

**Sociology 1020: Social Problems**  
**Dixie State College of Utah**  
**Fall 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 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.

*NOTE: I do not accept LATE work*

***Class Participation (20 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.*

***Critical Thinking Paper (40 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. You will write one critical thinking papers this semester (3-5 pages). 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*

***Mid-term and Final Exams (2 @ 50 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 Paper	40 points=	40
Critical Thinking Presentation	40 points =	40
Class Participation	20 points =	20
Exams	2 @ 50 points =	100
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>200</b>

**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**

Apr 11	Registration open to Seniors (90+ credits)
Apr 12	Registration open to Juniors (60+ credits)
Apr 13	Registration open to Sophomores (30+ credits)
Apr 14	Open Registration
Aug 15-19	Faculty Workshops
Aug 22	Classwork Starts
Aug 24	Last Day to Add Without Signature
Aug 29	Drop/Audit Fee Begins (\$10 per class)
Sep 5	Labor Day
Sep 6	\$50 Late Registration/Payment Fee
Sep 12	Pell Grant Census
Sep 12	Last Day for Refund
Sep 12	Last Day to drop without receiving a "W" grade
Sep 13	Courses dropped for non-payment
Sep 16	Last Day to ADD Classes
Sep 30	Graduation Application Deadline
Oct 12	Mid-Term Grades Due
Oct 13-14	Semester Break
Oct 17	Last Day to DROP/AUDIT Classes
Nov 11	Last Day for Complete Withdrawal
Nov 14	Spring Registration open to Seniors (90+ credits)
Nov 15	Career Day
Nov 15	Spring Registration open to Juniors (60+ credits)
Nov 16	Spring Registration open to Sophomores (30+ credits)
Nov 17	Spring Registration Open to All Students
Nov 23-25	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 9	Classwork Ends
Dec 12-16	Final Exams

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK ONE (Aug. 22-26)**

*Introduction to Sociology*

*Deviance and Social Control*

### **WEEK TWO (Aug. 29- Sep. 2)**

*BEST: CHAPTER ONE The Social Problems Process*

*READING 26*

### **WEEK THREE (Sep. 5-9) \*\*Holiday September 5th**

*BEST: CHAPTER TWO Claims*

*BEST: CHAPTER THREE Activists as Claim Makers*

READING 10

READING 12

**WEEK FOUR (Sep. 10-16) \*\*NO CLASS SEPTEMBER 10th**

*BEST: CHAPTER FOUR Experts as Claimsmakers*

READING 13

**WEEK FIVE (Sep. 19-23)**

*BEST: CHAPTER FIVE The Media and Claims*

*BEST: CHAPTER SIX Public Reaction*

READING 11

READING 16

**WEEK SIX (Sep. 26-30)**

*BEST: CHAPTER SEVEN Policymaking*

*BEST: CHAPTER EIGHT Social Problems Work*

READING 2

READING 15

**WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 3-7)**

*BEST: CHAPTER NINE Policy Outcomes*

*BEST: CHAPTER TEN Claims across Space and Time*

READING 33

READING 17

*Mid-Term Review*

**WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 10)**

*Mid-Term*

**WEEK NINE (Oct. 17-21)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK TEN (Oct. 24-28)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK ELEVEN (Oct. 31-Nov. 4)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK TWELVE (Nov. 7-11)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK THIRTEEN (Nov. 14-18)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK FOURTEEN (Nov. 21)\*\*Holiday November 23-25**

*Presentations*

**WEEK FIFTEEN (Nov. 28-Dec. 2)**

*Presentations*

**WEEK SIXTEEN (Dec. 5-7)**

*Final Exam Preparation*

*Final Exam*