

SOCIAL PROBLEMS
SOC 2020 CRN 10204 section 001
Wed 10:40am to 1:25pm
Classroom: Science Hall 2009

Instructor: Ms. Heather Mooney

Office: 2244 FAB

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Office Hours: Wednesdays from 1:30pm to 2:30pm

Course Description

This course takes consideration of major contemporary social problems which reveal structural strains, value conflicts, deviations and changes in society. It will analyze the socio-cultural factors creating problems and of possible solutions for the future.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- 1) Analyze the social world through the discipline of sociology and have an understanding of some of the key debates/problems in the nature of social life
- 2) Place your own lives/biographies in a sociological perspective
- 3) Understand some of the central challenges facing our society and the world in the 21st century and be able to evaluate them
- 4) Think more critically about your own role as a citizen and understand proposed ways to alleviate the major social problems facing society today

Course Expectations

Arrive on time and do not leave until class is over. Turn off your cell phone (or set to silent) and do not use during class. Treat others respectfully. Please refrain from talking to one another during class or engaging in any other distracting behavior. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Any and all violations of these course expectations and actions that are not considerate of others can result in negative participation points and up to removal from the class. Complete all readings before class and be prepared to discuss them. Get help when you need it. Provide feedback.

Required Text and Materials

1. Crone, J. A. (2012). *15 Disturbing Things We Need to Know*. Sage.
2. Barkan, S. E. (2013). *Social Problems: Continuity and Change*.
Open Source Textbook available online: <http://www.saylor.org/books/>

Highly recommended to read one of the following:

Al Jazeera America – <http://america.aljazeera.com/>

New York Times – www.nytimes.com

BBC News - www.bbc.com/news

Grading

Your course grade is diversified based on written assignments, three projects and a final exam. Please note participation and attendance are also necessary for making the grade. Any assignments or requests made during class throughout the semester will count under the participation or written work category. This includes engaging in class discussion and activities, as well as being ready and able to answer questions and provide comments in class about the readings, materials and so forth.

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Written work	15%
Term Paper	15%
Presentation	10%
Community	15%
Book Review	10%
Final Exam	15%

Total: 100%

Written Work

Nearly each week you will be assigned reflection papers. These should be in essay format and at least one to two pages long. It is important that you incorporate your thoughts and critical thinking into these papers. Ideally writings will generate thoughts or questions that can be brought up in class discussions. Late assignments will be reduced in value half a letter grade for each day that the assignment is late.

Research Term Paper

The focus of this paper is to critically explore a social problem/issue that is of interest to you. The paper will be a five to seven page double spaced (size 12 font Times New Roman style) assignment. Please feel free to use the assigned readings, your personal experiences and resources from the Undergraduate Library. Please include a cover paper and a bibliography. You should include at least four journal (periodical) articles. Please use American Sociological Association (ASA) formatting.

Community Service Project

During the week of November 16th, you will be given class time (therefore there will be no class on Wednesday November 18th, 2015) to conduct at least 4 hours of service learning at a local community agency or event of your choice. A great option is joining the Sociology's Department community service event called Sociology Cares @ Focus Hope on Saturday Nov 21st, 2015 from 9am-12noon. Consider how your local community service relates to social problem(s) in society. You will be required to turn in a Reflection of your choice on the significance and experience.

Exam: The final exam will cover all assigned readings, films, and lectures. We will review the material in class the exam. The majority of each exam will be multiple choices and/or true and false, with a few short answer and/or essay questions.

Make up exams are extremely rare and all of them will be exclusively essay tests. You must get permission and make arrangements for your make up test with me prior to or immediately after the exam. Permission to take a makeup exam will be granted only under the most extenuating circumstances. If you miss due to illness or injury a note from your doctor is required. All make up exams must be conducted within one week of the regular exam date. It is your responsibility to schedule.

Book Review: Each student will select a sociological book of their choice by the end of September to read and critique. Book review should include a brief description of the content of the book, explaining the author's argument/points. Most importantly paper has an in-depth analysis and evaluation of its ideas and purpose, including your assessment of the book's ideas, strengths/weaknesses, etc. Paper should be 2-3 pages in length, typed in essay format using Times New Roman 12pt font.

Attendance Policy

Lectures will only cover *some* of the reading material that is assigned not all making it imperative that you read your assigned readings. Class is an interactive experience; thus, attendance and participation are both crucial and required as part of your grade. To earn full credit you must contribute to class discussions by reading, preparing and speaking in class. Showing up will not be enough.

Grading Scale

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

Email

Please check your email on a regular basis. Outside of class email is the best way to communicate with one another. I reserve the right to change the syllabus at any time as needed as the class progresses. Any changes will be emailed out to the class list serve as well as announced in class and posted on Blackboard. Required materials for the class will be made available via email and/or Blackboard as well.

If you have problems with your email account send an email to the C&IT Help Desk at helpdesk@wayne.edu or call (313) 577-4778.

The Computing & Information Technology Help Desk website:
<http://www.computing.wayne.edu/helpdesk/>

Academic Integrity

It is paramount that we each remain committed to academic excellence. We will pursue our love of knowledge in a honest and forthright manner, in standing with our reputable University community. Please visit the Dean of Student's Office website to review the policy and protocol around plagiarism, fabrication, cheating and other: <http://doso.wayne.edu/academic-integrity.html>

Education Accessibility Services

Any student with a documented disability or a condition that compromises their ability to satisfactorily complete the course requirements or attend class regularly should notify me as soon as possible. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your needs. Please contact EAS at (313) 577-1851 to discuss appropriate accommodations in a confidential setting. The office is located in Room 1600 of the David Adamany Undergraduate Library. All services are by appointment only please visit the website: <http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/>

Writing Center

Offers one-on-one writing assistance in the University Writing Center, room 2310 of the Undergraduate Library. English Department tutors are available to assist you with your paper, from beginning to end, from the first draft to the final copy. Please visit the website to schedule appointment online or for further information: <http://clasweb.clas.wayne.edu/writing> You can also call them at (313) 577-2544.

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”

Assistance/Feedback

I have regularly scheduled office hours during the semester and am always available by email. We can certainly schedule another time to meet if needed. Please if you are having problems with the course material, or otherwise, please contact me early on, if possible, so that we can work out a plan of action or other solution for you. You're also welcome and encouraged to provide any type of feedback to me about the class. Thank you very much!

Course Outline of Readings & Important Dates
(Subject to change according to course progress)

Wednesday Sept 2nd, 2015 – 1st day of Class (Introductions & Overview)
Reading #7 – The Atrophy of Social Life

SEPT 9th – Understanding Social Problems (Chapter 1)
Reading #14 – America’s Addiction to Belief

SEPT 16th – Poverty (Chapter 2)
Reading #8 – What Do We Deserve? (*extra* #11 & #12)

SEPT 23rd – Racial & Ethnic Inequality (Chapter 3)
*Friday Sept 25th (or Oct 2nd) from 11:30am-5pm Cell Block 7 Prison Field Trip

SEPT 30th – Gender Inequality (Chapter 4)

OCT 7th – Alcohol & Other Drugs (Chapter 7)

OCT 14th – Crime & Criminal Justice (Chapter 8)
Reading #9 – Cruel & Unusual

OCT 21st – Sexual Behavior (Chapter 9)
Reading #3 – Nannies, Maids & Sex Workers in the New Economy

OCT 28th – The Changing Family (Chapter 10)
Reading #6 – All Happy Families

NOV 4th – Health & Health Care (Chapter 13)
Book Review DUE (turn in during class)

NOV 11th – Urban & Rural Problems (Chapter 14)
Reading #5 – A User’s Guide to the Century

NO CLASS NOV 18th (Community Service)
*Sat Nov 21st, 2015 from 9am to noon WSU Sociology Cares @ Focus Hope

NO CLASS NOV 25th (Enjoy your Holiday!)

DEC 2nd – Class Presentations & Community Service Projects DUE

DEC 9th – FINAL EXAM

DEC 16th – Research Term Papers DUE by midnight via email or Blackboard