

# SOC 2020: Social Problems

Section 004  
CRN: 22570

Winter 2016

**Professor:** David Fasenfest  
**Email:** [david.fasenfest@wayne.edu](mailto:david.fasenfest@wayne.edu)  
**Office:** 3229 FAB  
**Tel:** 313-577-2930  
**Hours:** by appointment

This course deals with a broad array of social problems, where they come from, how we define them, and the degree to which programs and policies are designed to alleviate them. In addition, we will discuss how, at times, the solution to one set of problems may well create another set of problems. Students are expected to do all the course reading in preparation. This web course provides additional information available on Blackboard. There will also be assignments within REVEL, more to come on that. This is not a difficult course, unless you fall behind. Course expectations are straightforward and it is easy to do well.

**Goals and objectives for the course:** To understand the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of social reality, such that you will be able to: (a) describe how sociology differs from and is similar to other social sciences and to give examples of these differences; (b) describe how sociology contributes to a liberal arts understanding of social reality; and (c) apply the sociological imagination, sociological principles, and concepts to her/his own life. This semester you will be introduced to basic concepts in sociology and their fundamental theoretical interrelations, so you will be able to define, give examples, and demonstrate the relevance of culture; social change; socialization; stratification; social structure; institutions; and differentiations by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and class. Finally, you should be able to see how culture and social structure operate to: (a) show how institutions interlink in their effects on each other and on individuals; (b) demonstrate how social change factors such as population or urbanization affect social structures and individuals; (c) demonstrate how culture and social structure vary across time and place and the effect is of such variations; and (d) identify examples of specific policy implications using reasoning about social-structural effects. Finally, you will be able to describe: (a) the significance of variations by race, class, gender, and age; and (b) will know how to appropriately generalize or resist generalizations across groups.

**Consultation:** The best way to communicate your questions about the course is via email. Please note that I usually reply to email within 24 hours and most often sooner. If you do not get a response from me, perhaps your email did not arrive, so please resend your question.

***Required Course Materials:***

**TEXT/ONLINE COMPONENT:** Sullivan, *Introduction to Social Problems, Books A La Carte Edition Plus Revel -- Access Card Package 10/E*. ISBN: 9780134174624

- Access code card +loose-leaf print version available in the campus bookstore
- In order to register you will need the course link- directions and the course link needed are provided at the end of this syllabus. Once you've purchased your access code or with 2 weeks temp access until code is purchased, you may register.

**REVEL:** You will have several assignments on REVEL, including quizzes and Shared Writing. REVEL is an online learning tool. This is also where you'll be completing your reading assignments. Please continue reading below for more details.

- For help with any technical issues that might occur with REVEL, go to <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com/>

*Since the study of sociology is a growing, ever changing, discipline, this instructor reserves the right to assign additional reading material throughout the semester. In all matters of disagreement, this syllabus is the final arbiter. It is up to the student to make sure they have the most recent version of this syllabus—which will always be on Blackboard.*

## ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

**Blackboard:** This course will be organized via Blackboard, which can be accessed at (<http://computing.wayne.edu/blackboard/>). You are required to learn how to use Blackboard; there are good tutorials on the website. The syllabus, and any subsequent readings will be posted there. Blackboard provides a Discussion Board area we will use the first week of class, as well as an on-line grade book which will permit you to monitor your own performance on the exams. Note, however, that I am not able to help with technical issues related to your access to Blackboard. You **MUST** contact the C&IT Help Desk to figure out what is wrong, and how to get access to the course. Any appeal because of technical issues should be accompanied by your communication from C&IT that they were resolving your issue.

**Communication:** All course information will be broadcast via the Internet, posted through Blackboard. Each of you have been assigned an email account by WSU, and if you decide to use a different email address be sure you figure out how to forward any email on your own. I will send any notices, revisions of this syllabus, and other information on or through Blackboard. Blackboard uses your WSU account and I cannot change that. Not checking or not getting your WSU email is no excuse for missing assignments or other information relevant to this course. Do not ask me to use an alternative address to communicate with you.

**Additional material:** For each topic indicated in the schedule below I will post comments and additional material on Blackboard to appear *8AM on Sunday at the start of each week*. The material will relate to the main points of the week's topic providing additional perspectives.

**Preliminary Discussion Period:** Starting Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 8AM until midnight Friday January 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be a non-graded Discussion Board available **on Blackboard**, in which you will be asked to introduce yourselves, let us know something about what you are studying, or any other information you wish to share (see my introductory comments for suggestions). **IMPORTANT:** You must clearly state **you have read the syllabus and understand all of the course's requirements**. Moving forward, you will provide reactions and comments in a Shared Writing posts will need to be completed within REVEL, not Blackboard, as detailed below.

**Shared Writing/Discussion:** Beginning with the second week of class, you will be expected to make at least 2 comments within REVEL under the Shared Writing Assignment for each chapter. Please see the Shared Writing section below under COURSE REQUIREMENTS for more details. Shared Writing becomes available a week before the due date listed, and must be completed by 11:59 PM of the Friday due date, after which your grade will be posted within the REVEL Performance section. Requests to post after the assignment due date will not be accepted. You should go back and check your post was published appropriately; it is up to you to find out why if it did not. If you encounter any issues with this, please email me, I will not be able to solve your problem. However, I will send your email to our Pearson Representative. If she is unable to help you out, she will pass it on to Pearson Tech Support.

If you feel you were not given credit for an exercise or assignment, you should notify me immediately. I will try to address all concerns.

**Disability:** 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 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad 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. Provide me with your determination as soon as possible so I can make arrangements for quizzes and exams.

**Decorum:** You are expected to comply with all University regulations and requirements concerning proper behavior, plagiarism and any form of cheating. In an online course, that extends to the way you communicate in discussions. If you do not comply with norms of respectful communication you may be blocked from participation. Excessive abuse may result in dismissal from the class, and should you violate those norms, you can be sanctioned and otherwise punished pursuant to University policy. I will not tolerate "flames" or personal attacks for views posted by classmates. Name calling or dismissive comments are offensive. In the first instance of such a post I will send you a private warning, and ask you to follow-up with a conciliatory comment. After the warning, I will impose a 5 percent penalty per transgression. Persistent abusive posts are unacceptable and can lead to a removal from the course.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Shared Writing:** Within REVEL you will have a Shared Writing assignment for each of the ten chapters assigned where you will make two posts for each chapter. Each pair of chapter posts count for 10 points, so with ten chapters you have an overall possibility of earning 100 total points. There is no partial credit for only posting one comment. The Shared Writing assignment will provide a writing prompt within the chapter; for your first post you will need to respond appropriately by clearly and concisely answering the writing prompt assigned. Your additional posts could initiate new threads, ask general questions, or respond to comments by other students. You are welcome to make as many comments as you want, and from past experience many students end up engaging in lots of interactions with each other through the Shared Writing assignment. I will monitor the discussions, making comments as I feel appropriate, and in general look to see that a proper level of communication is established for the course.

Be sure to check back and see if your comments posted. It is impossible, after the fact, to figure out what happened or accept “missing” posts within Shared Writing. You may need to consult with the Pearson Tech Support to figure out why you cannot post for Shared Writing.

**Quizzes:** You will also be expected to complete the multiple-choice quizzes at the end of each of the 10 chapters assigned within REVEL. The total points allotted for each quiz can vary by chapter. Your REVEL quiz score will be based on the percentage of your total correct out of total possible responses for all quizzes combined. You are responsible for checking that each quiz score updates within your Performance tab in REVEL once you receive confirmation that you have completed the quiz. If you encounter problems, please email me and I will send it along to our Pearson Representative. If necessary, she will forward it to Pearson Tech Support.

**Examinations:** You will have three examinations during the semester (Feb 10-12, Mar 23-25, and Apr 20-22), available from 8AM the first day to 11PM last day. The questions on each exam covers all the material assigned to that point; the last one covers the full semester, more heavily weighted with questions on the course material from the latter part of the course. Examinations are on the schedule and will be announced and taken on Blackboard. Like the quizzes, you will be graded on the percentage of correct responses out of the total possible responses.

You will be instructed on how much time you are allotted for each exam, and will be reminded that once you begin you cannot suspend and return to the evaluation later. Exams, as noted above, will be available over several days. This will permit you to take these assessments at a convenient time. The exams cannot be rescheduled, but I will reset them during the exam period if you encounter technical problems with Blackboard. Please note—if I have to reset the exam, all answers already provided will be voided by Blackboard.

All exams will be given on Blackboard, with a start time and a limited duration. You will be able to start at your convenience, but once you start *you must finish taking the exam or quiz*. Once you exit you cannot return. You will have to finish in the time allotted. It is **your responsibility** to take them when they are scheduled; there can be **NO** waiver, extension, or rescheduling for any exam. Exams will be graded immediately and the grade, answers provided

and correct answers will appear on Blackboard's Grade Center, but only after the assessment period ends. *If no grade appears, you should contact me immediately.*

**I reserve the right to make changes in the course or this syllabus, if needed, as the semester progresses! Please pay attention to email messages containing any course modifications.**

### COURSE GRADE

Your grade for the course will be a composite of your percentage performance on the five main portions of this course: Shared Writing, Quizzes, and 3 Examinations. For each you will receive an overall percentage score, as noted above (percent for writing, percent for total correct answers on all quizzes combined, and percent correct for each of the exams taken individually). Your final course percentage on which the grade is based will be calculated as a weighted total:

Shared Writing (SW) percentage	20%
Quiz total (Q) percentage	15%
Exam One (E1) percentage	15%
Exam Two (E2) percentage	20%
Exam Three (E3) percentage	30%

This translates as  $(0.20 \times SW) + (0.15 \times Q) + (0.15 \times E1) + (0.20 \times E2) + (0.30 \times E3) = \text{Percent}$

**Your final grade will be calculated on the percentage range, as listed below:**

<u>Percent</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Grade</u>
94 – 100	A	74 – 76	C+
90 – 93	A-	70 – 73	C
86 – 89	B+	66 – 70	C-
81 – 85	B	50 – 65	D
77 – 80	B-	Less than 50	F

### **IMPORTANT:**

- I. This is an online class, and as such you have to manage the technology—whether it is through Blackboard for the first non-credit Discussion and all Exams, or it is through REVEL with Shared Writing and all Quizzes. Furthermore, unlike an in-class course, you may be living in different time zones or have jobs that limit your availability at certain times of each day or week. For that reason exams are offered over several days, exercises and assessments in Revel are offered over a week...so please monitor your time carefully. All times posted on this syllabus are in the Eastern Time zone and are firm.
  
- II. All technical problems **MUST** be resolved either through the C&IT Help Desk if it is a problem with Blackboard, or with the Pearson Rep (through me) if it is with REVEL. I have no ability to troubleshoot your problem or your system.

Additional Comments:

To anticipate a common question: no, I do not curve the final course grades. My philosophy is that you all should be able to get an A, but if no one does the work you all can get a D. Curving is a process where grades are distributed by percentages—for example assigning the top and bottom 5% an A and F, etc. -- but then only 3 out of a class of 60 people can get an A and at least 3 people will have to fail. That seems too arbitrary to me.

Unless you can demonstrate that I failed to give you credit when credit was due, or that I made a mistake converting your percent to a letter grade, all decisions are final. If, during the semester, I indicated that you should remind me of a problem or special circumstance that may result in a changed grade check to make sure I adjusted your final grade.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this course or its requirements. After the discussion of REVEL you will find the course schedule of topics and exams by date.

The best way to contact me during the semester is by email. Any message not getting a response should be resent (I can't control technology). Calling my office number will get you to the Department, where you can leave a message.

You can drop this course with no tuition owed by January 25<sup>th</sup>. After that date, the last day to withdraw from the course is March 27<sup>th</sup>; after that day you will have to appeal to the Registrar.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Jan 25:	Last day to withdraw with full tuition refund
Feb 10-12:	First exam
Mar 23-25:	Second exam
Mar 27:	Last day to withdraw from the course with a “W” grade
Apr 20-22:	Third exam

**DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS COURSE OR THE INFORMATION IN THIS SYLLABUS**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**I GENERALLY WILL NOT ANSWER REPEATED EMAIL QUESTIONS IF THE ANSWERS TO THEM CAN BE FOUND IN THIS SYLLABUS**

**BREAKTHROUGH**  
To learning reimagined

**REVEL™**

## REVEL

### Getting Started for Sullivan's *Social Problems*

#### TO GET STARTED, YOU WILL NEED THREE THINGS:

- **A LINK TO YOUR REVEL COURSE.** <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/pp6qm1>
- **AN EMAIL ADDRESS.** You will need to use your school's email address.
- **AN ACCESS CODE.** When you purchase the course textbook from the bookstore you will receive an access code for the publisher's REVEL web site, and possibly a shrink wrapped copy of the textbook if that is what your instructor decided upon. **You also have the option to choose a 14 day temporary access.**

**REGISTERING FOR YOUR REVEL COURSE** (IF YOU'D RATHER A VIDEO WALK YOU THROUGH, PLEASE SEE BOTTOM OF PAGE)

**Step 1:** Once you have the LINK TO YOUR REVEL COURSE, please click on it, or type it into your browser.

**STEP 2:** Type in your username and password then Click on: "Sign in with your Pearson Account" if you already have a Pearson Account or Create a new account if needed. If you are unsure, you may choose that option.

**STEP 3:** After you sign in, you will see your course appear in your REVEL account. Please click on your instructor's course and choose "Go to my course".

**STEP 4:** If you purchased an access code in your bookstore, please click: ENTER ACCESS CODE OR you can choose the option for temporary access for 14 days.

#### USER FRIENDLY VIDEOS & SUPPORT FOR REVEL

HOW TO REGISTER: <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/students/registration/index.html>

FEATURES OF REVEL:

[HTTP://WWW.PEARSONHIGHERED.COM/REVEL/STUDENTS/FEATURES/INDEX.HTML](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/students/features/index.html)

GET SUPPORT HERE:

[HTTP://WWW.PEARSONHIGHERED.COM/REVEL/STUDENTS/SUPPORT/INDEX.HTML](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/students/support/index.html)

## WINTER 2016 COURSE OUTLINE

<i>Due Date</i>	<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>READING &amp; SHARED WRITING (in REVEL)</i>
<b>Jan 15</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE Blackboard Introductions</b>	
Jan 22	<b>1. Studying social problems</b>	Chapter 1
Jan 29	<b>2. Economic inequality [Budget exercise]</b>	Chapter 2
Feb 5	<b>3. Race and ethnic inequality</b>	Chapter 7
<b>Feb 10-12                    → FIRST EXAM   ←</b>		
Feb 19	<b>4. Gender inequality and sexuality</b>	Chapters 8
Feb 26	<b>5. Aging</b>	Chapters 9
Mar 4	<b>6. Health</b>	Chapter 4
Mar 11	<b>7. Family</b>	Chapter 3
Mar 14-19	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
<b>Mar 23-25                    → SECOND EXAM   ←</b>		
Apr 1	<b>8. Education</b>	Chapters 5
Apr 8	<b>9. Urban society</b>	Chapter 13
April 15	<b>10. The Environment</b>	Chapters 14
April 22	<b>11. Conflict and Violence</b>	Chapter 15
<b>APR 27-29                    → THIRD EXAM   ←</b>		