

SOCIOLOGY 1306 – Contemporary Social Problems

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an overview of the various conditions within society that have come to be labeled "problems." As described in the ACC catalogue, "contemporary social problems" involves "an inquiry into a select group of current social problems with specific reference to their origin, development, and their suggested solutions." We will examine these problems primarily using a sociological perspective but will draw from all of the social science disciplines as we analyze and seek solutions for the problems in question. I hope that this course will improve your awareness and understanding of solutions to current social problems. I also hope that the course will encourage you to become actively involved in areas of social change that are important to you. As a way of applying our growing knowledge of contemporary social problems, we will focus on the presence of use of technology and their effect on how we experience current U.S. society.

COURSE RATIONALE

Students will learn about the conditions that both define and cause social problems, the consequences that result and competing explanations and solutions. This curriculum is designed for students to use this material to enhance their critical thinking skills, increase their ability to communicate, solve problems and recognize human diversity

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Describe how the sociological imagination can be used to explain the emergence and implications of contemporary social problems.
2. Explain the nature of social problems from at least one sociological perspective, e.g., critical, functional, interpretive, etc.
3. Identify multidimensional aspects of social problems including the global, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of social problems.
4. Discuss how "solutions" to social problems are often contentious due to diverse values in society.
5. Describe how the proposed "solutions" to a social problem, including social policies, may bring rise to other social problems.

REQUIRED TEXTS: [Social Problems - Continuity & Change \(LibreTexts\)](#)

COURSE POLICIES

1. Regular and timely class participation in discussions and completion of work is expected of all students. Weekly deadlines are in place to help you track your progress and alert you to the need for more support. I will be very flexible with our course deadlines should you need extra time to complete your weekly course requirements.
2. You should expect to work on class material (Textbook, Online Learning Resources, Discussion Board, Quizzes) from 3 to 6 hours a week.
3. AI Policy: Your use of AI is supported for the purposes of study and to receive feedback on your writing. It is important to have your voice heard in our class so we can learn from both your insights but also from your experiences.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Textbook Reading:** You should plan on reading all textbook material every week as you grow in your understanding of sociological views of contemporary social problems
2. **Online Learning Resources:** Weekly articles and videos will help you understand the context and complexity of our current social challenges.
3. **Discussion Board Posts/Replies:** There will be weekly Blackboard Discussion Board posts based on assigned prompts. Please follow prompt instructions for both your main post and the required two replies. Each weekly post is worth up to three (3) points (see rubric) and each reply is worth one (1) point for a maximum total of 5 points per week.
4. **Quizzes:** There will be 12 open-book, open-note, untimed quizzes consisting of 20 multiple choice questions. You may take these quizzes as many times as you wish. You will earn the score for your last attempt. Each quiz is worth four (4) points.

COURSE GRADING SCHEDULE

- 60 points - 12 Discussion Board Posts/Replies
- 48 points - 12 Quizzes

COURSE GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- A = 90-100 points
- B = 80-89 points
- C = 70-79 points
- D = 60-69 points
- F = Below 60 points

SOCI 1306 – Contemporary Social Problems Course Calendar

Week	Topic	Due Dates
1	Understanding Social Problems	9/28
2	Poverty	10/5
3	Racial and Ethnic Inequality	10/12
4	Gender Inequality	10/19
5	Sexual Orientation and Inequality	10/26
6	Alcohol and Other Drugs	11/2
7	Crime and Criminal Justice	11/9
8	The Changing Family	11/16
9	Schools and Education	11/23
10	Work and the Economy	11/30
11	Health and Health Care	12/7
12	Population and the Environment	12/14

Discussion Board Grading Rubric		
Elements	1 Accomplished	0 Developing
Content	Uses appropriate and relevant content to explore ideas pertinent to the subject. This includes quoting from both the textbook and online learning resources.	Uses content in some places that is inappropriate or irrelevant to the subject. Does not reference textbook or online learning resources.
Organization	Presents information in a unified and coherent manner. States and supports thesis adequately.	Presents information in an incoherent manner. States and supports thesis poorly.
Writing/Format (grammar/spelling/punctuation)	Uses straightforward language that generally communicates meaning to readers with few errors. This includes the proper use of paragraphs as needed.	Uses unsophisticated language with many errors that confuse the meaning.