**Social Problems and Issues (SOC 206) CRN 25644**

Course Format: In Person - **Meets Tues. & Thurs. 1:00-2:20 p.m. in NSH 109**

Instructor: Rob Molinar, Ph.D. (he/him/his) Term: FALL 2023

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\*Email is by far the best way to contact me

**Student** **Drop-in / Office Hours** = Tuesdays 11:45 - 12:45 (in SSH 105), Wednesdays 11:45 - 1:00 (virtual), or by Appointment.

**LB Email**: Please check your Linn-Benton email accounts regularly, as these addresses will be how I communicate with you throughout the term.

**Potential Help paying part ($30, or $75 - if on Tribal Land) of your internet bill**

While not a guarantee, it’s possible to get help paying for internet: <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

This document, also in Aviso, summarizes how to purchase, rent, or borrow computers: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vHtaMqeT-KSM0lVnXei5d-k2ue4I9-JTNDr2jYPFnKc/edit?usp=sharing>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**:

​​Examination of social problems with particular focus upon U.S. society. Sociological perspectives on definition, description, and analysis of contemporary and recurrent problems in industrialized societies. Investigation of causes and consequences of social problems are considered in societal context.

**Prerequisite**

We are in the process of changing our requirements. There SHOULD be NO *sociology* prerequisite to join this course, although it is recommended that you take **Writing 115 or Writing 121** before taking this class**.**

**Textbook**: Best, Joel. 2021. *Social Problems*, 4th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton.

Cost of eBook = $34.99 (\*already charged to your student account if you’re

enrolled in the class)

**Learning Objectives (LOs):**

1. Analyze contemporary social problems and their root causes.
2. Apply sociological analysis to social problems. Analyze the role of public policy in remedying social problems.
3. Describe and critique the role of social movements and grassroots efforts in addressing and remedying social problems.

*The next three LOs pertain to the “Difference, Power, and Discrimination” designation of this course:*

1. Explain how difference is socially constructed.
2. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
3. Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States (aka “intersectionality”).

The last LO, while not an official outcome, speaks to the atmosphere I strive to create and maintain:

1. Create a safe community in the classroom and in classroom communication

Over half of this course will be structured around three major social problems that connect with broader inequalities of social class, gender, sexuality, and race: homelessness/houselessness; racism; and sexual violence. We spend approximately two weeks on each of these issues, emphasizing, as our textbook does, the construction of these phenomena as problems but also their real effects. Since these topics are serious and have trauma attached to them, I make space for students to take the lead regarding how this material affects them (whether you need a break, to make a point, to access a resource with or without disclosing sensitive info, to communicate with me more privately, etc.). In between the weeks in which we look at these three sets of social problems, we will cover crime, health care, and education, which are problems dealt with by most textbooks. As described in the sixth LO above, we will examine how race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and other aspects of our identities and “social location” shape and are shaped by these issues.

**SERIOUS CONTENT**: In this course we will be dealing with sensitive and traumatic topics that are sometimes difficult for people to process or discuss, including poverty, racism, microaggressions, and kinds of violence that students have experienced firsthand. This material and these conversations require listening and compassion.

“If you would like more information about the resources available, you can ask me at any time this [term]. You **do not need to tell me why** you are asking to get help for a friend, another student, or yourself” (quoted from Bedera 2021, 270, emphasis added). We will make a list of ground rules for how we’d like discussions to go. Also, throughout the term you may email me any additional thoughts or concerns.

TITLE IX Protections: Sexual Harassment, Dating Violence, Partner Violence, Stalking.

Students are protected from sexual harassment by LBCC’s Board of Education policies, state and federal statutes. Linn Benton Community College takes a proactive stance against sexual harassment/sexual assault per the [Nondiscrimination and Nonharassment policies](https://www.linnbenton.edu/about-lbcc/administration/policies/board-policies-and-administrative-rules/1000-series-the-college/bp-1050.php). Incoming LBCC students shall be required to do training on Personal Empowerment Through Self-Advocacy (PETSA) not later than the third week of the term. This training establishes expectations and norms around mutual respect, consent, and strategies for violence reduction/prevention; it also encourages students to report violence to the college. To file a report of sexual violence or violation of Title IX rights, use our [complaint process](http://linnbenton.edu/report-it).

Some On-Campus Resources: Title IX Officers @ (541) 917-4425 or (541) 917-4848. ​​Counseling center; LBCC Emerg./Public Safety Officer (541) 926-6855.

Some Off-Campus Resources: Linn County Crisis Services: (541) 967-3866; Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV) 24-hour Crisis & Support Line = (541) 754-0110 OR 1-800-927-0197. Live Chat M-F, 10-4; en español también; Corvallis 2208 SW 3rd St, Corvallis, OR 97333.

<https://cardv.org/>

**ATTENDANCE**: In general, I expect you to be in class so we can learn together and you can get the most out of this course. Communication is important to me when you must be absent. I will count attendance toward participation, using participation as a way to “bump up” a grade for some students who are close to the next grade.

***NO SHOW DROP***:I can drop students who do not attend or contact me by the start of the second-class session (Sept. 28). If dropped, you automatically receive an email with information about this change to your schedule. If a student is here on a visa or receiving veteran assistance or financial aid, then those offices will be notified as well*.*

**GRADING**:

100 points is the maximum number of points to earn. Each point is worth one percent of your overall course grade (i.e.,100 points = 100%). Being present and engaged in class may “bump up” your grade at the end. Also, I round up (89.5% becomes an A, etc.)

GRADING BREAKDOWN

There are 6 total assignments (papers), and no exams, plus weekly discussion questions to answer and comment on. Assignments (papers and discussion questions) are due on Fridays by 11:59 p.m., posted to Moodle, **except** Social Construction Paper #3, which is due on a Sunday. Specific assignment dates are noted in the **Calendar** on pages 5 & 6 of this syllabus. For most assignments you will have a rough grading rubric to help illustrate what I expect. There is no final.

8 points = 1 Intro paper (**Due Week 1**)

45 points = 3 Social Construction Papers X 15 pts. each (**Due Weeks 3, 6, & 9).**

20 points = 2 reflection papers X 10 pts. each on other social problems that we

cover (**Due Week 4 AND your choice of Week 7 OR Week 10**).

27 points = 9 Weekly Questions and Discussion Posts x 3 pts. each (**beginning**

**Week 2**)

100 points Total

**WEEKLY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**:

Beginning Week 2 with Chapter 2, every week I will present four or five questions from the Best textbook, creatively titled *Social Problems*. You will **choose ONE of these questions to answer** in approximately one to two paragraphs. You will **also** look through and **make comments on one fellow student’s post**/answer. The latter post can deal with the same or different question that you answered. Making a comment means more than writing “I agree” or “I find that interesting because I think you make a really great point.” Your comment must have substance. Interact with the other student’s answer. Applaud, criticize, or further develop their response using examples or evidence from the book or your personal experience (if relevant). To answer a question and make a comment, use the Weekly Discussion Question link in Moodle each week. Ask me wherever you have questions about these assignments. Each week (weeks 2 through 10) you earn up to 3% of your overall grade.

***ACCOMMODATIONS / ABILITIES***:You may need accommodations due to documented\* disabilities, have medical information that I should be aware of, or need special arrangements in an emergency. Please speak with me about these needs during the first week of class or as soon as possible, whether you are or are not already registered with Accessibility Resources. Visit their website at [www.linnbenton.edu/accessibilityresources](http://www.linnbenton.edu/accessibilityresources) for steps on how to apply for services, email [accessibility@linnbenton.edu](mailto:accessibility@linnbenton.edu), or call 541-917-4789*.*

\*Linn-Benton CC takes a “social model” approach to disability, which means that a disability is “documented” if you provide a detailed self-report of what barrier(s) you are facing and how long this has gone on.

***ACADEMIC INTEGRITY****:* Students at LBCC are responsible for pursuing their studies with honesty and fairness, and in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others. All of us are expected to uphold the value of academic integrity, refraining from acts of dishonesty or cheating. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, forgery, changing or misuse of college documents and records of identification, cheating, plagiarism, aiding or abetting cheating or plagiarism, knowingly furnishing false information to the college, or copying college software. For a student who violates academic integrity, disciplinary action may first be taken by me, which includes a failing grade on an assignment/exam or the course. I will also report the matter to the Manager for Student Conduct and Retention, and the College may take further disciplinary action under the [Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct Code](https://www.linnbenton.edu/about-lbcc/administration/policies/board-policies-and-administrative-rules/7000-series-student-services/ar-7030-01.php).[[1]](#footnote-0)

***OTHER HELPFUL STUDENT RESOURCES (Available in-person and remotely)***: Besides your instructor, some helpful resources offered to help students succeed are: Writing Support (WH 138b), Math Support, Academic Coaching, First Resort, the Student Help Desk, Advising Center and Counseling Services, Library Services, and the International Student Office. Please reach out if you are struggling in this or any of your classes.

**CALENDAR** (Topics and dates should match Moodle):

\*Any additional readings beyond the textbook will be announced a week or more before they are to be read.

WEEK / DATES TOPIC READING & ASSIGNMENTS

| 1 / Sept. 26 & 28 | Viewing and theorizing social problems /  Create ground rules for discussions | Best **Ch. 1** Social Problems Process  **Due**: Intro Paper 9/29 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2 / Oct. 3 & 5 | Poverty/Homelessness “Bingo” | ***Stern*** article in Moodle;  Best **Ch. 2** Claims (Weekly Questions begin) |
| 3 / Oct. 10 & 12 | Homelessness - Guest speaker(s) | Best **Ch. 3** Activists  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Social Construction Paper #1 10/13 |
| 4 / Oct. 17 & 19 | Crime and Criminal Behavior | Best **Ch. 4** Experts  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Reflection Paper #1 10/20 |
| 5 / Oct. 24 & 26 | Social Construction of race / Racism | Best **Ch. 5** Media  (Weekly question) |
| 6 / Oct. 31 & Nov. 2 | Racial inequality and Color-Blind Racism | Best **Ch. 6** Public Reaction  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Social Construction Paper #2 11/3 |
| 7 / Nov. 7 & 9 | Health and Illness | Best **Ch. 7** Policymaking  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Reflection Paper #2 (first option) 11/10 |
| 8 / Nov. 14 & 16 | DV, IPV & Sexual Assault | Best **Ch. 8** Soc. Probs work  (Weekly question) |
| 9 / Nov. 21 (No School on Nov. 23) | Sexual Assault, Movements to Address | Best **Ch. 9** Policy outcome  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Social Construction Paper #3 11/26 (Sun.) |
| 10 / Nov. 28 & 30 | Issues in U.S. Education | Best **Ch. 10** Claims across space & time  (Weekly question)  **Due**: Reflection Paper #2 (second option) 12/1 |

1. Component 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)