SOCIAL PROBLEMS (Online)
SYG 2010 Sections 1, 2, and 3
Fall 2020

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LIBERAL STUDIES FOR THE 21st CENTURY
The Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world in which they live and work. Liberal Studies offers a transformative experience. This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Social Sciences requirements and is designed to help you become a critical analyst of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience. It has also been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Diversity in Western Experience (Y) requirement and is designed to help you become a culturally literate member of society. In order to fulfill FSU’s Diversity in Western Experience requirement, the student must earn a “C-” or better in the course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to increase your sociological understanding of social problems. We will use several major sociological perspectives to examine the following key questions:

- What creates social problems?
- How social problems reflect, produce, and reproduce inequality in society?
- How do certain phenomena become labeled as social problems while others do not?
- How can citizens and communities reduce or eliminate these problems?

The course will cover various substantive topics including poverty, inequality across gender, racial, sexual orientation, and age groups, crimes, drugs, population increase, sexual violence, and environmental changes.

COURSE 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 WEB SITE
When you register for this course, you automatically gain access to the course web site (Canvas). To visit the site, open your web browser and go to https://canvas.fsu.edu/. After you log on, click the course number. In this course, we will use Canvas extensively to download course materials, submit your assignments, take exams, and interact with the instructor, mentors, and classmates. If you are not familiar with Canvas or have technical problems or questions regarding Canvas, check out online support by logging into Canvas and clicking the “Help” icon.
REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Text

*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/textbooks/social-problems-continuity-and-change](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/social-problems-continuity-and-change). Follow the link, click “Read Multiple Formats” and then “Download.” Choose a format for fits your need. For many people, “Digital PDF” will work the best.

For each chapter, I post summary slides on Canvas. You can use them to review the chapter and prepare for the exams.

Online Videos and Articles

To supplement the text, you will be asked to read online articles and watch online videos for each topic. See the schedule section on the last page of this syllabus.

Computer/Internet Access

You need access to a computer with Adobe Reader and Microsoft Word or equivalent programs to view course materials and complete assignments. You also need stable internet connections to keep up with the class, receive/submit assignments, and take tests. If you are having problems with the internet connection, try different browsers (Firefox, Chrome, Internet Explorer) and use Ethernet connection as opposed to wireless connection.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Syllabus Quiz/Enrollment Confirmation

By Wednesday August 26, 9:00PM Eastern Time, you are required to take a quiz about the syllabus and confirm your enrollment in this course and your agreement to the syllabus. The quiz will be posted on Canvas. The first question asks you to confirm your enrollment and syllabus agreement. Without your enrollment confirmation, you will be dropped from the course. Also, if you cannot agree to any part of the syllabus, contact me immediately.

Self-Introduction

By Wednesday August 26, 9:00PM ET, you are required to post a paragraph to introduce yourself to the class. The post can describe your background and your current interest or characteristics (academic major, work, family relations, etc.). On Canvas, click Discussions and then Self Introduction.

Reading and Video Assignments

Read/watch assigned materials for the week before you take a quiz.

Quizzes

Each week, you will complete a set of multiple questions on Canvas. The quiz needs to be taken by Friday 9:00PM ET. These questions are based on the textbook chapter, online article, and online video assigned for the week. Unlike exams, quizzes can be taken twice to correct your mistakes and improve your score. After taking the quiz for the first time, you will see which questions you missed. When you take the quiz twice, your second score will be recorded even if it is lower than the first one. This means that you should retake the quiz after studying for the questions you have missed in the first round. In each session, you have 15 minutes to complete the quiz. Note that Canvas will automatically submit your ongoing work at the deadline even if you have not spent 15 minutes. This means that if you want to take advantage of 15-minute time limit, you need to start by Friday 8:45PM. Hyperlinks to quizzes disappear after the deadline. No late submission is allowed unless you have documented excuse (see below for the Excuses section).
Paper Assignment
This writing assignment gives you the opportunity to place into practice the concepts and techniques that you learned in the course materials. The assignment requires you to critically examine and explain how social status and structures shape the construction and experience of a particular social problem. You will be asked to find and read online documents on the topic you choose. I suggest you start this assignment early because it is engaging and cannot be completed in the last minute. The assignment sheet will be posted on Canvas. Penalties will be given to papers submitted late, as follows:
- Up to 24 hours after the deadline: 5 point reduction
- 24 to 48 hours after the deadline: 10 point reduction
- More than 48 hours after the deadline: Papers are not accepted. Contact the instructor immediately.

Discussion Board Activities
You will engage in two discussion board activities during the semester. After the second week, each student will be assigned to a discussion group. For each discussion activity, I will ask a question regarding the course materials (text, articles, videos), and you will be asked to post your comment three times, including your initial response to the question and at least two responses to other members of your group.

Length: Your initial response needs to be at least 250 words, and each of your responses to group members needs to be at least 150 words. (If you are not sure how many words you are writing, write them (or paste them) in Word and check the word counter at the bottom left corner of the window.)

Deadline: The discussion question is posted by Monday, and your initial response is due on Friday 9:00PM ET, and two replies to group members are due on Sunday 9:00PM ET. The discussion board closes on Sunday at 8:00PM, and Canvas will accept late submission of initial responses until then. For late submissions, 3 points will be deducted every 24 hours (e.g., 3 points off for 1 second to 24 hours late). No late submissions of replies will be accepted—the discussion board will disappear after the reply deadline.

Grading: Only meaningful responses will receive full credits. A meaningful contribution answers the question directly, thoroughly, and correctly by explicitly drawing on the concepts learned in the course materials, just like essay questions in exams. Your responses also need to be original. Posts that have similar content will be checked for originality. No credit will be given to overly emotional responses, those that attack group members (as opposed to professionally critiquing their responses), and other inappropriate responses.

Tests
You will take three tests. The second and third exams are not cumulative. Each test consists of a few short-essay questions and covers textbook chapters, online articles, and online videos assigned for the segment of the course. You will take the tests at home (or campus labs if you prefer), and you will be allowed to use the textbook and other course materials during the exams. (However, there is not much time to check these materials during the exam, so it is wise to fully prepare for the exams.) You can take each exam only once and need to complete within 90 minutes. Therefore, it is important that you have stable internet connections when taking the exams. You need to take each test during the specified exam window (7:00AM to 9:00PM ET). Do not postpone taking the exam until the last minute, as the possibility of connection problems or other unexpected delays could leave you with insufficient time to complete the exam. This is why the examination windows are open for 14 hours. Look at the exam schedule on the last page of this syllabus and contact the instructor immediately if you have a schedule conflict with these dates.

EXECUSES
Late submissions of your work are permitted for the following and only the following reasons: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. Within a week after returning to the class, contact the instructor to submit your documentation or notify when your documentation will be ready.
GRADING

- Syllabus Quiz/Enrollment Confirmation (1), 5 points.
- Self Introduction (1), 5 points.
- Tests (3), 100 points for each exam. (300 of 605 final points.)
- Paper Assignment (1), 50 points (50 of 605 final points.)
- Quizzes (12), 15 points for each quiz. (180 of 605 final points.)
- Self Introduction (Discussion Board). (5 of 605 final points.)
- Discussion Board Activity 1, 15 points for the initial response, 5 points for the first response to a group member, and 5 points for the second response to a group member. (25 of 605 final points.)
- Discussion Board Activity 2, 15 points for the initial response, 5 points for the first response to a group member, and 5 points for the second response to a group member. (25 of 605 final points.)

To convert your final score to a letter grade, I will first divide your final score by 605, multiply it by 100 to get a percentage, and then use the following rule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87.00-89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.00-86.99</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.00-79.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73.00-76.99</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>67.00-69.99</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.00-66.99</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.00-59.99</td>
<td>F</td>
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Incomplete Grades
Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for an Incomplete grade. An Incomplete grade will not be given except extenuating circumstances at my discretion. Note that College of Social Science and Public Policy guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

GETTING HELP

If you have any questions about the course contents, assignments, or exams, please first contact your mentor (to be assigned in the second week). For other issues, please contact the instructor. We will generally reply within 24 hours, and the mentor will let you know what time of the day they usually respond to email inquiries. If you email us on Friday afternoon or during the weekend, please assume you will not hear back until Monday morning. If you do not hear from us within 48 hours of sending your email (during the week), email us again to check—maybe we did not receive your email or accidentally overlooked it. This way we can make sure to answer your questions in a timely manner. When sending email, please remember to include your full name. It is also important that you directly email us, instead of using the Canvas messaging or comment function. We do not consistently receive notifications for questions asked through these Canvas functions, so we keep all correspondence on email for a record keeping purpose.

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." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy)

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:
(1) register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services; 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 Office of Accessibility Services has been provided. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:
FREE TUTORING FROM FSU
On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is 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 http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY
It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE (all deadlines are shown in Eastern Time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 1 8/24-8/28</th>
<th>Understanding Social Problems</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the syllabus carefully</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz (By Wed 9PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Introduction (Discussion Board, Wed 9PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Quiz for Chapter 1 (By Fri 9PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module 2 8/31-9/4</th>
<th>Poverty</th>
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<tr>
<td>Text Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz (By Fri 9PM ET)</td>
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<td>Discussion (Initial post by Fri 9PM, replies by Sun 9PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module 3 9/7-9/11</th>
<th>Racial and Ethnic Inequality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Chapter 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Video, Do You Have a Black Friend? <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrR48pQTQhc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrR48pQTQhc</a></td>
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<td>Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module 4 9/14-9/18</th>
<th>Gender Inequality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Text Chapter 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module 5 9/21-9/25</th>
<th>Exam 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 9/22 (Window open from 7:00AM to 9:00PM ET)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module 6 9/28-10/2</th>
<th>Sexual Orientation and Inequality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Text Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video: Frontline, Growing Up Trans (watch first 1 hour), <a href="https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/growing-up-trans/">https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/growing-up-trans/</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET)</td>
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</table>
| Module 7 | 10/5-10/9 | Aging and Ageism | ● Text Chapter 6  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 8 | 10/12-10/16 | Alcohol and Other Drugs | ● Text Chapter 7  
● Discussion (Initial post by Fri 9PM, replies by Sun 9PM ET)  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 9 | 10/19-10/23 | Crime and Criminal Justice | ● Text Chapter 8  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 10 | 10/26-10/30 | Exam 2 | Tuesday 10/27 (Window open from 7:00AM to 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 11 | 11/2-11/6 | Health and Health Care | ● Text Chapter 13  
● Video, Hungry For Health, [https://vimeo.com/18731614](https://vimeo.com/18731614)  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 12 | 11/9-11/13 | Schools and Education | ● Text Chapter 11  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 13 | 11/16-11/20 | Work and the Economy | ● Text Chapter 12  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET)  
● Paper assignment (Fri 9PM ET) |
| 11/23-11/27 | Thanksgiving Break | No Assignments! |
| Module 14 | 11/30-12/4 | Population and the Environment | ● Text Chapter 15  
● Video: TedEd, Population Pyramids: Powerful Predictors of the Future, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLmKfXwWQ1E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLmKfXwWQ1E)  
● Quiz (By Fri 9:00PM ET) |
| Module 15 | Tues 12/8 | Exam 3 | Tuesday 12/8 (Window open from 7:00AM to 9:00PM ET) |