

Basic Course Information

Semester:	Spring 2015	Instructor Name:	Dahna Rasmussen, MA
Course Title & #:	Contemporary Social Problems SOC 102	Email:	dahna.rasmussen@imperial.edu
CRN #:	20816	Units:	3
Classroom:	201	Office #:	807F
Class Dates:	02/17/05-06/12/15	Office Hours:	MW 3-3:30PM, TTh 9AM-11AM
Class Days:	W	Office Phone #:	760-355-6283
Class Times:	6:30 PM- 9:40 PM	Emergency Contact:	Elvia M. Camillo 760-355-6144

Course Description

This course examines contemporary social problems and the process by which competing groups make claims to define phenomena as social problems. Emphasis includes understanding these problems on the societal level, the group level, and from the standpoint of the individual. (C-ID SOCI 115)(CSU, UC)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Define and apply the basic concepts of sociology including culture, status, roles, norms, institutions, social class, race, gender. (ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO5)
2. Distinguish different major sociological theoretical perspectives that explain social behavior. (ILO2, ILO4, ILO5)
3. Read, summarize and evaluate peer-reviewed empirical studies. (ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4)
4. Demonstrate the ability to make oral presentations that are organized, rely on evidence and engage the audience. (ILO1, ILO2, ILO4)

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Define a social problem and be familiar with the key components of the definition.
2. Identify health care as a social problem and explain what constitutes adequate health care in society.
3. Analyze the extent of mental illness in America and the nature of mental illness as a social problem.
4. Analyze alcohol use and abuse in the United States, as well as other patterns of drug use.
5. Recognize the types of crime and criminals in addition to the conditions and causes of crime.
6. Describe the extent of poverty in American society and identify the relationship.
7. Identify the origins of prejudice and discrimination and the consequences of each.
8. Describe the significance of world population growth and immigration that stress the environment.
9. Describe the changing family structure in America and the effects on society.

10. Analyze the success and failures of the American educational system and compare it to other countries.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Required Text: Kornblum, William and Joesph Julian. (2012). Social Problems (14th edition). Person Education, Inc. ISBN 978-0-205-83232-3

Additional readings may be required and will be provided on Blackboard.

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

Course Requirements: You are expected to demonstrate your understanding of sociological material you will learn in this course through the following course requirements:

- ☐ **Three (3) Exams (each 100 points):** Each exam will consist of a combination of the following types of questions: multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, true/false, and/or short answer. Exam questions will be based on assigned reading, lectures, and/or videos. There are no makeup exams, unless there are *serious, extenuating* circumstances that prevent you from taking the exam. If there is a conflict with a scheduled exam time, **you must notify me in advance.**
- ☐ **Online Class Discussions (25 points each):** The discussion topics will relate to the upcoming lecture material. This is done to encourage a serious read of the material scheduled for the week. Students are required to post an original response to the topic **AND** respond to the post of two classmates. Discussion topics will open Mondays at 12AM and will close the following Sunday at 11:59PM. The first discussion, which will count for extra credit, will be open longer to allow students an opportunity to get use to the system and the expectations. There is a 400 word minimum for the original post and it is expected students will thoroughly answer each question being sure to properly utilize sociological concepts and theories, as appropriate.
- ☐ **Response Paper (50 points):** Completion of this paper assignment will be based on the assigned readings. The paper will be due at the beginning of class on the date indicated on the course schedule. Assignment instructions will be available on Blackboard. Late papers will be accepted with a **10% point deduction per day** after the assigned due date.
- **Extra Credit (maximum of 5 points each):** additional in class exercises (limited to 3 per semester) **may** be provided.

Instructional Methods: Lecture, Discussion, Audio Visual, Group Activity. It is expected that students will engage in (2) hours of independent work for each hour of lecture or class work.

Out of Class Assignments: The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. WASC has adopted a similar requirement.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Semester Grade: Your semester grade will be calculated by total points earned from exams and course assignments. Keep track of the points you earn in the course to avoid any discrepancies when I calculate your final grade. The grading scale for both individual exams and your final course grade is based on a 90-80-70-60 scale (see below). Do not ask me to create individual “extra assignments” at the end of the semester so that you raise your grade.

Exams (3 @ 100 points each)	300 points
Online Discussions	250 points
Response Paper	50 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	600 points

Scale for semester total points:

A (100-90%)	=600-540
B (89-80%)	=539-480
C (79-70%)	=479-420
D (69-60%)	=419-360
F (59% & below)	=359 and below

Exam Grading Scale:

A (100-90%)	=100-90
B (89-80%)	=89-80
C (79-70%)	=79-70
D (69-60%)	=69-60
F (59% & below)	= 59 and below

Attendance

- A student who fails to attend the first meeting of a class or does not complete the first mandatory activity of an online class will be dropped by the instructor as of the first official meeting of that class. Should readmission be desired, the student’s status will be the same as that of any other student who desires to add a class. It is the student’s responsibility to drop or officially withdraw from the class. See [General Catalog](#) for details.
- Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students. A student whose continuous, unexcused absences exceed the number of hours the class is scheduled to meet per week may be dropped. For online courses, students who fail to complete required activities for two consecutive weeks may be considered to have excessive absences and may be dropped.
- Absences attributed to the representation of the college at officially approved events (conferences, contests, and field trips) will be counted as ‘excused’ absences.

Classroom Etiquette

- **Classroom Demeanor:** Please arrive to class on time. If you arrive to class late, then find your seat as quietly as possible so as not to disturb others. Conversely, if you must leave class early, you must let me know in advance. (Please leave as quietly as possible; sit near the door.) Here are some key points

to remember:

☒ Class ends at 9:40 PM (or when I have announced that class is over); do not begin packing your belongings five minutes before class ends.

☒ Turn off your cell phones. (I will answer your phone if it rings!) Having your phone ring during class is distracting not only for other students but also for me. If you need to keep your phone on for personal reasons (childcare, “on call” for work), then please see me.

☒ If you feel that you must read/do other schoolwork, read the newspaper, have a detailed conversation with a classmate, text, Tweet, take a nap, play on the Internet, or listen to your I-Pod, don't come to class.

☒ Disruptive Students: Students who disrupt or interfere with a class may be sent out of the room and told to meet with the Campus Disciplinary Officer before returning to continue with coursework. Disciplinary procedures will be followed as outlined in the General Catalog.

☒ You may use a laptop to take notes during class, but if your use of it becomes disruptive in class, then you will be asked not to use your computer.

If you abuse the aforementioned non-class related activities, then you will be asked to leave the class for the day. (If this happens, you are responsible for getting notes and other related information that occurred in your absence.)

- **Class Discussion:** I expect and encourage students to participate in class through verbal and written contributions. I will not accept racist, sexist, homophobic, and other kinds of derogatory language directed at others students or me while we have in-class discussion. While you may disagree with someone else's point of view, there can still be great classroom conversation without having to be disrespectful to others. Furthermore, please make meaningful, relevant comments to the lecture topic.
- **Food and Drink** are prohibited in all classrooms. Water bottles with lids/caps are the only exception. Additional restrictions will apply in labs. Please comply as directed.
- **Children in the classroom:** Due to college rules and state laws, no one who is not enrolled in the class may attend, including children.

Online Netiquette

- What is netiquette? Netiquette is internet manners, online etiquette, and digital etiquette all rolled into one word. Basically, netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online.
- Students are to comply with the following rules of netiquette: (1) identify yourself, (2) include a subject line, (3) avoid sarcasm, (4) respect others' opinions and privacy, (5) acknowledge and return messages promptly, (6) copy with caution, (7) do not spam or junk mail, (8) be concise, (9) use appropriate language, (10) use appropriate emoticons (emotional icons) to help convey meaning, and (11) use appropriate intensifiers to help convey meaning [do not use ALL CAPS or multiple exclamation marks (!!!!)].

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty in the advancement of knowledge requires that all students and instructors respect the integrity of one another's work and recognize the important of acknowledging and safeguarding intellectual property.

There are many different forms of academic dishonesty. The following kinds of honesty violations and their definitions are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to serve as examples of unacceptable academic conduct.

- **Plagiarism** is taking and presenting as one's own the writings or ideas of others, without citing the source. You should understand the concept of plagiarism and keep it in mind when taking exams and preparing written materials. If you do not understand how to "cite a source" correctly, you must ask for help.
- **Cheating** is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment, and the instructor may report the incident to the Campus Disciplinary Officer, who may place related documentation in a file. Repeated acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action. Please refer to the [General Catalog](#) for more information on academic dishonesty or other misconduct. Acts of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) plagiarism; (b) copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment; (c) communicating test information with another person during an examination; (d) allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment; (e) using a commercial term paper service.

Additional Student Services

Imperial Valley College offers various services in support of student success. The following are some of the services available for students. Please speak to your instructor about additional services which may be available.

- **Blackboard Support Site.** The Blackboard Support Site provides a variety of support channels available to students 24 hours per day.
- **Learning Services.** There are several learning labs on campus to assist students through the use of computers and tutors. Please consult your [Campus Map](#) for the [Math Lab](#); [Reading, Writing & Language Labs](#); and the [Study Skills Center](#).
- **Library Services.** There is more to our library than just books. You have access to tutors in the [Study Skills Center](#), study rooms for small groups, and online access to a wealth of resources.

Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)

Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor or the [Disabled Student Programs and Services](#) (DSP&S) office as soon as possible. The DSP&S office is located in Building 2100, telephone 760-355-6313. Please contact them if you feel you need to be evaluated for educational accommodations.

Student Counseling and Health Services

Students have counseling and health services available, provided by the pre-paid Student Health Fee.

- **Student Health Center.** A Student Health Nurse is available on campus. In addition, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District and El Centro Regional Center provide basic health services for

students, such as first aid and care for minor illnesses. Contact the IVC [Student Health Center](#) at 760-355-6310 in Room 2109 for more information.

- **Mental Health Counseling Services.** Short-term individual, couples, family, and group therapy are provided to currently enrolled students. Contact the IVC [Mental Health Counseling Services](#) at 760-355-6196 in Room 2109 for more information.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to experience a positive learning environment and to due process of law. For more information regarding student rights and responsibilities, please refer to the IVC [General Catalog](#).

- **Personal Responsibility:** Please read the assigned material by the date indicated—lectures and in-class discussions are based on the idea that you have some general understanding of assigned reading for that day’s class meeting. You are responsible for **all** assigned reading, even if it is not discussed in lecture. Furthermore, at times, I may introduce material **not found in the text**. Regardless, if you miss a lecture, then it is your responsibility to get lecture notes from another student in the class. I do not post lecture notes on Blackboard. Other personal responsibilities:
 - ☐ Read the syllabus—**thoroughly**. Please don’t ask about information that can be easily found in the syllabus.
 - ☐ Keep track of your grade. Calculate your own grade. I will not do that for you during the course of the semester.
 - ☐ If you miss a class, don’t ask “Did I miss anything important?”
 - ☐ If you have trouble understanding material, then ask me. **Get help sooner than later.**
 - ☐ If you are doing poorly in the course, do not wait until the end of the semester and ask how I can help you raise your grade. Relatedly, do not ask if I will create an extra assignment for you to raise your grade.
- **E-mail & Phone Correspondence:** Please use Blackboard to send messages to me. ***If you send course-related messages to my IVC e-mail address, I will not respond to your message—unless it relates to trouble accessing Blackboard.*** Also, when sending an e-mail, please do not address me with “hey” or some other informal nickname, or write your e-mail in IM/chat room/text format—I will not respond to your message. When you call and leave a message, please be sure to **clearly** leave your name and phone number so that I can get back to you. Typically, I will reply to your e-mail or phone message within 48 hours.

Information Literacy

Imperial Valley College is dedicated to helping students skillfully discover, evaluate, and use information from all sources. The IVC [Library Department](#) provides numerous [Information Literacy Tutorials](#) to assist students in this endeavor.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Reading and Preparation: Please come to class prepared. Reading and lecture will run concurrently. Assigned readings should be completed **before** the class for which they are listed in the course schedule, and will be the topic of lecture for that day. Please keep in mind the following as we begin this process and engage the material:

Education: the act or process of acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life.

Acquire: verb (used with object), acquired, acquiring to gain for oneself through one's actions or efforts: to acquire education

WEEK ONE

Monday 02/16/15 WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY-CAMPUS CLOSED

February 18, 2015

Chapter 1-Sociological Perspectives on Social Problems

Mills, C. Wright. *The Promise*

WEEK TWO

February 25, 2015

Chapter 2- Problems of Health and Healthcare

Chapter 3-Problems of Mental Illness and Treatment

February 28, 2015: Last day to register for full-term courses

WEEK THREE

Introductory Discussion closes Sunday, March 1st @ 11:59PM

March 4, 2015

Chapter 4- Alcohol and Other Drugs

Chapter 5- Crime and Violence

Durkheim, Emile. *The Normality of Crime*

March 1, 2015: Last Day to Withdraw from Classes without a "W" being recorded.

WEEK FOUR

Discussion #1 closes Sunday, March 8th @ 11:59PM

March 11, 2015

Exam 1 (covers Chapters 1-5)

WEEK FIVE

Discussion #2 closes Sunday, March 15th @ 11:59PM

March 18, 2015

Chapter 6- Poverty and Affluence

Video: *Park Avenue: Money, Power, and the American Dream- Why Poverty?*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6niWzomA_So

WEEK SIX

Discussion #3 closes Sunday, March 22nd @ 11:59PM

March 25, 2015

Chapter 7- Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination

Bonilla-Silva, E. *Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation*

WEEK SEVEN

Discussion #4 closes Sunday, March 29th @ 11:59PM
April 1, 2015
Chapter 8- Gender and Sexuality

Discussion #5 closes Sunday, April 5th @ 11:59PM
SPRING RECESS APRIL 6-11, 2015

WEEK EIGHT

April 15, 2015
Chapter 9- An Aging Society

WEEK NINE

Discussion #6 closes Sunday, April 19th @ 11:59PM
April 22, 2015
Chapter 10- The Changing Family

WEEK TEN

Discussion #7 closes Sunday, April 26th @ 11:59PM
April 29, 2015
Exam #2 (covers Chapters 6-10)

WEEK ELEVEN

Discussion #8 closes Sunday, May 3rd @ 11:59PM
May 6, 2015
Chapter 11- Problems of Education

WEEK TWELVE

Discussion #9 closes Sunday, May 10th @ 11:59PM
May 13, 2015
Chapter 12- Problems of Work and the Economy
Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*

May 16, 2015: Last day to drop full-term courses

WEEK THIRTEEN

Discussion #10 closes Sunday, May 17th @ 11:59PM
May 20, 2015
Chapter 13- Population and Immigration

WEEK FOURTEEN

Monday 05/25/15 MEMORIAL DAY, CAMPUS CLOSED
Discussion #11 closes Sunday, May 24th @ 11:59PM
May 27, 2015
Chapter 14- Technology and the Environment

WEEK FIFTEEN

Discussion #12 closes Sunday, May 31st @ 11:59PM

June 3, 2015

Chapter 15- War and Global Insecurity

WEEK SIXTEEN

June 10, 2015

Exam #3 (covers Chapters 11-15)

Have a great break!!!!