will not be viewable by guests or other individuals permitted access to the course. The exception will be made only when you have given explicit, written, signed consent. Verbal consent or email is insufficient.”

Course Calendar

Date	Lecture	Readings
Sept 2	Introduction to Class	
Sept 8 & 10	Studying Social Problems	Chap 1
Sept 15 & 17	Poverty and Wealth	Chap 2
Sept 22 & 24	Race and Ethnicity/ Gender	Chap 3 & 4
Sept 29 & Oct 1	Sexuality	Chap 7
Oct 6	<i>Review Day</i>	
Oct 8	<i>Exam 1</i>	
Oct 13 & 15	Crime and Violence	Chap 6
Oct 20 & 22	Age/Physical & Mental Health	Chap 5 & 9
Oct 27 & 29	Economy and Politics	Chap 10
Nov 3	<i>Review Day</i>	
Nov 5	<i>Exam 2</i>	
Nov 10 & 12	Work and Workplace	Chap 11
Nov 17 & 19	Education and Urban Society	Chap 13 & 14
Nov 24	Flex Day	
Nov 26	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	
Dec 1 & 3	War and Terrorism	Chap 17
Dec 8	<i>Review Day</i>	
Dec 10	<i>Exam 3</i>	
Dec 15	Final Papers due by 9am	