

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Sociology 102

General Education Competency Area:
Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing

Fall Term 2022

Professor:

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Class Meets:

Monday & Wednesday 10:30 am – 11:45 am
Classroom: Administration 203

Office Hours:

In-office, Zoom, phone or email
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 1:45pm-2:45pm, and by appointment

Course Description:

Students develop a sociological frame of reference for understanding some of the complex problems of our society. Problems examined include poverty, environmental degradation, racism, sexism, crime, substance abuse, inadequate healthcare, etc. in the context of American society.

Purpose:

This course is designed to help students become critical consumers of information concerning the causes, consequences, and solutions related to current social problems.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

This course is designed to help you develop the competencies stipulated by the Idaho State Board of Education for the Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing component of the General Education Core. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of a particular Social Science discipline (sociology).
- ii. Develop an understanding of self and the world by examining the dynamic interaction of individuals, groups, and societies as they shape and are shaped by history, culture, institutions, and ideas.
- iii. Utilize Social Science approaches, such as research methods, inquiry, or problem solving, to examine the variety of perspectives about human experiences.

- iv. Evaluate how reasoning, history, or culture informs and guides individual, civic, or global decisions.
- v. Understand and appreciate similarities and differences among and between individuals, cultures, or societies across space and time.

Course-specific Learning Outcomes:

This course aims to help you gain knowledge and develop skills that will aid you in becoming a critical thinker, a successful student, and an informed, engaged member of society. More specifically, in this course you will do the following, which are linked to the above General Education learning outcomes as noted in parentheses:

- learn how to interpret your and others' behaviors and experiences using a sociological framework (i, ii, iv, v)
- gain an understanding of the structural roots of social problems (i, ii, iv, v)
- gain an understanding of the ways social class, race, gender, and nationality affect people's life chances and the types of problems and challenges they face (i, ii, iv, v)
- discuss social issues in an informed, critical, and civil manner and in the process gain experience speaking to an audience of your peers (i, ii, iii, iv, v)
- write evidence-based essays in which you analyze specific social problems and apply sociological theories, concepts, and insights appropriately (i, ii, iii, iv, v)

Goals:

It is expected that students will become more adept at utilizing social scientific analysis to analyze social problems in a critical manner. The written work and verbal presentations of students should reflect systematic, logical arguments clearly supported by theory and research. Students will have opportunities to practice effectively communicating their social science analysis.

Course Requirements:

- Introduction Discussion 10 points
- Report One 30 points
- Report Two 30 points
- Report Three 30 points
- Report Four 15 points EXTRA CREDIT
- Exam One 100 points
- Exam Two 100 points
- Exam Three 100 points
- Exam Four 100 points

Discussion:

All students are expected to participate in the first introduction discussion (on Canvas) where you will introduce yourself to the class.

Reports:

Three required reports and one extra credit report will be assigned throughout the semester. There will be questions posted on Canvas. Reports will be submitted to Canvas. The questions will be designed to facilitate class discussions. includes short oral reports prepared in small group discussions on selected issues in the readings (to be assigned in class). The small

groups will consist of three or four students each. I will assign group members on the day of discussions. Each group will pick a member to take notes and prepare a short document with the names of the group members and an outline of the group's main points. The document will be turned in at the end of the class and serve as the basis for the group's report grade. I will post questions on our website to be considered approximately one week in advance.

The reports will be evaluated on the quality and thoughtfulness of your social scientific analysis of the assigned material. They will be graded as: excellent, surpassing expectations (A), good, competent work (B), satisfactory (C), not satisfactory (D), failing (F).

FOUR (4) REPORTS WILL BE ASSIGNED. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE (3). YOU MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE FOURTH REPORT IF YOU WANT EXTRA CREDIT.

Exams:

Four exams (including the final exam) consisting of essay, multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blanks questions will be administered in class. You will write your answers in **blue books** available at the LCSC Bookstore. Please buy four blue books (They are cheap). Study questions will be available prior to the exams to help you prepare.

Student Conduct:

Any student with questions remaining as to what constitutes cheating or plagiarism should consult the instructor in order to avoid any misunderstanding. If a student is caught cheating, at minimum, he/she will fail the assignment, the Judicial Affairs Officer will be notified and the incident recorded.

Moreover, we will be dealing with controversial issues at times and it is essential that discussions remain constructive and respectful.

Assignment Grading:

- A ≥ 93%
- A- ≥ 90%
- B+ ≥ 87%
- B ≥ 83%
- B- ≥ 80%
- C+ ≥ 77%
- C ≥ 73%
- C- ≥ 70%
- D+ ≥ 67%
- D ≥ 63%
- D- ≥ 60%
- F ≥ 53%

Readings: (Available at the Lewis-Clark Bookstore and internet)

Understanding Social Problems, 10th Edition, 2017

Authors: Mooney, Knox, Schacht

Publisher: Cengage

ISBN: 978-1-305-57651-3

Topics and Assignments:

(Due to the nature of academic discussions, the topics listed below will not always correspond to the days' discussions.)

Week 1: Aug 22-24

Introduction to the course and the nature and meaning of social problems

Reading: chapter 1, Canvas module 1

Introduction Discussion due Aug 24

Week 2: Aug 29-31

Physical and Mental Health and Health Care

Reading: chapter 2, Canvas module 2

Sept 5: No Class: Labor Day

Week 3: Sept 7

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Reading: chapter 3, Canvas module 3

Week 4: Sept 12-14

Crime and Social Control

Reading: chapter 4, Canvas module 4

EXAM ONE Sept 14

Week 5: Sept 19-21

Crime and Social Control Part II

Reading: chapter 4, Canvas module 4

Week 6: Sept 26-28

Family Problems

Reading: chapter 5, Canvas module 5

Report One Sept 28, 10:30 am

Week 7: Oct 3-5

Economic Inequality, Wealth and Poverty

Reading: chapter 6, Canvas module 6

Week 8: Oct 10-12

Work and Unemployment

Reading: chapter 7, Canvas module 7

EXAM TWO Oct 12

Week 9: Oct 17-19

Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Reading: chapter 9, Canvas module 8

Week 10: Oct 24-26
Gender Inequality
Reading: chapter 10, Canvas module 9
Report Two Oct 26, 10:30 am

Week 11: Oct 31-Nov 2
Sexual Orientation and the Struggle for Equality
Reading: chapter 11, Canvas module 10

Week 12: Nov 7-9
Environmental Problems Part I
Reading: chapter 13, Canvas module 11
EXAM THREE Nov 9

Week 13: Nov 14-16
Environmental Problems Part II
Reading: chapter 13, Canvas module 11

November 21-25 Fall Break

Week 14: November 28-30
Science and Technology
Reading: chapter 14, Canvas module 12
Report Three Nov 30, 10:30 am

Week 15: Dec 5-7
Conflict, War, and Terrorism
Reading: chapter 15, Canvas module 13
Report Four Dec 7, 10:30 am

Final Exam/Exam Four December 12, 10:30 am