SYG2010 Syllabus

Course Information

- **Course Hours:** Online Course
- **Course Meeting Location:** Online Asynchronous
- **Credit Hours:** 3 hours
- **Prerequisites:** None

Course Description

In a world oversaturated with loud 24/7 media outlets, we all assume that we know what the social problems are. This course aims to challenge that assumption. It starts with the premise that social problems do not simply exist in the way that air or gravity exists; rather, they exist because we have created them. Social problems, like most social objects, are socially constructed. This course not only will introduce you to the most pressing and persistent problems faced by contemporary society but also will prompt you to ask how we know that they are indeed social problems. Before we rush to solve social problems, we should first try to understand what they are.

Course Instructor

Sourabh Singh

Assistant Professor

ssinh2@fsu.edu

(850) 644-1234

Sociology / 431B

Weekday emails will be responded to within 24 to 48 hours. Emails after 4:00 pm on Fridays and on weekends will be responded by Monday.

Course Teaching Assistant

Samuel Wirth: srw16h@my.fsu.edu

Office Hours: TBA
Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to perform the following tasks:

1. Describe how major sociological theories explain social problems.
2. Explain various ways in which social inequality relates to social problems.
3. Identify causes and consequences of major social problems.
4. Explain the labeling process of social problems.
5. Explain recent findings regarding each of the major social problems covered in the course.

Course Materials

Required Text Book

Social Problems: Continuity and Change.

This is an open textbook that can be downloaded for free from the Open Textbook Library web site: https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=141.

Follow the link, click “Read Multiple Formats” and choose a format for fits your need. For many people, pdf will work the best.

For this week you must:

- Introduce your self (for details please see week 1 module: part 1)
- Discuss what is a social problem? and sociological perspectives on social problems (for details please see week 1 module: part 2)

Student Responsibilities

- Students should log on to Canvas at least every other day to check for course updates.
- Students are expected to keep up with the class, engage with the course material, and submit assignments by the due dates.
- Assignments, quizzes, and exams are expected to be products of individual students per the FSU Academic Honor Policy. Students should not discuss any of the questions with each other before or during the actual assignments, activities, quizzes, or exams without instructor approval.
- To receive maximum points for questions, students need to follow the instructions carefully, follow word limits as instructed, and use spell and grammar checking.
- To be successful in this course, students need to complete all required assignments and tests.

Grading Policy

Memos
Each week of the course is divided into two parts. You are required to write a 250 words memo for each part of the course week. So in a week you will write two memos. These memos must be submitted between 7:00 am Monday - 7:00 pm Friday. Your memos will count for 40% of your total grade for the course.

In the memo you are expected to briefly summarize the main points of the readings, and discuss your opinion on them. Your opinion could be in the form of appreciation or criticism of the reading; it could also be in the form of the relevance or irrelevance of the reading with respect to current social problems. Your opinions must be supported by logical reasoning and/or arguments.

In general my advise is that you should try to write your memo as you are doing your readings; do not wait to write it later.

The purpose of memo writing exercise is to ensure that you keep up with the readings and carefully think through them.

Your memos will be graded; you will receive a brief feedback on each of your memos. You must get in touch with us (instructor or mentors) in case you want detailed feedback.

Memos submitted after 7:00 pm on Friday will be considered late.

Exams

There will be three non-cumulative essay-type exams during the entire semester. This is a 15 weeks semester; you will get exams typically after every five weeks. These exams will provide you with opportunity to more deeply engage with topics of your interest. Each paper will be 20% of the total grade. Details regarding each exam - number of questions, word count, due date and so on - will be provided when exams will be announced.

Grading

Memos: 40 points
Exam 1: 20 points
Exam 2: 20 points
Exam 3: 20 points
### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent, creative and superb command of the subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Creative and outstanding command of the subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Above average level but not outstanding grasp of the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above average but thin understanding of some readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Above average but misses some parts of the readings and thus is unable to apply subject matter at all levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Average level of achievement with some mastering yet narrow application of the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average level of achievement; refers to the readings in a superficial way suggesting spotty understanding of the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>Close to average due to spotty understanding of the material and inability to apply readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Below average understanding, showing little knowledge of the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below average level with multiple contradictory arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>Below average understanding thus failure to apply readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fails to understand and address the readings on the subject matter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Technology Requirements

Course content is accessible through Canvas. Students will need to be able to view videos, write and upload assignments, post to discussion boards, and take assessments. Students should have access to high-speed internet and updated software. Mobile devices may be used to view course content, upload assignments, and take assessments as determined by the instructor. To view the most current technology requirements, visit the [FSU Canvas support site](https://canvas.fsu.edu).
Canvas Support

Need help with Canvas? Contact FSU Canvas Support:

Email: canvas@fsu.edu

Phone: (850) 644-8004

Website: support.canvas.fsu.edu

Hours: 8am to 5pm, Monday - Friday

Course Policies

Communications/Netiquette

For Discussions:

- Please use polite, respectful behavior when posting your responses to prompts in the Discussion Boards.
- Be mindful of how you express your emotions and humor, and be sensitive to cultural and ability differences of your online peers.
- Keep postings to the point, and make sure your comments are relevant to the topic of discussion.
- Avoid messages such as, "Wow," "Way to go," or "Ditto" and aim for comments that validate other members’ ideas through careful explanation of why.
- When replying, give a short description in the subject line of what you are replying to, and use correct punctuation and spelling throughout your post.

For Email Communication:

- For email, please respond to your instructor’s and peers’ messages within a 24-hour period.
- Use a brief description in the subject line that outlines the topic of discussion.
- Avoid using slang or profane words.
- Use your instructor’s correct title he or she prefers for communication.
- Avoid using emoticons, such as smiley faces, and maintain a professional demeanor.
- Sign your email messages using your full name.
- AVOID USING ALL CAPS. This makes the message visually difficult to read and is perceived by the reader as "shouting."
- Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, just as you would for any communication.
- Ask yourself whether you would be comfortable if someone other than the intended receiver were to read your message. Remember, email is not a completely secure form of communication.
• Refrain from "flaming," which is expressing a strongly held opinion without tact or regard for others. Don’t assume that recipients will know the intent of the message (e.g., "just kidding"). It reads differently when it’s in print (electronic or not).
• Report any inappropriate communication considered to be of a serious nature to your instructor, as it may be a violation of University policy.
• Treat others with respect by making messages clear and succinct.

Policy for Late Submissions and Missed Tests

Delay in work submission due to excused absence will be not penalized.

Unexcused late work will be accepted. However, it will lead to loss of grade points; Memos and papers submitted after due date and time will lose 25% of their grade points for each delayed day. If you are late by four days you will lose all grade points.

Policy on Responding to Students

• Email responses typically within 24 to 48 hours. Emails after 4:00 pm on Fridays and on weekends will be responded by Monday.
• Graded assignments typically returned within 2 weeks after due date.

University Policies

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (For more details see the FSU Academic Honor Policy and procedures for addressing alleged violations.)

Americans With Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. Please note that instructors are not
allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the
Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials
are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to
FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

**Student Disability Resource Center (Tallahassee Campus)**
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
Email: sdrc@admin.fsu.edu

**Students Disability Resource Center (Panama City Campus)**
Dr. Kimberly Leath
Office of Student Affairs
2nd Floor Barron Building (Room 215)
Email: kleath@fsu.edu or sds@pc.fsu.edu
(850) 770-2172 (office)
(866) 693-7872 (toll free)

**Free Tutoring from FSU (Tallahassee Campus)**

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance are available for many courses at Florida State
University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring
Services’ comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see the Academic Center for
Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’ website or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is
available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to
encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic
integrity.

**Syllabus Change Policy**

"Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading)
statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice."

**COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: Chapter 1: Understanding Social Problems**

1.1 What Is a Social Problem?

1.2 Sociological Perspectives on Social Problems
Week 2: Chapter 2: Poverty

2.1 The Measurement and Extent of Poverty

2.2 Who the Poor Are: Social Patterns of Poverty

2.3 Explaining Poverty

2.4 The Consequences of Poverty

2.5 Global Poverty

2.6 Reducing Poverty

Week 3: Chapter 3: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

3.1 Racial and Ethnic Inequality: A Historical Prelude

3.2 The Meaning of Race and Ethnicity

3.3 Prejudice

3.4 Discrimination

3.5 Dimensions of Racial and Ethnic Inequality

3.6 Explaining Racial and Ethnic Inequality

3.7 Reducing Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Week 4: Chapter 4: Gender Inequality

4.1 Understanding Sex and Gender

4.2 Feminism and Sexism

4.3 Dimensions of Gender Inequality

4.4 Violence against Women: Rape and Sexual Assault

4.5 The Benefits and Costs of Being Male
4.6 Reducing Gender Inequality

**Week 5: Chapter 5: Sexual Orientation and Inequality**

5.1 Understanding Sexual Orientation
5.2 Public Attitudes about Sexual Orientation
5.3 Inequality Based on Sexual Orientation
5.4 Improving the Lives of the LGBT Community

**Exam 1 TBA**

**Week 6: Chapter 6: Aging and Ageism**

6.1 The Concept and Experience of Aging
6.2 Perspectives on Aging
6.3 Life Expectancy and the Graying of Society
6.4 Biological and Psychological Aspects of Aging
6.5 Problems Facing Older Americans
6.6 Reducing Ageism and Helping Older Americans

**Exam 1 Due**

**Week 7: Chapter 7: Alcohol and Other Drugs**

7.1 Drug Use in History
7.2 Drugs and Drug Use Today
7.3 Social Patterning of Drug Use
7.4 Explaining Drug Use
7.5 Drug Policy and the War on Illegal Drugs

7.6 Addressing the Drug Problem and Reducing Drug Use

**Week 8: Chapter 8: Crime and Criminal Justice**

8.1 The Problem of Crime

8.2 Types of Crime

8.3 Who Commits Crime?

8.4 Explaining Crime

8.5 The Criminal Justice System

8.6 Reducing Crime

**Week 9: Chapter 9: Sexual Behavior**

9.1 An Overview of Heterosexuality

9.2 Teenage Sex and Pregnancy

9.3 Abortion

9.4 Prostitution

9.5 Pornography 429

**Week 10: Chapter 10: The Changing Family**

10.1 Overview of the Family 10.2 Sociological Perspectives on the Family

10.3 Changes and Problems in American Families

10.4 Families in the Future

**Exam 2 TBA**
Week 11: Chapter 11: Schools and Education

11.1 An Overview of Education in the United States
11.2 Sociological Perspectives on Education
11.3 Issues and Problems in Elementary and Secondary Education
11.4 Issues and Problems in Higher Education
11.5 Improving Schools and Education

Exam 2 Due

Week 12: Chapter 12: Work and the Economy

12.1 Overview of the Economy
12.2 Sociological Perspectives on Work and the Economy
12.3 Problems in Work and the Economy
12.4 Improving Work and the Economy

Week 13: Chapter 13: Health and Health Care

13.1 Sociological Perspectives on Health and Health Care
13.2 Global Aspects of Health and Health Care
13.3 Problems of Health in the United States
13.4 Problems of Health Care in the United States
13.5 Improving Health and Health Care

Week 14: Thanks Giving Break
Week 15: Chapter 14: Urbanization

14.1 A Brief History of Urbanization

14.2 Sociological Perspectives on Urbanization

14.3 Problems of Urban Life

14.4 Problems of Rural Life

14.5 Improving Urban and Rural Life

Exam 3