

# SOCIAL PROBLEMS SYLLABUS

“Unless a capacity for thinking be accompanied by a capacity for action, a superior mind exists in torture.”  
–Charles H. Cooley

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Sociology 2

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Addresses some of the most compelling social problems in society and discusses the diverse contributions sociology has made to the understanding of complex social issues.

## STUDENT-LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- 1) Identify specific social problems and their cause-effect patterns.
- 2) Identify current research methods that are utilized for the investigation of social problems.
- 3) Compare and contrast various social problem programs and/or treatments in terms of their effectiveness.
- 4) Apply the three main social theories to various social problems in society.
- 5) Critically evaluate the proposed ways to alleviate the major social problems facing society today.
- 6) Identify whether a specific social problem is being evaluated from a micro or macro perspective.

## GOALS:

- 1) Explain how social problems interact and reacts with the larger society.
- 2) Utilize class concepts to support your opinions about social problems.
- 3) Describe key concepts in each unit and make connections between the concepts in different units.
- 4) Use sociological theories and concepts from class either to analyze your service learning experience.

## READINGS:

- 1) **Text:** Social Problems 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2010, John J. Macionis ISBN: 9780132433396 (**Any edition is fine!**)  
\*You can get it at the OCC bookstore or online. I suggest looking for it at <http://www.dealoz.com/>
- 2) **Online Readings & Film:** See Blackboard (under Handouts, Online Readings & Film)
  - Preparing for Power
  - Savage Inequalities
  - Sick in America Film
  - Jihad vs. McWorld
- 3) **Optional:** These brief activities include my Reading Raves, Drugs South Park and Alcohol, The Key to Understanding any Society and Freegans, Sexual Orientatiols Quiz, Sociology in the Media Blog <http://sociologyinthedia.wordpress.com>, & more. **See Blackboard (under Handouts, Just for Fun)**

## CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) **Attendance/Participation:** 30 points
  - **Attendance:** (20 points) Regular attendance is vital to success in this class, **Potential Test Question(s) will be Given at the Beginning of Every Class** and attendance will be taken at the end of every class. Lastly, each student can miss 1 class without any penalty.
    - **Note 1:** If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get caught up from a classmate.
    - **Note 2:** It is your responsibility to drop the class officially if needed.
  - **Participation:** (10 points) You can earn points by confirming the Learning Agreement **See Blackboard (Assignments)**, and doing the Service Learning Paper Proofread Activity.

2) **Discussion Board Prompts: Each** is worth 20 points

- You will need to complete 2 discussion board prompts (see course outline for dates) about some social problem issues. See course outline for Discussion board dates. You will use class concepts to make arguments about the various issues. More details are available on blackboard.

3) **Exams: Each** is worth 40 points

- There will be 1 midterm and 1 final, each worth the same amount. There will be multiple-choice questions and short answer questions. Study guides will be posted 2 weeks before each exam.

3) **Service Learning Project: 50 Points**

- In this activity you have a chance to apply the knowledge you have learned this semester and use it to discuss your experience participating in 12-hours of community service, see Blackboard for more details

4) **Extra Credit Media Clips Board: 2 Points Each (4 Points Max) See Blackboard (Discussions)**

- You can earn this by posting a link to an online video clip or article with an explanation of how it relates to something in lecture on the Extra Credit Video clip discussion board. Your clip or article cannot be something shown in class or already posted by somebody else on the forum.

**Grading Summary**

Attendance & Participation	30 points	15%
Discussion Board Prompts	40 points	20%
Service Learning Project	50 points	10%
Midterm	40 points	20%
Final	40 points	20%
	<b>200 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Grading Scale**

A = 180 - 200 points	90 - 100%
B = 160 - 179 points	80 - 89%
C = 140 - 159 points	70 - 79%
D = 120 - 139 points	60 - 69%
F = 119 & below	59% & below

**GRADING POLICY:**

- **Late Papers and Assignments:** Varies by assignment. See Blackboard.
- **Redoing Assignments:** Under **NO** circumstances can you redo any assignment; it would be unfair to others.
- **Make-up Exams, Extensions, or Taking an Exam Early?:** None of these are an option.
  - There is another option that I give **ONLY** for excused absences, which must include **DOCUMENTED** illnesses (doctor's note required, if you do not have a doctor you can go to the Student Health Center) or emergencies (i.e. accidents with a police or emergency room report).
  - I must approve these before we can discuss another option.
  - If I do not approve you the other option, you will receive a zero on the exams. Remember oversleeping or a family vacation will not be approved.
- **Grade Begging:** This entails asking for a special exception to be made for you that is not outlined in my grading policy. **Grade begging is not allowed in this class.** Remember, grades are earned in this class and there is no excuse that can justify being given a grade that was not earned. Grade begging emails will receive a standard cut and paste reply from my grading policy one time and further grade begging emails will not receive a response.

- **Borderline Grades:** If a student receives a % grade that has a 9 with some decimals trailing it, I will round your grade up **ONLY IF THE STUDENT HAS AN ATTENDANCE RECORD HIGHER THAN THE CLASS AVERAGE**. Thus if you have not done this I will not be able to round your grade up even if it ends with 9.99999. If a student has a score that ends with a 9 with no decimals, you will not be considered for a grade round up, no exceptions.
- **Special Needs:** If you have a special need, you should contact the Special Services Center (949-582-4833). Their staff will assist you =).

#### STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Opinions Welcome and Encouraged:** This class will be a safe place where you can share their opinions and ask questions without fear of reproach. I feel so strongly that you share your opinions in class that I will not share mine. Multiple viewpoints (I never say what my view on them is) in class and you can choose what you believe for yourself.
- **Create a Respectful Environment:** Since you are safe to share **ANY** viewpoint, you would like as long as it is done in a respectful manner. I have a zero-tolerance policy towards racist, sexist, and/or homophobic language (You can share views that would be considered any of these in non-offensive language).
- **Cell phones & Texting:** Cell phones need to be shut off in the classroom. They are disrespectful to other students. So make sure these devices are turned off **BEFORE** entering the class. If you have a **JUSTIFIABLE** reason for having one on, come see me before class and we will work something out.
- **Avoid distracting behavior:** To make this a learning environment that is a productive learning environment it is important that you avoid distracting behavior (i.e. talking during lecture, text messaging, surfing the web on laptops, arriving late, leaving early, writing notes, cell phone use, and anything else that might bother you or someone around you). Since many students (and instructors) are distracted by such behaviors, “violators” may be removed from class and referred to the Dean of Students.
- **Academic Dishonesty:**
  - This is a serious offense and **no excuses** for such actions will be accepted. Any form of academic dishonesty that occurs will result in the following: A zero on the assignment, an academic dishonesty report, sent to my dean, and the vice president of student services (this office may choose to take further action and that will solely be up to them to decide), it will be put on a permanent record.
  - Thus, **it is your responsibility** to know what qualifies as academic dishonesty, see the following link for a detailed outline of what it is <http://www.saddleback.edu/la/ActsofAcademicDishonesty.html>
- **Learning from Each Other:** I truly believe that learning is a two-way street. You will not only learn from me, but more importantly I will learn from you!
- **Have Fun:** This class will be very hands-on. By participating fully in class activities and discussions, it is my hope that you will enjoy our exploration of sociology.

#### READING AND LECTURE PREPARATION:

- **Reading as Preparation for Lecture:** In an effort to accomplish objectives, please come to each class prepared, having read the material we are covering **BEFORE** we discuss it. Lectures are intended to complement text material and will emphasize an interactive learning-centered approach. In fact, you will actually play a role in determining and developing how we assess learning in this class. In addition to this overall interactive environment, you will work in groups to further your learning of material.
- **Annotation:** Based on previous (i.e. high school) restrictions, many students are hesitant to highlight and write in textbooks. Fear not and put that thinking style behind you! Annotation is a useful strategy that facilitates learning and you may still sell back your annotated books or keep it for your own academic library.

- **Lecture Outlines:** Before each class, an abbreviated PowerPoint presentation (in PDF form) will be posted on Blackboard. You can print it out in one of two formats, 3 slides per page or 1 slide per page. Lectures are taught with the expectation that you print them before lecture and use them to take notes on or with.
- **Blackboard & Email:** Must be checked regularly, because you will be responsible for printing out class assignments, turning in assignments on time, and knowing class announcements.

#### EMAILING:

- **Email:** (it is your responsibility to regularly check your (Saddleback Email)
  - Before Emailing Me a Question
    - Make sure you have checked the **Syllabus** (99% of answers can be found here)
  - Emailing Me
    - **Purpose of Emailing me:** Clarifying terms theories, further grade questions after reading my feedback, site glitches, etc. I am happy to help with this =)!
    - **Inappropriate Email Topics:** Asking questions that can be found in the syllabus, asking me to tell you what you missed when you were absent, telling me you were absent or will be, grade begging emails, etc.
    - **Do Not Forget to Include in All Emails:**
      - In the subject line: your ticket number
      - Sign the email with your full name so I can know who it is =).

#### TROUBLESHOOTING:

- **Student Help Page:**
  - <http://www.saddleback.edu/de/student-technical-support/>
  - <http://www.socccd.edu/help/login.htm>
- **Campus Support:**
  - Phone Number: 949-582-4357
  - Email: [scstudenthelp@saddleback.edu](mailto:scstudenthelp@saddleback.edu)
  - Website: <http://www.saddleback.edu/oe/student-resources/StudentContactforTechnicalSupport.html>

## COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Content	Readings	Assignments/Tests
WEEK 1	Introduction	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 1	○ <u>Assigned</u> : Learning Agreement
WEEK 2	Theoretical Perspectives Research Methods	Bring in an article (See Lecture 3 for Details)	○ <u>School Holiday</u> : ○ <u>Due</u> : Learning Agreement ○ Assign Service Learning Project
WEEK 3	Wealth & Poverty	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 2 <u>Optional</u> : Are Credit Cards a Debt Trap?	○ Assign Discussion Board #1
WEEK 4	Racial Inequality	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 3	○ <u>Due</u> : Discussion Board #1 Main Post
WEEK 5	Educational Inequality	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 13 <u>Online</u> : Savage Inequalities <b>Only if your Last Name is A-K</b> <u>Online</u> : Preparing for Power <b>Only if your Last Name is L-Z</b>	○ <u>Due</u> : Discussion Board #1 Replies ○ <u>Due</u> : Completed Service Learning Packet ○ Assign Discussion Board #2
WEEK 6	Gender Inequality	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 4	○ <u>Due</u> : Discussion Board #2 Main Post
WEEK 7	Sexuality	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 7 <u>Optional</u> : Sexual Orientation? A Surprising Answer	○ <u>Due</u> : Discussion Board #2 Replies
WEEK 8	Aging Review	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 5	○ <u>Midterm</u> :
WEEK 9	Aging Health	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 9	
WEEK 10	Health	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 9 <u>Online</u> : Sick in America	○ <u>Due</u> : Service Learning Project Time Sheet & Organization
WEEK 11	Crime & Violence	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 6	
WEEK 12	Crime & Violence Drug Use		○ <u>Due</u> : Service Learning Project Paper in class peer review
WEEK 13	Drug Use	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 8 <u>Optional</u> : Drugs, South Park, & Alcohol	
WEEK 14	Population Growth Global Stratification	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 15 & 14	○ <u>Due</u> : Service Learning Project Assign S
WEEK 15	Global Stratification Environment	<u>Macionis</u> : Ch. 16	
WEEK 16	Environment Review	<u>Optional</u> : Freegans?	○ <u>Due</u> : Extra Credit Clips
WEEK 17			○ <u>Final Exam</u> :

\*Note: the syllabus is accurate to the best of my ability. I do reserve the right to modify this syllabus at anytime.