

The University of Tennessee at Martin
Department of Behavioral Sciences

SOCIOLOGY 202: SOCIAL PROBLEMS
Spring 2016: SECTIONS 001, 002, 003, ECOS

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Office Hours: Mon., Wed.: 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Tues., Thurs.: 9:30am – 12:30pm
Other times by appointment

Catalog Description:

Analysis of selected contemporary social problems in their social and cultural setting. Develop an awareness of local, national, and international social problems. Learn and apply sociological perspectives to the analysis of social problems. SOC 202 is a service learning course, and students are required to complete volunteer community service hours and attend an assigned number of campus events.

Learning Outcomes:

Specialized knowledge – Students will be able to define and explain social problems from a variety of theoretical perspectives using the tools, methods, and specialized terms of a sociological perspective of social problems.

Specialized knowledge – Students will construct a summative paper that draws on current research, theory, and scholarship from social problems and bridging that scholarship with one other field.

Intellectual skills (use of information resources) – Locates, evaluates, incorporates, and properly cites multiple information resources in different media.

Applied and collaborative learning – Completes a project that evaluates a significant question in social problems, including a narrative of the effects of learning outside the classroom on the practical skills employed in executing the project.

Civic and global learning – Develops and justifies a position on a public issue and relates this position to alternate views held in the policy environment.

Grading Criteria:

Your grade for this course will be determined based on the following criteria:

Participation	40 points
Pre-test/Post-test	20 points
Discussion prep sheets	70 points
Term paper	100 points
Assessments (Four exams)	400 points total
Service	<u>50 points</u>
	680 total points

Students who earn 90% or more of the points will earn an “A.”

Students who earn 80% to 89% of the points will earn a “B.”

Students who earn 70% to 79% of the points will earn a “C.”

Students who earn 60% to 69% of the points will earn a “D.”

Students who earn less than 60% of the points will earn an “F.”

Attendance & Participation:

This is an interactive course. I will be lecturing – some. Most of the course is comprised of discussions – both small group discussions & full class discussions – and in-class exercises. You are expected to attend each class meeting, and I will take attendance each time. I realize, however, that adults have responsibilities which will from time to time cause them to miss class. Therefore, I will allow three (3) missed classes for any reason before absenteeism will negatively affect your attendance grade. Excuse of an absence is at the instructor’s discretion and may require documentation. Any exercise completed in class will count toward your participation grade. However, if you are not present for an exercise, you will forfeit the ability to earn those points. Failure to attend at least 50% of the scheduled class meetings will result in a failing grade for the course.

Assessments:

Pre-test and Post-test: At the beginning of the term, you will be assigned a test of your knowledge of sociology and social problems. Near the end of the term, you will take the same test. **Note:** these tests do not affect your exam grade; they are only used by the instructor to measure learning gains.

Exams: There will be four (4) take-home exams, which will be completed on Blackboard. Further information regarding these exams will be announced in class. You will have one opportunity to take the exam. You will be provided with a study guide, and you will be able to use your notes and text.

Discussion prep sheets: For each of the eight (8) days that there is an assigned reading posted to Blackboard you will read the assigned reading and prepare a set of questions/outside connections based on the readings. These readings will be discussed in class, and, in order to facilitate the discussion, it is expected that you will have read the assignment and prepared at least one discussion question. Although the readings will be discussed in class as a group, you will be assessed on your individual performance, preparation, and participation. **Prep sheets are due to be posted on Blackboard on the day of the scheduled discussion.** Late prep sheets will **NOT** be accepted. You are required to complete seven (7) of the eight (8) assigned prep sheets. You may complete all

eight for ten (10) points as extra credit. Prep sheets will be submitted on Blackboard, should be approximately one page in length, and pose one discussion question that can be shared with the group.

Term paper: Following mid-term, we will be focusing on one particular social problem to engage in term paper. The result of this exercise will be three assignments for a total grade of up to 100 points. Further information & instructions will be forthcoming.

Service: During the course, each student must complete 5 hours of service to the community and submit via Blackboard a one-page statement of their experience, relating it to a topic covered in class.

Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Statement:

Students who have a disability that requires accommodation(s) should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services at (731) 881-1689 to discuss their specific needs.

Acknowledging Differences:

During the semester, students will have the opportunity to share thoughts, opinions, and beliefs about their life experiences. The differences in these perspectives that each student brings to the discussion will add to the richness of the course. Students should communicate in ways that acknowledge and respect such differences. While it is natural and expected that many of us will have differing opinions, we must always respect our fellow students in the class and the opinions they hold. I expect and encourage students to be critical of each other's ideas, but it is unacceptable to be dismissive or and/or combative with other students in the class.

Classroom Decorum:

I have an obligation to maintain a classroom environment that allows students to learn to the best of their abilities. While I encourage students to ask questions and make comments in class, I will not tolerate or permit behavior that is disruptive, distracting, or demeaning. If you cell phone must be on for medical, child care, or other reasons, please set it to silent or vibrate. Students disrupting classroom decorum will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Ethical Conduct:

By virtue of your enrollment at the University of Tennessee, you agree to abide by the standards of conduct as outlined in the following statement:

As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Instances of academic dishonesty will be turned over to the Office of Student Conduct.

Required Course Materials:

Henslin, James M. 2015. *Social Problems: A Down-to-Earth Approach*. New York: Pearson.

Additional readings on Blackboard

Tentative COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.)

TOPICS & READINGS

Week	Dates	Topic	Textbook	Bb Additional reading
	1/14-1/15	Intro/Syllabus		
1	1/18-1/22	Introduction to social problems	Chapter 1	
2	1/25-1/29	Environment	Chapter 13	
3	2/1-2/5	Aging	Chapter 2	
		Exam 1*		
4	2/8-2/12	Sexual behavior	Chapter 3	Reading 1
5	2/15-2/19	Education		Reading 2
6	2/22-2/26	Criminal justice	Chapter 6	
		Exam 2*		
7	2/29-3/4	Gender	Chapter 9	Reading 3
8	3/7-3/11	Spring Break - No class		
9	3/14-3/18	Race	Chapter 8	Reading 4
10	3/21-3/25	Urbanization & population	Chapter 12	
		Exam 3*		
11	3/28-4/1	Economic inequality	Chapter 7	Reading 5
12	4/4-4/8	Healthcare	Chapter 10	Reading 6
13	4/11-4/15	Research week		
14	4/18-4/22	Family	Chapter 11	Reading 7
15	4/25-4/29	Power in society	Chapter 14	Reading 8
Finals	5/2-5/6	Exam 4**		
		*Exams are due on the last day class meets during the week assigned		
		**Final exams are due according to the University's final exam schedule		