

Syllabus for Sociology 103 – Social Problems

Course: SOC*K103 Social Problems
Course Schedule: TR 2:00PM – 3:15PM
Location: D104
Instructor: Chloe Duhaime Marrero
Email: CMarrero@qvcc.commnet.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course examines contemporary social problems through sociological perspectives. Throughout the semester we will gain an understanding of how major systems of power such as racism, sexism, and classism, among others, are interrelated and result in numerous social problems. We will explore ways in which these social problems are part of the way society is organized and ways we can address them. This course will explore how some of the most pressing social problems – such as crime, violence, addiction, racism, class inequality, and sexism – in the U.S. are created by unequal social structures and deeply embedded, taken-for-granted cultural beliefs.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Explain social, organizational, political, economic, historical, or cultural elements that influence and are influenced by individuals and groups.
- Summarize different theories and research methods used to investigate social phenomena.
- Explain ethical issues pertaining to social contexts and phenomena.
- Explain issues of diversity within and across cultures.
- Apply concepts or theories of social phenomena to real world situations.

Course Readings

Assigned weekly readings should be done by the beginning of each class. Reading assignments are subject to change and changes will be announced during class. Supplemental material may also be handed out. It is important to complete assigned readings as we will spend much of class discussing their content.

The required book for the class is:

Carl, John, 2012. *Think Social Problems 2013*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Participation & Attendance

Attendance and participation is imperative in this course. Attendance will be taken during each class. Missing class will affect your final grade. If you know you will have to miss a class please talk to me about it at least a week beforehand. I take attendance seriously because you are an important part of this class. Your thoughts, perspective and questions are fully appreciated and are required for the sake of learning through each other. Participation will be determined by:

- Attendance
- Participation in discussions
- Participation in group exercises

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Your course grade will be based on attendance/participation, a reading journal, a research presentation, and two exams. Grades will be calculated out of a total of 200 possible points distributed below:

Assignment	Points
Attendance/Participation	30 (15%)
Reading Journal	40 (20%)
Presentation	50 (25%)
Midterm exam	40 (20%)
Final exam	40 (20%)
Total Points	200

There will be two examinations (one midterm and one final) in this course. These exams will contain multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions, and they may cover both reading materials and what we cover in class. No make-up exams will be given except in the case of an extreme circumstance, and arrangements must be made with me prior to the regularly scheduled exam unless this is absolutely impossible. An unexcused absence for an examination will cause a “0” to be recorded for that exam grade.

The research presentation will involve a 15 minute presentation including a visual entity (handout, PowerPoint, etc.) and a 500-750 word double-spaced summary paper with a minimum of 5 references. You will choose a subject matter discussed in the textbook and you are expected to become a subject matter expert on your topic. Upon completion of your presentation I require a paper copy of both your summary and visual aid.

The reading journal will be submitted at the end of the semester. You will be expected to summarize and respond to each assigned reading with a critical analysis. It would be easiest for you to write this as you go throughout the semester.

All assignments and exams involve written work. You will be graded not only on your understanding and application of the material but also on the quality of your writing including spelling, grammar and proper use of American Sociological Association (ASA) formatting. If you would like help developing your writing skills, you can visit The Writing Center in room C117. I am available to review and discuss assignments so long as it is several days prior to due dates.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date assigned. Late assignments will lose one letter grade for each day it is late. So if your paper is graded 40/50 points, and you are late one day, the grade will go down to 35/50. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with Matt Liscum in Room A-119 in the Counseling and Advising Office as soon as possible. He can be reached at (860) 383-5240 or MLiscum@trcc.commnet.edu. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

Digication Upload

During the semester you will be expected to upload one of your two writing assignments or your research paper to Digication. We will review this process during class.

Cell Phone Policy

Please be considerate to your classmates. Cell phones and other electronic communication devices are only permitted in the classroom if they are turned off or on silent. They should not be answered or used during class. If there are extenuating circumstances, please let me know prior to class and we will come to an agreement. If you are using your device during class, you may be asked to leave and your attendance grade will be affected.

Course Schedule

The following schedule is a *tentative* list of the topics and required readings for each week. Changes to the schedule will be announced during class.

WEEK 1- August 27 and 29

- Welcome/Introductions
- Course overview
- The study of social problems
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapter 1

WEEK 2- September 3 and 5

- Study of social problems continued...
- Inequality: Poverty and Wealth
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapter 2

WEEK 3- September 10 and 12

- Race and Immigration
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapter 3

WEEK 4- September 17 and 19

- Gender, Sex and Sexuality
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapters 4 and 12

WEEK 5- September 24 and 26

- Aging and Family
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapters 5 and 15

WEEK 6- October 1 and 3

- Economy, Work and Globalization
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapters 7 and 17

WEEKS 7 & 8-October 8, 10, 15 and 17

- Politics, Media, War and Terrorism
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapters 6, 8 and 20
- **NOTE**: **Class canceled on Tuesday, October 8th**
- **NOTE**: **Midterm exam due October 10th**

WEEKS 9 & 10- October 22, 24, 29 and 31

- Urbanization, Population, Environment
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapter 16, 18 and 19

WEEK 11-November 5 and 7

- Problems in Education
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapter 9

WEEKS 12, 13 & 14-November 12, 14, 19, 21, and 26

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Crime and Criminal Justice
- Required Readings: Carl's Think Social Problems chapters 10, 11, 13, and 14
- **NOTE**: **Class canceled on Thursday, November 28 (Thanksgiving Recess)**

WEEKS 15 and 16- December 3, 5, 10, and 12

- Presentations
- Final examination
- **NOTE**: **Reading journals are due December 3rd**
- **NOTE**: **Research presentation write-ups are due the day of your presentation**