



## *Welcome to Social Problems Online*

### *SOCI- 0307*

#### **CONTACT INFO:**

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#### **CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:**

SOCI 0307 Social Problems (3) A study of contemporary American society in light of selected problem area. An analysis of contributing factors, conflicting views and values, current situation of prospects for resolution involving application of sociological concepts, theories, and methods. Prerequisite SOCI 0101 Principles/Introduction.

#### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

##### New Required Text Info

This course uses an e book- you will receive an access code along with a color copy of the text unbound and 3 hole punched. You must purchase this package which also includes and lab. Books can be purchased online through the colleges bookstore at

<http://westfieldstate.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/BNCBHomePage?storeId=65065&catalogId=10001&langId=-1>

Social Problems a Down to Earth- 10e book with My Soc Lab, by James Henslin and Lori Ann Fowler, Pearson Education

Should be an access code for the e book and my lab and a color copy of a pdf of the book 3 ring bound.

ISBN 9780205032846

## INTERACTION PLAN AND COURSE ACTIVITIES:

### OVERVIEW OF CLASS:

This course will introduce you to the sociological study of social problems. The goal of the course is to learn about sociology, can analyze social problems, and understand how they are socially constructed. We will explore: (1) How an issue is socially constructed into a social problem? (2) How does the differential power of various groups affect how some issues become constructed into social problems and others do not? (3) What role do the media play in the social construction of social problems?

This approach will reveal the social rather than the individual roots of such problems. This understanding will provide us with a more objective understanding of how to consider the construction of solutions to social problems. With the use of the sociological "eye" we will learn to think critically about the "common sense/ wisdom" surrounding various social issues.

### Who's Online

Great place to talk with professor or each other. I'm online most evenings love to chat with students.

### ASSIGNMENTS- Weekly Activities and Assignments Folder

All assignments are posted in the Weekly Assignments folder on the homepage. Open up the folder for the specific week of the class and click on various icons for the weeks assignments.

### BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION FORUMS:

This online tool provides the real backbone of the course. Essentially is a bulletin board with weekly asynchronous discussions that you must participate in. In many cases you will be mandated to post assignments here. Directions on how to use the bulletin board are in your instruction manual.

### CHAT:

A chat room is a synchronous live discussion forum in which participants can sign on at the same time. Some of you may want to set up a chat room to communicate. If I feel the need to enhance a concept I will post a chat which will not be mandatory . A copy of the chat will be posted in the forum for those who are unable to participate.

### ONLINE CHAPTER QUIZZES:

Upon completion of a chapter, students will be assigned to take an online quiz. This is not timed and students can take the quiz multiple times until they achieve the grade they are satisfied with. This is included in the final grade but is used more as a reading check.

### STUDENT RECORDS/ GRADES:

Student grades are posted online in addition to the standard college grades report posted online by the college. The final grade will be an average of all activities including participation. Exceptional work going beyond the basics of the assignment will result in an A. A good faith effort in course work will result in a B. Lesser effort, production, and participation will result in lower grades. Points are deducted for assignments not completed by due date. Students having difficulties need to connect with the professor as soon as possible- see contact information.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course introduces students to the scientific study of social problems. The object of the course is to teach students thinking and writing sociologically. This is called using the sociological imagination /sociological eye a term coined by C. Wright Mills. We will use this technique to critically examine and understand a range of contemporary American social problems.

#### Grades

The final grade will be an average of the following items. Each activity will be evaluated equally.

The course consists of the following activities:

Students are expected to check the weekly assignments folder for course readings and assignments. Students are expected to read assigned materials and complete assigned exercises by posted due dates. Please note: bulletin board discussion postings, exercises, and readings complement each other. In order to successfully complete the course, students are expected to read all assigned readings and take the quizzes for each chapter as assigned by the instructor.

Students are expected to participate in general and group discussions online. This will clarify and increase one's understanding of social problems. Students will receive a grade for their participation in the discussion forums. Exceptional participation or assignment postings and going beyond the basics of the assignment will result in an A. A good faith effort to participate on a regular basis at the proper time will result in a B. Lesser participation will result in lower grades. I will maintain a record of the discussion and will be checking in to see your participation on a regular basis.

Students are expected to write a series of essays which will expand one's understanding of social problems and sociological theory. In these essays I will ask you to analyze, interpret, and apply your ideas. My goal is to get you to think and write more sociologically about social problems. I find that as students put their thoughts down on paper or in cyber forums, they think more systematically.

Students are expected to take weekly review quizzes.

## Final

Students are expected to complete a final position/ reaction paper which will focus on a specific American social problem. Students will have the freedom to select the problem they are to study from the remaining chapters in the text that are not covered during the semester. The final will consist of 2 parts a paper and a short power point presentation. The paper should start with a thesis statement. That is a one-sentence answer to the essay question and cover description and history of a social problem; Include the answers to the following questions. (1) What are the major causes of the social problem you are considering? (2) How would you go about solving the social problem? (3) What do you predict will happen with your solution in the next 10-20 years and why? The short power point presentation will be a public service announcement on the specific social problem studied. Detailed explanations for each part of the final will be provided. Students may elect to work in groups but not more than three students per group.

## VIDEO TAPES:

Students will view/examine videotapes on various social problems and analyze them from the sociological perspective. I will "set the stage" before you view the video, by posing a question and/or assignment which will challenge you to look for the sociology.

## INTERNET:

You will be encouraged to use the web to study sociology. This can be a successful active learning strategy. This will help you become better critical thinker because you will review many competing viewpoints on the web. Your textbook has several important sites listed in each section of the text.

## PLEASE NOTE:

By enrolling in this class a student is agreeing to all of the policies stated here. If students have questions concerning any of these requirements and/or policies, they are encouraged to ask questions using the bulletin boards main forum and private e-mail feature of Plato /Vista. Students may also call me at home for problems and/or clarifications of an emergency nature. Please no calls pass 9 PM.

**DISABILITY NOTICE:**

If you have a disability and require reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course please contact me during the first week of class