

SOC 0002 - SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Catalog Description

Advisory: Completion of SOC 1 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: A sociological approach to the study of major social problems, addressing areas such as social stratification and social institutions. Utilizes a critical approach and emphasizes the social construction of social problems. (C-ID SOCI 115) (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Apply sociological theory, research and critical analysis to the construction of social problems.
- CSLO #2: Evaluate and analyze proposed solutions, social movements, and actions to social problems.
- CSLO #3: Apply practice of social justice to the study of social problems.

Effective Term

Fall 2024

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

The student will be able to, through oral and written work:

1. evaluate connections between public issues and private troubles;
2. examine and evaluate social problems from the perspective of the key sociological theories;
3. evaluate research in the field of social problems;
4. analyze and evaluate causes to social problems;
5. discuss and analyze social problems within social institutions and conditions including but not limited to, family structures, work & unemployment, corporate & government institutions, gender identity, wealth and poverty, race and ethnicity, and the distribution of life chances;
6. evaluate and critique the role of claimsmaking and claimmakers in the definition of social problems;
7. evaluate proposed solutions to current social problems;
8. critique and debate issues of social justice and the effectiveness of social movements; and
9. generate a proposal to effectively address a social problem of concern.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Behavioral Sciences
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - D7 Interdisciplinary Soc/Behav
 - CSUGE-D0 Sociology/Criminology
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 4J Sociology/Criminology

Articulation Information

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Instructor will show film "Voices of Dissent: Activism in American Democracy" and then facilitate group discussion about participatory democracy and the role of activism in creating social change. Students will engage in small group discussion
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Student work will regularly be evaluated. Types of evaluative assignments include writing, presentations, discussion participation, quizzes, exams, etc. Example: 1. In an essay exam, respond to the following question: Douglas Rushkoff, of The Persuaders, asks, "What does it mean when we begin to merge our once separate roles as consumers and citizens?" How would you answer Rushkoff's question? Given that the U.S. economy is based on consumer spending, is it patriotic to shop? Include in your response a discussion about the impact of advertising, labor, and globalization.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: Student work will regularly be evaluated. Types of evaluative assignments include writing, presentations, discussion participation, quizzes, exams, etc. Example: Fill-In the Blank Quiz/ Exam question: An example of a social problems worker is...
- Projects
 - Example: Working in small groups, students will create an activist zine. In addition to the zine, students will share with the class (via paper, discussion board, or presentation) an analysis on how zines have historically as well as today, been used as alternative media approaches to social change.
- Reports
 - Example: Students will choose a social problem to research and explain through the stages of the social construction of social problems (the framework to course work throughout the semester). This report/project will be built out in stages throughout the semester, building upon concepts introduced and discussed in class. Project included with report will be evidence of action to impact social issue (i.e. community service, campus event planning, policy involvement, volunteerism)

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will show film "Voices of Dissent: Activism in American Democracy" and then facilitate group discussion about participatory democracy and the role of activism in creating social change.

Distance Learning

1. Faculty member will include the Emma Lazarus poem that appears on the Statue of Liberty in a lecture. Then via discussion prompts (discussion boards, VoiceThread, etc) instructor will facilitate a discussion among students comparing current attitudes about immigration. Instructor will facilitate a class discussion about the pro's and con's of arguments made regarding U.S. immigration policies.

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Read the chapter in your text about mal-distribution of wealth. Find a journal article related to the topic. Bring the article to class, along with your analysis, and be prepared to discuss in small groups.
2. Read a scholarly journal article regarding a social problem of your choice. Come to class prepared to discuss the article through the lens of the Constructionist model.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

Students will regularly be assigned college level writing. Example One: Background: This assignment focuses on chapter 9 and asks you to think critically about social policy. By looking at specific social policies and thinking about how to assess them, you gain a better understanding of the ways that social policies and even evaluations of them are socially constructed. Assignment: Find at least two social policies that have either been enacted or proposed for dealing with your topic/condition. Assume that you have been asked to provide an assessment of the effectiveness or likely effectiveness of the social policies. Make a list of at least four questions that you would need to have answered about each of the two social policies in order to say whether they were effective. Then provide a discussion of how you would go about answering these questions. Be sure to address issues of objectivity, ethics, and funding as you discuss the methods you would use. Example Two: Background: This assignment will focus on Chapter 2 of your reading. The emphasis here is to analyze the rhetoric associated with the condition you have chosen (in assignment #1). You are required to apply terminology of the discipline by discussing examples, names and statistics and how they are used more and less effectively. Assignment: First, identify at least two different claims regarding the condition you have chosen. For each claim identify its grounds, warrants, and conclusions. Second, analyze how each claim might fare in the social problems marketplace. Do they seem to target different audiences? What might make one more appealing than the other? Third, make at least three suggestions for how one of the claims can be modified to make it more effective. Be sure to add any new sources you use for this assignment to your list of sources.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Instruction to student: Social Problems can be a daunting topic to take on but in this class we will attempt to look critically at the problems that exist in our society while identifying the process of claimsmaking and the various components that impact the social view of problems. We will also explore and critique the solutions and social change movements that address social problems. In doing so, this class will participate in a group project – one that will impact our community campus-wide.

During our class period, we will collaboratively join a campus event (i.e. Social Justice Day, Pride Days, Earth Days, etc) to present projects on a related social problem issue of your choice. The design of the day will be up to you and may include (but are not limited to) the following ideas: working with a local organization that works for social justice – locally and/or globally; researching a specific social problem and hosting an informational table sharing information and resources during the campus event; seeking-out and organizing a speaker for the event; conducting an educational workshop during the event; or working on the nuts and bolts of hosting the campus event. You may work individually or in groups. You are also welcome and encouraged to present additional ideas. In addition to your participation with the campus event, you are required to submit an analysis of your research and your action experience. This can be done in the form of a paper, digital story, or presentation. This should include background on the issue and details about your efforts. Background should be researched via the organization with which you are volunteering (if applicable) and academic sources (i.e. library research). Specific criteria for the various forms (paper, digital story, presentation) will be shared in class and on Canvas. Work should be cited and final should include your annotated bibliography of resources (i.e. the full list of sources, broken into appropriate categories, that you have been building throughout the semester). As you are preparing your final, take into consideration the writing assignments for chapters 1-10 – these assignments give you the foundation for your final and the assessment of your condition/issue. Because you are now an expert on the social condition you have been researching all semester, your final should show evidence of your understanding of the social problems process and its application to your social condition. Consider the following questions (you are not limited to these questions): 1. Should we be concerned about this condition? If so, how concerned? 2. What claims have been made about this condition? How are they influenced? How do these claims impact public opinion? Who are the claimsmakers? 3. What should we tell the public about the condition? Why? 4. What role has the media played in defining and impacting your social condition? 5. Does the condition require legislative action? Social action? Why or why not? 6. How did your presentation for the campus event address the social condition? Drawing on everything you have learned about the social problems process, be sure to provide a well-reasoned critical analysis of your social condition.

Required Materials

- Social Problems
 - Author: Joel Best
 - Publisher: WW Norton
 - Publication Date: 2020
 - Text Edition: 4
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Soul of the Citizen
 - Author: Paul Loeb
 - Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin
 - Publication Date: 2010
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Investigating Social Problems

- Author: A. Javier Trevino
- Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc
- Publication Date: 2022
- Text Edition: 3
- Classic Textbook?:
- OER Link:
- OER:
- Social Problems: Continuity and Change
 - Author:
 - Publisher: Saylor Foundation
 - Publication Date: 2016
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/141>

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.