

SO 308<sup>10</sup> Social Problems  
Chaminade University of Honolulu  
5:30-9:40pm Friday

Spring Term 1999  
Schofield Barracks  
April 5 - June 14

Instructor: Richard Rohde, Ph.D.  
e-mail: rohde@hawaii.edu

Phone: 732-3992 (home)  
Cell/Voice Mail: 228-9470

**Required Text:**

William Kornblum & Joseph Julian, *Social Problems*, 9th ed., 1998

**Course Description:**

This course addresses a wide range of social problems that we confront in the contemporary world. These include issues of crime and violence, the delivery of health care and education, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual discrimination, terrorism, threats to the environment, and so forth. The sociological perspective on these issues emphasizes the influence of social groups, processes, and institutions upon human behavior and perception. In this course we will examine how social problems are identified, how various theories guide sociological research on these problems, and how social policy is informed by this research. Insight derived from the sociological approach will encourage the development of a critical perspective towards understanding ourselves and social problems as they affect us.

**Examinations, Writing Assignments, and Attendance**

Two brief examinations (each worth 20 per cent of your final grade) will combine short answer and essay formats. Makeup exams may be allowed without penalty ONLY if prior arrangements are made. A minimum of one letter grade (10 points) will be subtracted from makeup exams resulting from unexcused absences.

A research paper (10 pages plus references, typewritten, due June 4) is required. You may choose any topic of interest to you which conforms to the definition of a "social problem." The purpose of this paper is to relate sociological concepts, perspectives, and theories developed in class to a specific issue which you wish to more closely examine. Students will share with each other the results of your research in an informal classroom presentation near the end of the course. This paper (and presentation) will count 30 per cent of your final grade.

The remaining 30 per cent of your grade will be based upon attendance and weekly class participation assignments. Each student will be assigned on a weekly basis the task of preparing a verbal summary of a specific topic (e.g., a section of a chapter, generally 5 to 6 pages) which is part of that week's readings. Students' informal summaries will serve to initiate class discussions about particular topics, and lay the groundwork for examinations of related issues.

Class attendance and participation is very important -- I can't overemphasize this. Being prepared for class is equally important, that is, having read the assignment prior to class so you can listen and/or participate intelligently. The success of this class depends upon all of us sharing information, and deciding what it all means through discussion. Lectures will supplement, not reiterate, the information within the textbook. Integrated within the class

schedule are videos which have been selected to illustrate and reinforce the topics brought forth in the readings and in lectures, and to provide a common basis of discussion.

**Grading Scale** Your final grade will be based on the following formula:

100 points = A+ // 99-90 = A // 89-80 = B // 79-70 = C // 69-60 = D //

The following schedule lists the topics to be covered in each class, and the respective reading assignments that will be addressed in that class. You will be responsible on the exams for all readings.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
<b>April</b>		
09 Fri class 1	Introduction to this course Sociological Perspectives	Ch. 1
16 Fri class 2	Physical Health Mental Illness	Ch. 2 Ch. 3
23 Fri class 3	Sex-Related Problems Alcohol & Drugs	Ch. 4 Ch. 5
30 Fri class 4	Crime & Criminals Violence Poverty	Ch. 6 Ch. 7 Ch. 8
<b>May</b>		
07 Fri class 5	<b>Exam One</b> Discrimination Sex Roles & Inequality Aging	Ch. 9 Ch. 10 Ch. 11
14 Fri class 6	The Changing Family Problems of Education	Ch. 12 Ch. 13
21 Fri class 7	Work & the Economy Urban Problems Population & Immigration <b>Exam Two</b>	Ch. 14 Ch. 15 Ch. 16
28 Fri class 8	Technology & Environment War & Terrorism	Ch. 17 Ch. 18
<b>June</b>		
04 Fri class 9	Student Presentations <b>Paper Due</b>	
11 Fri	Student Presentations – Final class!	