

Social Problems and Issues (SOC 206)  
MWF 12-12:50  
Spring 2015

Instructor: Arfa Aflatooni  
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Office Hour: MTWTF 10-11

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### **Course Description and Objectives**

This course attempts to examine the current social problems in America and the world. There are many opinions as to what is and/or isn't a social problem. In this course we will try to identify and study various social issues facing our society today. We explore the root-causes of our social problems by examining appropriate empirical studies in the field of sociology. The main objective of the class is to encourage students to develop a sociological understanding of our social problems. In other words, to see how we are all affected directly or indirectly by the problems in our society.

I strongly encourage the students in this class to participate in class discussions, present their views and experiences in relation to various issues that will be discussed in class.

### **Required Book**

**Textbook: Social Problems in Diverse Society (6th edition) by Diana Kendall.**

### **Exams and Grading**

There will be **three all essay tests** (Two midterm and one final) for this class. The questions on each test come from chapters, lectures, videos, and class discussions.

**Your final test is not cumulative. This instructor will give no make-up exam unless the student has made a previous arrangement with the instructor.**

### **Grass Roots Presentation**

Each student is also required to find a grass roots organization on the WWW that addresses or tries to remedy a social problem (one of the problems we have covered in class or one that we have not covered in class). Your report should be typed (2-4 pages) and turned in on the day of your presentation (**tenth week of class**). **You will not receive full credit for your report if you do not present it to class. You need to submit to me the name of your chosen organization by May 9.**

### **Here are the criteria for choosing a Grass-Roots Organization**

- The organization must be a non-governmental organization (NGO).
- It has to be founded by an individual or a group of individuals who sought to define a condition as a social problem.
- It has to address **a very specific** social problem (i.e., racial or gender discrimination, crime and drug problems, health and educational disparities, environmental issues, effects of war on society, etc.)
- It has to have a history of activism at the local, national or international level.
- It has to offer some realistic and workable solutions to the problem ( history of some of its achievements)

### **Class Participation and Attendance**

Sociology is an interactive discipline and therefore you will be an active participant during each class. **You are expected to attend the class having read the assigned chapters or any other reading for the week. Habitual absences and tardiness are distracting to others as well as to your own learning process.**

### **Final Grade Breakdown:**

**In-Class Tests = 70%,**

**Grass Roots Paper and Presentation = 20%**

**In-Class activities=10%.**

### **Class policy on Plagiarism**

Students who use someone else's work as their own or copy information or ideas from outside sources without proper citations will receive an "F" for their work. Bibliographies and in-text citations are required whenever you use outside sources, including the Internet. Do Your Own Work!

### **Students with Disability**

Students who have some type of disability or medical condition that will require them to take their tests at the Learning Center or the Office of Disability Services (917-4789) should contact me at the beginning of the term (the first week) and provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services so that I can make the appropriate arrangements with the ODS to take their tests there.

### **Missed Exams**

Missed exams will be counted as zeros except for extraordinary circumstances. Acceptable reasons for missing an exam would include health problems, a death in the family, etc. **Please note that the arrangements should be made with me before the exam.** Make-up exams are taken at **Student Assessment Center** at Red Cedar Hall-111.

### **Limited Use of Email and Electronic Devices in Class**

This is **not** an online class and therefore I expect that most of our communications will take place in person and in class. If you miss class for any reason, you need not to email me about that. If there is something that you need to discuss with me please come and see me in my office during my office hours. On rare occasions where you are out of town or very ill and need to communicate with me you can send a short message or email you work to me. Also,

**Out of respect for your classmates and me, no cell phones, BlackBerry Devices, iPods, or MP3 players are allowed in class. Please turn off all electronics before class.**

## **Tentative Lecture Topics**

### **Week 1**

**Defining Social Problems and Finding Solutions: Chapters 1 and 18**

### **Week 2**

**Wealth and Poverty: Chapter 2**

**Week 3**

**Race and Ethnic Inequality: Chapter 3**

***Midterm # 1 April 20***

**Week 4**

**Gender, Age and Sexual Orientation: Chapters 4, 5 and 6**

**Week 5**

**Prostitution, Pornography and Sex Industry: Chapter 7**

**Week 6**

**Alcohol and Other Drugs: Chapter 8**

***Midterm # 2 May 11***

**Week 7**

**Physical and Mental Health Care: Chapter 10**

**Week 8**

**Problems in Education: Chapter 12**

**Week 9**

**Population Problems and Environment: Chapters 15 and 16**

**Week 10**

**Presentations of Grassroots Organizations**

**Final Test: please check the finals schedule on LBCC website**