

SOCIOLOGY 102: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Fall 2016
Tues/Thurs 10:35-11:50
FNA 5062
3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR:

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TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

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COURSE SYNOPSIS

This course provides an introduction to the subject of Sociology through an investigation of social problems, inviting students to understand modern social problems through sociological lenses. It encourages students to think about social problems from a point of view that focuses on society and its structures, versus from an individual point of view. The course is broken into subsections that focus on social inequality, social institutions, and the physical and social world.

Learning Outcomes

Objectives:

1. That students gain a basic understanding of sociological perspectives and analysis, allowing them to understand the impacts of social structures on individuals' and groups' behaviors, choices, and opportunities.
2. That students learn to use the tools of sociology, including different theoretical understandings and research methodologies, to analyze social issues and to interpret sociological data.
3. That students learn to think critically about the social world, including the ability to objectively and thoughtfully interpret media presentations of current and past events, as well as the ability to distinguish individual anecdotal evidence from sociological data and larger social patterns.

Assessment:

Students' progress toward course objectives will be assessed through their performance on midterm and final exams, in-class activities, and two writing assignments that will showcase students' deeper understandings of course readings and concepts, and their ability to apply those concepts to the larger social world. Writing assignments will require students to use sociological methods and inquiry to collect primary data, allowing for clear assessment of objectives number 2 and 3.

READING LIST

Required Books (Available at the Bookie and online booksellers)

Text: Anna Leon-Guerrero. 2014. *Social Problems: Community, Policy, and Social Action*.

Fourth Edition. Sage Publications, Inc.

Reader: Stompler, Mindy and Amanda M. Jungels. 2017. *Focus on Social Problems: A Contemporary Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Additional articles: Posted to course Blackboard site under Content → Class Articles.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Expectations

This course expects that you attend class regularly, complete the assigned readings on time, and successfully complete two written assignments and three exams. You will also be asked to do regular in-class exercises that will test knowledge and comprehension of readings, as well as generating discussions during class time. All assignments are designed to help you apply class concepts and to think sociologically about yourself and your world, and all require you to draw heavily from class material. Exam questions will include material from class lectures as well as the assigned readings.

In-class quizzes will take place via TopHat interactive software, accessible through electronic devices including computers, tablets, and mobile phones. Enrolled students will receive an invitation; the website can also be accessed at: <https://tophat.com/>. Use of TopHat does require a subscription. If you have a concern about this, please speak to the professor privately. The join code for this course is: 600849.

Course Conduct

In order to create an environment in which everyone can learn, it is important that everyone feel comfortable to express his or her ideas, opinions and concerns. We must all respect each other's input, and be careful to address comments at the ideas being discussed rather than the individuals who are discussing them. Insulting, attacking, or threatening language is not appropriate or acceptable at any time. Talking to one another, whispering, IM-ing, or texting is unacceptable behavior during class lectures. Students who fail to behave appropriately may be asked to leave the class.

This class has no formal attendance policy, and it is up to you to decide whether or not to attend. Should you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed from your classmates. **No teaching or lecture notes will be provided to students. Do not email the professor or the TA to find out what you missed.** Coming to class is your responsibility, and you are solely responsible for your failure to do so, whether for health or personal reasons. In-

class activities, tests, and quizzes missed due to absence cannot be made up unless prior arrangements have been made, as discussed below under Grading and Policies.

Emails will be answered in a *relatively* timely fashion, but do not expect immediate responses via email, or responses at night or on weekends. In general, email is not the best format for asking complicated questions. For questions that require discussion or longer answers, please make an appointment or come to speak to the professor or TA in office hours. For more information about how to communicate effectively with your professor via email, please read the following website before composing your email: <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>.

All written assignments, including papers and term papers, must be turned in two ways: **a hard copy in class, and an electronic copy must be submitted to our class Blackboard site under the proper assignment (under the Content tab)**. You must turn in hard copies of all assignments in addition to these electronic copies. Computer or printer failure is not an acceptable excuse for late papers; please plan accordingly. If you must turn in an assignment late, you will need to have it stamped with the date and time in the Sociology Office, Wilson-Short 204, and placed in the homework box for this course. Papers that lack such a date stamp will not be counted as turned in until received by the professor or TA. The Sociology office closes at 4pm most days; it is your responsibility to turn in assignments by this time. Papers will not be considered turned in until BOTH the hard copy and the electronic Blackboard copy have been received.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course, both in class and through the use of the SafeAssign function on Blackboard. Any student who attempts to gain an unfair advantage over other students by cheating will fail the assignment and be reported to the Office of Student Standards and Accountability. Each student must turn in original work. No copying will be accepted. Any time another person's work is used or referenced, it absolutely must be properly cited. Students who violate WSU's Standards of Conduct for Students may receive an F as a final grade in this course. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3).

Grading and Policies

In-Class Exercises: 15% (all averaged together)

Assignment 1: 15%

Assignment 2: 20%

Midterm Exams: 30% (15% each)

Final Exam: 20%

Work handed in late will be graded down. For each day late assignments will be graded down by one-third of a letter grade (i.e. from an A to an A-, from an A- to a B+, etc.). Assignments turned in more than one week late will not receive credit.

Failure to take an exam will result in a failing grade on it. Alternative exam times will be offered only in the case of serious emergencies and conflicts, and documentation must be provided. University policy (Acad. Reg. #90) states that Incompletes may only be awarded if "the student

is unable to complete their work on time due to circumstances beyond their control.”

Grade Distribution:

94-100%= A
90-93= A-
86-89 = B+
83-85= B
80-82= B-
76-79= C+
73-75= C
70-72= C-
65-69= D+
60-64= D
< 60= F

Accommodations for Disabled Students

We are committed to providing assistance to help you succeed in this course. Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. For more information about the Access Center please refer to: <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu/>, email the center at: Access.Center@wsu.edu, or call them at: 509-335-3417.

Emergencies and Safety

Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is highly recommended that you review the Campus Safety Plan (<http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/>) and visit the Office of Emergency Management web site (<http://oem.wsu.edu/>) for a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information related to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community. An emergency alert system is also available. You can sign up for emergency alerts (see <http://alert.wsu.edu>) through the my.wsu site (<http://portal.wsu.edu/>).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Section I: Social Problems and the Sociological Imagination

Week 1 (Aug 23-25): Introduction

Readings:

Text Chapter 1 (pp. 2-27)

Article on Blackboard: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 1: “The Promise”

Section II: Social Inequality

Week 2 (Aug 30- Sept 1): Social Class

Text Chapter 2 (pp. 30-61)

Reader Chapter 3, readings 9-11 (pp. 83-104)

Week 3: (Sept 6-8): Poverty
Reader Chapter 4, readings 13-16 (pp. 119-163)

Week 4: (Sept 13-15) Race and Ethnicity
Text Chapter 3 (pp. 62-96)
Reader Chapter 5, readings 18-20 (pp. 176-202)
****Assignment 1 Assigned****

Week 5 (Sep 20-22): Gender and Sexual Orientation
Text Chapters 4 and 5 (pp. 98-144)
Reader Chapters 6 and 7, readings 24-26 and 30 (pp. 236-260, 299-310)

Week 6 (Sep 27-29): Catch Up, Review, and Midterm 1
No New Readings
*****Midterm Exam 1, Thursday September 29*****

Section III: Institutions and Society

Week 7 (Oct 4-6): Families
Text Chapter 7 (pp. 172-203)
Reader Chapter 10, readings 41-43 (pp. 423-444)

Week 8 (Oct 11-13): Education
Text Chapter 8 (pp. 204-238)
Reader Chapters 9, readings 36, 38 (pp. 376-392, 398-404)
****Assignment 1 Rough Draft due in Class on Tuesday, October 11****
****Revised Final Draft due Thursday, October 13****

Week 9 (Oct 18-20): Work and the Economy
Text Chapter 9 (pp. 240-268)
Reader Chapter 13, readings 55-56, 59 (pp. 555-573, 594-602)
****Assignment 2 Assigned****

Week 10 (Oct 25-27): Health and Medicine
Text Chapter 10 (pp. 270-298)
Reader Chapter 11, readings 45-47 (pp. 463-485)

Week 11 (Nov 1-3): The Media
Text Chapter 11 (pp. 300-323)
Reader Chapter 8, readings 32, 34-35 (pp. 322-331, 341-371)

Week 12 (Nov 8-10) Catch-Up, Review, and Midterm 2
No New Readings
*****Midterm Exam 2, Thursday, November 10*****

Section IV Our Physical and Social Worlds

Week 13 (Nov 15-17): Crime and Criminal Justice

Text Chapter 13 (pp. 356-389)

Reader Chapter 12, readings 51-54 (pp. 518-550)

Week 14 (Nov 29- Dec 1): The Environment

Text Chapter 15 (pp. 422-454)

Reader Chapter 14, readings 61-63 (pp. 615-640)

****Assignment 2 Rough Draft due in Class Tuesday, November 29****

****Revised Final Draft due Thursday, December 1****

Week 15 (Dec 6-8): Individual Action and Social Change; Catch-Up and Review

Reader Chapter 15, readings 68-69 (pp. 675-689)

Recommended: Text Chapter 17 (pp. 490-507)

*****Final Exam*****

10:10 – 12:10 p.m. Wednesday, December 14