

Sociology 1020: Social Problems
Dixie State College of Utah
Spring 2011

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sociology is the scientific study of people doing things together. In this course we will discover that our behaviors, from the local and intimate to the global and public, are patterned and situated within the groups, communities, and societies of which we are members. We will see that sociologists go about uncovering and understanding our behaviors via empirical observations. By the end of the course you will develop a Sociological Imagination--a perspective of the world that recognizes the interconnectedness of personal biographies and larger global and historical events.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students completing Introduction to Sociology should:

- Demonstrate an ability to identify the ideas, people, and events in sociology and everyday life.
- Have an understanding of sociology as a scientific discipline.
- Gain an understanding of the three major theoretical perspectives of sociology.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the constructionist model of social problems.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Joel Best. 2008. *Social Problems*. W. W. Norton.

Ira Silver. 2008. *Social Problems Readings*. W. W. Norton.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Critical Thinking Papers (10 @ 5 points)

Writing is a thinking and reasoning process in itself; trying to clearly put down on paper what you mean forces you to grapple with ideas. Each paper is due at the beginning of class and must be typed. Detailed instructions for the assignments will be handed out in class. All writing must be free of spelling errors and grammatically correct.

NOTE: I do not accept LATE work

Class Participation (10 points)

Your active participation is a vital aspect of this class. It is in your best interest to come to class in order to understand the material covered when we meet. Also, **read the assigned material by the date indicated**—lectures and in-class discussions are based on the idea that you have some understanding of

the more basic aspects of each assigned chapter and related course material for that day's class meeting. You are responsible for *all* assigned reading, even if it is not discussed in lecture. I also present material not found in the text. Regardless, if you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to get lecture notes from another student in the class. I will ask students to provide ideas and/or examples concerning the material. *Often, this will require students to expand their knowledge beyond personal beliefs and opinions.*

Individual Presentation (40 points)

Skills in critical thinking will be exercised in developing knowledge of several current social problems. You will collect news articles and develop knowledge of the various facets of the class chosen social problem. Each group will create and distribute a statement defining and explaining the social problem. Points will be awarded for the collection of news articles and the identification of an issue, sides of an issue and claims on the issue treated in each article. Oral presentations will be evaluated on soundness of arguments, clarity of expression, and demonstration of critical thinking when reaching conclusions. More information will be given out about the presentations.

Individual Presentation Participation (20 points)

You will be given grading rubrics for everyone that presents in the class. You will earn points for every presentation you attend and grade. This is 10% of your grade so it is important that you attend class during this week as well as listen to the presentations, you will be tested on this material.

Mid-term and Final Exams (2 @ 40 points)

A mid-term and final exam will be given during exam week as noted on the schedule. It will be composed of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions.

NOTE: There are no makeup exams

NOTE: I reserve the right to (a) adjust individual grades based on my evaluation of your participation and enthusiasm in the course and (b) make changes to the syllabus during the course if I feel it will benefit the class.

GRADING

Your quarter grades will be calculated by total points earned by completing course requirements. I highly recommend tracking your points earned during the quarter to avoid any discrepancies or surprises when I calculate your final grade.

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Points</u>	
Critical Thinking Papers	10 @ 5 points =	50
Class Participation	10 points =	10
Individual Presentation	40 points =	40
Grading of IP	20 points =	20
Exams	2 @ 40 points =	80
Total Points		200

CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. Do not come into class late or leave early, unless you have a compelling reason that you have discussed with me prior to class.
2. In order to do well in this course, your writing must be grammatically correct with correct spelling. Good writing does not mean complicating writing; clear, carefully constructed sentences should be your goal.
3. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a classmate. I do take attendance. Excused absences are those for which you can provide documentation proving illness, death in the family, or participation in a college-sponsored event. Excused late arrivals must be discussed with me before class starts.
4. Active participation includes not only frequency, but quality of participation, in a manner that demonstrates both completion of assigned work and respect for classmates and the instructor. I will not expect you to always have the right answer to questions and problems in class, but I will expect you to have done the reading, homework, and to be prepared to engage with the material during the class session. Demonstrating respect includes taking care to avoid monopolizing discussion and interrupting classmates. It also includes making sure that one's comments are directly related to the topic at hand and are offered to get a better grasp of course material or to contribute constructively to the class discussion.
5. Students are required to refrain from having side conversations during class. Having side conversations will significantly lower your participation score. If you feel the need to read the newspaper, read for another class, play on the Internet, text message, and/or take a nap, do not come to class. Students are expected to turn off their cell phones before class starts.

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

I expect you to check your e-mail regularly in case I send out information relating to this class. You can expect me to reply to your communications (please allow me 48-72 hours to respond). Here are some general rules for emailing:

- Email messages should be courteous, clear, concise, and directly related to specific content in the course.
- Messages must include your full name and a specific subject line.

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE POLICY

Academic dishonesty in any form, including, but not limited to, plagiarism on written assignments, submitting other person's work as one's own, and cheating on exams or quizzes will not be tolerated at Dixie State College of Utah.

Teachers at Dixie State College of Utah have the right to manage their classroom environments to ensure a good learning climate.

DISABILITY RESOURCES

If you are a student with a physical or mental impairment and would like to request accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (652-7516) in Room 201 of the Student Services Center. The Disability Resource Center will determine your eligibility for services based upon complete professional documentation. If you are deemed eligible, the Disability Resource Center will further

evaluate the effectiveness of your accommodation requests and will authorize reasonable accommodations that are appropriate for your disability.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

1/17-Holiday
1/18-Drop/Audit Fee Begins
1/25-Late Registration/Payment Fee
1/31-Graduation Application Deadline
2/1-Last Day for Refund/ Last day to drop without receiving a “W” grade
2/2-Courses Dropped for Non-Payment
2/4-Last Day to ADD classes
2/21-Holiday
2/28-Mid-Term Grades Due
3/4- Last day to Drop/Audit classes
3/14-3/18-Spring Break
4/1-Last day for complete Withdrawal
4/28-Classwork Ends
4/29-5/5-Final Exam Week

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE (Jan.10-14)

Introduction to Sociology

Deviance and Social Control

WEEK TWO (Jan.17-21) ***Holiday (No Class) Monday 17th**

BEST: CHAPTER ONE The Social Problems Process

READING 26

WEEK THREE (Jan. 24-28)

BEST: CHAPTER TWO Claims

READING 10

WEEK FOUR (Jan.31-Feb.4)

BEST: CHAPTER THREE Activists as Claim Makers

READING 12

WEEK FIVE (Feb.7-11)

BEST: CHAPTER FOUR Experts as Claimsmakers

READING 13

WEEK SIX (Feb.14-18)

BEST: CHAPTER FIVE The Media and Claims

READING 11

WEEK SEVEN (Feb.21-25)***Holiday (No Class) Monday 21st**

Mid-Term Review

Mid-Term Exam

WEEK EIGHT (Feb.28-Mar.4)

BEST: CHAPTER SIX Public Reaction

READING 16

WEEK NINE (Mar.7-11)

BEST: CHAPTER SEVEN Policymaking

READING 2

***March 14-18 SPRING BREAK**

WEEK TEN (Mar.21-25)

BEST: CHAPTER EIGHT Social Problems Work

READING 15

WEEK ELEVEN (Mar.28-Apr.1)***No Class on Friday April 1st. (Presentation Preparation)**

Presentation Preparation

WEEK TWELVE (Apr.4-8)

Presentations

WEEK THIRTEEN (Apr.11-15)

BEST: CHAPTER NINE Policy Outcomes

READING 33

WEEK FOURTEEN (Apr.18-22)

BEST: CHAPTER TEN Claims across Space and Time

READING 17

WEEK FIFTEEN (Apr.25-27)

Final Exam Preparation

WEEK SIXTEEN (Apr.29-May5)

Final Exam