

Las Positas College  
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## Course Outline for SOC 6

### SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Effective: Spring 2012

#### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

SOC 6 — SOCIAL PROBLEMS — 3.00 units

This course provides students with an overview of contemporary social problems from a sociological perspective. Particular attention is directed to the institutional and organizational features of societies that generate poverty, racism, sexism, urban and population resource, environmental, criminal justice, and identity politics based problems for people.

3.00 Units Lecture

#### Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

#### Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	54.00

#### II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

#### III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. examine social problems from a sociological perspective;
- B. apply macro, mid-range, and micro-sociological theories to the study of social problems;
- C. apply and assess sociological research methods to the study of social problems;
- D. develop social solutions to social problems examined over the course of the semester.

#### V. CONTENT:

- A. The Sociological Imagination and Social Problems
  - 1. Defining social problems
  - 2. Sociological Theory and Social Problems
  - 3. Sociological research methods and social problems
- B. Inequality
  - 1. Social class in the United States
  - 2. Global Stratification
- C. Race, Class, and Gender
  - 1. Majority/Minority
  - 2. Discrimination
  - 3. Immigration
- D. Populations and Resources
  - 1. A demographic perspective to social problems
  - 2. The health, fertility, and migration translations
  - 3. Aging, Urbanization, and the Family/Household
  - 4. Population and the Environment/Demographic Change
- E. Educational Inequality
  - 1. Inequalities in schooling
  - 2. The hidden curriculum of contemporary education
- F. Sex and Social Problems
  - 1. Sex variance
  - 2. Prostitution and Pornography
- G. Crime
  - 1. Theories of crime causation
  - 2. Social solutions and crime
- H. The Media and Technology
  - 1. From the Printing Press to the Internet—The consequences of technological revolutions
  - 2. The digital divide
  - 3. What is the role of the media in framing social problems?
- I. War and Terrorism
  - 1. Ideological wars
  - 2. Identity Politics and Religious Fundamentalism

### 3. Social solutions to war and terrorism

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. **Discussion** -
- C. Video/web page visitation
- D. Group Exercises
- E. Examinations
- F. Online Learning
- G. **Discussion** -
- H. **Lecture** -

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading assignments
  - 1. Students are required to complete approximately 100 pages of reading per week (ex. Mills Chapters 1-3; Chapter 1 from Carl; and 2 selections from *The Contexts Reader*)
- B. Short Writing Assignment
  - 1. In preparation of a literature review for the course term paper, students will select an empirical work of sociology and compose a succinct sociological book review.
- C. Term Paper
  - 1. Students will compose a 12-15 page term paper using the course materials and theoretical issues discussed in class to examine the creation of a contemporary social problem. Term papers must include six sections: (1) abstract; (2) introduction; (3) literature review; (4) data/analysis; (5) conclusion; and (6) works cited page.
- D. Group projects
  - 1. Social Problems Through the Lens Group Project (multi-modal group project involving curation of a video clip/visual image accompanied by a 350-word sociological caption).
  - 2. Create a WIKI Page examining a contemporary social problem.
- E. BLOG
  - 1. Because the construction and management of social problems are ongoing processes, students should follow current events and are required to share their sociological analysis of a minimum of 8 Posts on the social problems course BLOG.

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

##### A. **Methods**

##### B. **Frequency**

- 1. Frequency of Evaluation
  - a. One Midterm Exam during the 8<sup>th</sup> Week of Instruction
  - b. Short in Class Weekly Reading Assessment Quizzes (Pop Quizzes)
  - c. One Final Exam TBD by Las Positas College Exam Schedule
  - d. Weekly Short Writing Assignments
  - e. One book or journal article review to be completed during the third week of instruction
  - f. Students will post eight times on the course BLOG (biweekly)
  - g. Course Term Paper is due in stages during weeks IV; X; XVI

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. John, Carl. *THINK Social Problems.*, Prentice Hall, 2011.
- 2. Goodwin, Jeff, and James Jasper. *The Contexts Reader.*, W. W. Norton & Company, 2007.
- 3. Mills, Wright. *The Sociological Imagination.*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: