

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

SOC 2310-501

Syllabus

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Instructor: Barb Thompson

Course Section: 501

Office: Valencia Campus

CRN: 45923

VASCC #12

Term: Fall 2019

Office hours: 9:30a-10:30a MW

Credit hours: 3

and by appointment

Telephone:

Meeting time/room: MW 12n-1:15p
VACTC 101 and 113

Email: bthompson58@unm.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course studies the nature, scope, and effects of social problems and their solutions. The course will concentrate on sociological perspectives, theories, and key concepts when investigating problems, such as inequality, poverty, racism, alienation, family life, sexuality, gender, urbanization, work, aging, crime, war and terrorism, environmental degradation, and mass media.

This course is designed to build students' sociological understanding of how sociological approaches attempt to clarify various issues confronting contemporary life, as well as how sociologists view solutions to these problems.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and explain major social problems in the United States, and how social problems become constructed as problems.
2. Describe and analyze policy related solutions associated with social problems from various perspectives.
3. Critically examine social problems through the use of sociological theories, methods, and empirical techniques.
4. Identify connections, both national and global, between social problems and social inequalities (e.g., social class, race/ethnicity, and gender/sexuality).

TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS:

- The default text is Social Problems: Continuity and Change, by Steven E. Barkan, version 1.0. (ISBN: 9781453347195). You can also purchase a paperback copy at the UNM bookstore or through Amazon, where you can also purchase an electronic copy. Please select whichever option works best for you. Having access to the textbook is necessary for successful completion of the course.
- You will also need access to UNM email,
- UNMLearn (<http://learn.unm.edu>) for supplemental materials,
- a notebook the style of your choice for taking notes
- about 3-6 hours outside of class per week for reflection, reading, and readiness.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ATTENDANCE:

Students enrolled for credit, credit/no credit, or audit are expected to attend all class sessions. Attendance will be taken each class meeting. A student with excessive absences—15% of total class hours (4 classes)—may be dropped from the class. Students should not assume they will be dropped from the class automatically.

Assignments to be turned in must be **presented professionally: typed, double spaced in 12 font of Arial or Times Roman**. While this is not an English class, your work should reflect your grasp of written communication skills and be prepared in a professional manner. Too many grammatical errors will detract from your work. If you know you have difficulty with writing skills, please make use of the Writing Lab. If I notice you have difficulty, I will suggest you contact them. Please do not be offended: I am only trying to help you be successful.

Absences do not relieve students of the responsibility for missed assignments and exams. Students must take the initiative in arranging with their instructor to make up missed work. All assignments are due by 11:59p on the due date. If you are going to miss class, please email me PRIOR to the class meeting, attaching any assignment due that meeting, to ensure your assignment is considered for full credit. Any assignment turned in after the due date will not receive full credit.

Please do not wait until the last days of the term to ask how to improve your grade. I will be happy to help you do your best in the class, but not at the last minute.

Students are expected to follow the following UNM guidelines:

- Academic Integrity Policy: Having academic integrity is paramount to your success in any class. This course has a zero tolerance for academic dishonesty. This includes “dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done by you or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students...” and **plagiarism**-an academic theft committed when you copy an idea or any text than of more than six words from any source, including the internet, your friends, etc., without citing the source. **To avoid plagiarism**, you must enclose whatever you copy in quotations and cite the source. Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be subject to the investigative and disciplinary process of UNM. This, and further information, is available at: <http://handbook.unm.edu/policies/section-d/d100.html>.
- Student Code of Conduct: available at <http://pathfinder.unm.edu/campus-policies/student-code-of-conduct.html>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) <http://www.cnm.edu/student-resources/academicrecords/academic-records-list/FERPA>

Grading will generally conform to the following:

A+=100-99%	B+=89-87%	C+=79-77%	D+=69=67%
A=98-94%	B=86-84%	C=76-74%	D=66-64%
A-=93-90%	B-=83-80%	C-=73-70%	D-=63-60%

Any grade below 60 will be assigned an F. According to UNM policy, (http://degrees.unm.edu/undergrad_programs/1312/degree_plans?disp_first=4+Year+Plan), the passing grade for all sociology courses is a “C”. Students must complete all course requirements to earn credit for the course. Those who fail to complete the requirements will be assigned an “F”. Only letter grades will be posted on your transcript.

Students will earn points toward the grade of their choice in the following manner:

1. **Exams (200 points total, or 22% of your grade):** There will be two (2) exams and an optional final exam. These tests allow you to demonstrate your attention to course lectures, readings, and classroom exercises. Exams will include traditional objective questions (T/F, fill in the blank, multiple guess, etc.) and will always include subjective (essay) responses. **Each exam will be worth 100 points.** If you have an A average at Week 17, you may choose not to take the final exam. If you are missing an assignment or have less than an A average, the final exam will replace your one lowest score or missing assignment. This does not add an additional 100 points to your grade, but replaces the lowest previous score. Your performance on the final will not lower your average. **There are no other make up exams.**

2. **Application Points (daily quizzes and 3“Doing Sociology”--brief out-of-class assignments)(400 points total, or 56% of your grade) :**

Sociology works best when students are actually participating in it on a regular basis. So, this course features ongoing opportunities for you to apply what you are learning/have learned, through daily quizzes, short assignments, and so on. This helps me track your participation and attendance. There is no opportunity to make up quizzes and in-class activities.

ONCE AGAIN: All assignments are due by 11:59p on the day it is due to be considered for full credit. In the event you must miss class on the day an assignment is due, you must (a) email me that you will be absent and (b) attach the assignment to that email. Any assignment received after the due date will not be considered for full credit.

3. **Semester Project (200 points, total, or 22% of your grade):** As noted previously, sociology is as much about doing as it about reading and learning about what has been done by others. In light of that, you will have the opportunity to participate in a semester project of your own design. It will include a written component and an oral presentation to share with your colleagues. The semester project will therefore count **200 points**. Specific information will be presented in Week 5.

4. There are 800 possible points for assignments this semester. Once you earn them, you cannot lose them. Once you have earned 720 points or more, you have locked in your A.

In the event UNM closes during the final week, final grades will be based on all work assessed up to that point.

Special Needs: In accordance with University Policy 2310 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), any student who, because of a disability, may require certain special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. If you are a student with documented physical or learning disability, please notify me during the first week of class. If you have special needs and require accommodations in the classroom or other academic setting, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of Equal Access Services at 505-925-8560 (<http://valencia.unm.edu/about/accessibility.html>).

Veterans and active military personnel with special circumstances (e.g. upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these in advance, if possible, to the instructor. For additional assistance, please contact Frances Duran (Campus Branch Registrar) at 505-925-8585 or fduran@unm.edu.

Accommodations for Spiritual Tradition and/or Faith-Based Observances: Please notify me of your obligations to spiritual tradition or faith affiliation. Reasonable accommodation for such observances, upon advanced request, will be considered.

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination: In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM faculty, teaching assistants, and graduate assistants are considered “responsible employees” by the Dep. of Education, (see p. 15 <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>). This designation requires that any report of gender discrimination which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity (oeo.unm.edu). For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, see: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html>.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

Preparation: Time is most precious commodity we have. You have chosen to spend this class time improving yourself. This is most easily accomplished by coming prepared to class. Read the assignments, bring your materials and prepare to share your ideas. I will communicate with you in person or via UNM email **ONLY**, so please check your UNM email regularly.

Limiting distractions: This involves reducing conversations with others, attending to tasks not related to class, and turning your phone off during class time. Please do not bring your children or other guests to class. Please do not use electronic devices in class.

Respect: This class is a lab for learning about society. We will cover topics which are very personal to some of you, sensitive to many of us, and may be uncomfortable because they make you think in challenging ways. Respectful disagreement is expected, but there is **NO** tolerance for **INTOLERANCE**. Feel free to share your opinions, but respect the rights of others to share theirs, too. This instructor reserves the right to limit or end class discussion on any topic at any time. Your university experience is a place to grow personally and professionally. You will be exposed to ideas that are different from those you might hold. Allow yourself the opportunity to explore and question these differences, to decide which one(s) fit you best.

My classroom is identified as a Safe Place for all.

Weeks/Dates/Topic	Readings	Major Assignments Due
Week 1 (8-19-19) Class introduction What is a social problem?	Chapter 1	
Week 2 (8-26-19) Social.Research/Methods Journal articles	Chapter 1	Doing Sociology #1 assigned (W)
Week 3 (9-2-19) Poverty	NO CLASS MONDAY Chapter 2	Doing Sociology #1 due (W)
Week 4 (9-9-19) Race & Ethnic Inequality	Chapter 3	
Week 5 (9-16-19) Prejudice/Discrimination		Test on W
Week 6 (9-23-19) Gender Inequality	Chapter 4	Semester Project explained (M)
Week 7 (9-30-19) Sexual Orientation & Behavior	Chapter 5, 9	Doing Sociology #2 assigned (M)
Week 8 (10-7-19) The Changing Family	Chapter 10	Doing Sociology #2 due (M)
Week 9 (10-14-19)		
Week 10 (10-21-19) Aging	Chapter 6	Test on W
Week 11 (10-27-19) Health and Healthcare	Chapter 13	
Week 12 (11-4-19) Drugs and Alcohol	Chapter 7	Doing Sociology #3 assigned (W)
Week 13 (11-11-19) Urban vs. Rural	Chapter 14	Doing Sociology #3 due (W)
Week 14 (11-18-19) The Environment	Chapter 15	
Week 15 (11-25-19) War & Terrorism	Chapter 16	Semester Project due (M) Semester Project presented (W)
Week 16 (12-2-19) The Economy	Chapter 12	Semester Project presented (M) Final exam review (W)
Week 17 (12-9-19) Final Exam		Final exam

The syllabus is a guideline for this class. Changes may be made as needed, but you will be provided with sufficient notification for any graded activity.

I have received a copy of the Fall 2019 Sociology 2310 syllabus. I will keep it all semester and refer to it as needed. I will contact my instructor if I have questions about class or assignments.

Signature

Printed name

Valid UNM email address