

SE 01
Pns

COURSE OUTLINE - SOCIAL PROBLEMS - SO 308 40
CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY
Spring 2001 Accelerated Semester

INSTRUCTOR: David B. Johnson, Ph.D.
TIME/PLACE: Wed, 5:30PM, Ft Shafter
COURSE/TEXT: SOCIAL PROBLEMS, Kornblum and Julian

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Sociology 308 is an survey course of Social Problems which presents sociology as systematic way of learning about human interaction. It shows how groups and society function to define, create and respond to social problems. It discusses social problems from three perspectives. It discusses social problems from the social structural perspective which presents social problems as they originate in social institutions such as the family, religion, politics, education and economics. Social problems also arise from conflict relations in society, such as the conflict that is found between social classes and various gender, age, ethnic and other groups. Social problems also arise and are defined through social interaction, more of a macro perspective. The course will address these various explanations of the origins, the sociological mechanisms used in defining and in addressing social problems. The course will also look at these phenomena over time and to what extent social problems are a stable phenomena and how they change. It will discuss various ways in which society has responded to social problems historically and in the present and perhaps how they will be addressed in the future.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to read the assigned text chapters. The reading should be completed in advance of each class meeting to allow students to knowledgeably participate in classroom discussions of the assigned topics.

There will be a mid-term examination on the first half of the course materials (see schedule), and there will be a final examination emphasizing the second half of the course materials. Exam questions will include sociological terms defined in the text and will also include some of the special readings questions from the text. In addition, there will be some questions about sociological concepts discussed in the classroom and text. The exams will be take-home with long essay type questions. Exam questions will be evaluated on: completeness, accuracy, creativity, appropriateness and clarity of discussion.

Students will be expected to complete a course project. The project is for the purpose of teaching the student through experience in "doing sociology." The student will select from among several types of projects and topics and will receive guidance

from the instructor. The course project will begin at the start of the course and the final written report is due on the last day of class (see schedule). The student is encouraged to consult with the instructor on various phases of the project. The course project includes a written paper of 12-14 pages (double spaced typed). The term papers will be evaluated on: organization, scholarship, creativity, clarity of discussion and appropriateness.

Once students have selected an appropriate topic for the class project, they should discuss the selection with the instructor for approval and suggestions. The instructor will then provide students with guidelines on how to get started and will consult with students on their progress. The course project will be evaluated on: organization, scholarship, accuracy, creativity and completeness.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Each unit of the course will utilize a variety of learning techniques to maximize the students' participation and involvement. There will be lecture-discussions on the assigned text chapters, including discussion of sociological terms and concepts. Also, the class will be asked to respond to questions about the assigned readings. There will be periodic discussion in small groups on special topics and issues. An attendance role will be kept to enable the instructor to evaluate student attendance and participation.

GRADING:

The course grade will be assigned as follows:

Course project paper	40% of grade
Oral report on project paper	10% of grade
Examinations (20% mid-term + 20% final exam)	40% of grade
Class attendance/participation	10% of grade

NOTE: see syllabus for evaluation criteria for papers and exams.

POLICY ON MAKE-UPS, ATTENDANCE, LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

The instructor may exact a one-grade penalty for late exams or course projects, depending upon the circumstances. The dates for exams and the due date for the class project are on the class schedule. Students who have difficulty in attending classes or taking exams or completing the course project should discuss their situation with the instructor in advance or as soon as possible to enable the student to meet the course requirements in a timely manner. If for some reason a student is unable to meet all of the course requirements by the end of the term s/he should discuss the situation with the instructor and possibly arrange for an incomplete grade agreement form to be prepared before the end of term, otherwise the final course grade will be determined by those assignments turned in by the end of the term.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE MEETINGS AND SYLLABUS

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC OF CLASS DISCUSSION:	READING ASSIGNMENT
1	Apr 4	<p>INTRODUCTION:</p> <p>This unit introduces the student to the sociology of social problems. It discusses various definitions of social problems and various mechanisms for defining them. It will present three basic theoretical perspectives: structural/functional, conflict and interaction. Students will be introduced to the theoretical literature and to sources of research on social problems that relate to measurement and response to various social problems. Also, the research for the class project including types and topics will be discussed, along with a discussion on the preparation of the written course project report.</p>	Chapter 1
		<p>PHYSICAL HEALTH</p> <p>This unit presents the way in which lack of physical health is defined as a social problem and how it differentially affects various segments of society. There will be a discussion of the various mechanisms and perspectives in defining ill health, as well as various ways in which it affects society. It will also address various social responses to this class of social problem over time and the extent to which each has been successful..</p>	Chapter 2
2	Apr 11	<p>MENTAL ILLNESS</p> <p>This unit discusses the origin of mental illness as defined as a social problem, and various perspectives regarding the cause and appropriate response to mental illness. It will also cover a historical description of societal perspectives on mental illness and present some future alternative approaches</p>	Chapter 3
		<p>SEX AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM</p> <p>This unit discusses various aspects of sexual relationships that are considered a social problem and various theoretical explanations regarding the causes and responses. It will discuss various historical responses to these problems and how the problems have been redefined over time. It will discuss the various social costs associated with these problems and the extent to which different approaches have been successful.</p>	Chapter 4
3	Apr 18	<p>ALCOHOL AND OTHER SUBSTANCES</p> <p>This unit covers how the use of various substances, such as alcohol and other drugs is defined as a social problem. It will discuss the various theories about causes and "cures" to these problems, as well as the social costs involved with the problem and various alternative approaches.</p>	Chapter 5

CRIME

Chapter 6

This unit covers the social definition of deviance and crime and how persons are defined as deviants and criminals and the individual and social consequences of such. It will discuss the distribution of crime in society among various subgroups. It will also discuss the individual experience of being a criminal and the interaction between criminals and society.

4 Apr 25 VIOLENCE

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Chapter 7

This unit covers the theories about the causes and proper responses to violence in society. It will discuss the extent to which violence is found in various segments of society and how each respond to it. It will compare historical trends as well as cross national and cross cultural patterns of violence and ways in which various societies view it and respond to it.

POVERTY

Chapter 8

This unit presents a discussion of the distribution of wealth and poverty and various theories that might explain social inequality as a social problem as well as its causes and consequences. Also, there will be a discussion of various approaches to this "problem" and possible future trends in poverty and outcomes of various efforts to eradicate it.

5 May 2 RACISM, PREJUDICE & DISCRIMINATION

Chapter 9

This unit discusses the historical and sociological development of prejudice and discrimination and the nature and causes of racism, as well as the various causal perspectives. There will be a discussion of how these phenomena can be viewed as a social problem and various alternative responses and their relative effectiveness.

SEX ROLES AND INEQUALITY

Chapter 10

This unit will present the processes of definition of gender roles and various explanations for gender inequality and why it is defined as a social problem, its costs to society and how society has responded to it over time.

HAND OUT MID-TERM EXAMINATION ON CHAPTERS 1-10 OF TEXT

6 May 9 TURN IN MID-TERM EXAMS

AGING

Chapter 11

This unit discusses the historical and sociological development of prejudice and discrimination and the nature and causes of ageism, as well as the various causal perspectives. There will be a discussion of how these phenomena can be viewed as a social problem and various alternative responses and their relative effectiveness.

FAMILY

Chapter 12

This unit will present the various problems associated with the modern family including, marital dissolution, alternative family types and associated lifestyles. There will be a discussion of the explanations of the causes as well as approaches to these various problems in the modern family.

7 May 16 EDUCATION

Chapter 13

This unit includes a discussion of various social problems associated with education and schools. It will cover explanations of causes as well as possible solutions to these problems based on various assumptions. There will be a discussion of historical trends in educational problems and a comparison of the types of problems faced by various sub groups in society and how they attempt to cope with them. These problems will be discussed in the context of various other social institutions, such as the family, economics, religion etc.

WORK AND ECONOMY

Chapter 14

This unit covers the theories of the distribution of goods and services, production and consumption patterns, trends and issues as well as economic organization and various problems associated with them. It will consider various viewpoints of how to deal with these problems. There will be consideration of global economic trends and processes.

8 May 23 URBAN PROBLEMS

Chapter 15

This unit discusses various aspects of urban living that are defined as social problems. It will discuss several theories that explain the causes and solutions to these problems. Also it will consider trends in urban problems over time and various patterns of problems among various groups.

POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION

Chapter 16

This unit covers the various population dynamics including growth and migration. It will consider various perspectives on these phenomena and how they might become defined as social problems along with various approaches in coping with them as problems.

9 May 30 TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT Chapter 17

This unit covers various aspects of and problems associated with old and new, different levels of technological development. Various groups and cultures look at the environment and technology differently and have their own priorities. There will be a discussion on trends in technological development as well as environmental issues and how various perspectives might present solutions to problems.

WAR AND TERRORISM Chapter 18

This unit discusses the ways different groups and cultures define war and terrorism and how they can be considered a social problem. It will cover the history of war and terrorism and how current societies view and cope with them.

HAND OUT FINAL EXAMINATION (Chapters 10-18)

10 Jun 6 CLASS PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Students will be given time to present their oral reports on their course papers

Or related topics, however students may present these at any time during the term with the instructor approval.

TURN IN FINAL EXAMS

TURN IN PROJECT PAPERS (Can be turned in earlier if desired)

NOTE: Students who wish to have their graded papers and exams returned to them may provide the instructor with a stamped, addressed envelope. Otherwise the graded papers and exams will be returned to the Accelerated Programs Office for distribution to the Education Office where the course was taken, and the return of such cannot be guaranteed.