



Basic Course Information

Semester:	Spring 2024	Instructor Name:	Laura Semmes
Course Title & #:	Soc. 102	Email:	Laura.semmes@imperial.edu
CRN #:	20509	Units:	3
Classroom:	412	Office #:	Online/Zoom
Class Dates:	2/13/2024-6/9/2024	Office Hours:	Wed: 10:00 am-12:00 pm
Class Days:	Tuesday/Thursday	Class Format:	In-person
Class Times:	11:20 am-12:45 pm	Emergency Contact:	Laura.semmes@imperial.edu

Course Description

"Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both"
– C. Wright Mills

This course is designed to introduce you the main sociological theories and perspectives regarding various social problems facing the world today. This course examines various social problems from both a scientific viewpoint regarding why we have social problems and also from an applied viewpoint regarding how social problems affect humans in society. Topics include physical and mental health, alcohol and drug problems, crime, violence, poverty, racism, prejudice and discrimination, sex roles and inequality, the changing family, education problems, and work and economy problems.

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

No prerequisites/corequisites

Student Learning Outcomes

Each of the following outcomes should be achieved during the time you are in this class. The goal is for you to grow in your communication skills, critical thinking skills, personal responsibility, information literacy and global awareness.

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)

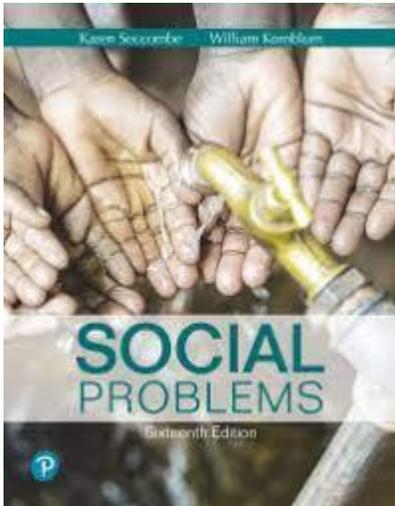
Course Objectives

1. To critically think about and gain knowledge of the main theories and concepts of each of the various social problems that affect the world today
2. To leave this course with a basic understanding of how contemporary social problems affect our daily lives

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Secombe, Karen, Kornblum, William. Social Problems 16th Ed. 2021
ISBN 13: 9780137540617

https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/social-problems/P200000002935/9780137540617?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=dsa_specific_pages&gclid=Cj0KCQiA_bieBhDSARIsADU4zLcLatLr4gSpvrVKb3azcQ3kLPpaleXD3Zs8GDp4KQuEe7im83I5Cy0aAqd3EALw_wcB&gclidsrc=aw.ds



Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

We will meet for class twice weekly in person Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:20 am. If there are any changes to this schedule or to the modality of the class, you will be informed through Canvas. The meeting link is posted below and can be used for office hours. We will also have weekly online assignments which will count as part of your participation grade. These assignments will each refer to some aspect of the chapter they are covering, and are designed to help you apply the concepts to social life in our society and culture.

Exams are multiple choice/true-false and are to be taken in person on specified dates. If you know you are going to be unable to take an exam on its scheduled date, please notify the professor **one week before** to make arrangements or as soon as possible. This must be done before the test day. If you miss the exam day without making arrangements, there will be no make-ups.

The Sociology Project is a project that is completed during the second half of the semester. Details about the project are located on the last page of the syllabus.

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.



Zoom link for Office Hours

Laura Semmes is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: My Meeting

Time: Feb 14, 2024 10:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Every 16 weeks on Wed, until June 5

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: <https://imperial->

[edu.zoom.us/meeting/tZ0kduuvrzwjGtK5sgUmeA0lBDg2mKNKb70T/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhpzooHdW](https://imperial-edu.zoom.us/meeting/tZ0kduuvrzwjGtK5sgUmeA0lBDg2mKNKb70T/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhpzooHdW)
[SuRmBRpx5HYj4a-3zmGZEjbd2yQziNi1WQyz6FMZFYl9UPvPS](https://imperial-edu.zoom.us/j/89912717906)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://imperial-edu.zoom.us/j/89912717906>

Meeting ID: 899 1271 7906

One tap mobile

+16694449171,,89912717906# US

+16699006833,,89912717906# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

- +1 669 444 9171 US
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 719 359 4580 US
- +1 253 205 0468 US
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 360 209 5623 US
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US
- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 689 278 1000 US
- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 899 1271 7906

Find your local number: <https://imperial-edu.zoom.us/u/kdIpUB5q6W>



Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Grading Process

A: 90-100%	4 Exams @ 100 pts.	400 pts.
B: 80-89%	Project:	100 pts.
C: 70-79%	Assignments:	100 pts.
D: 60-69%	Total Points:	600 pts.
F: 59% and lower		

Course Policies

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.

Please make arrangements with the instructor or a fellow student to keep up with all assignments in case you cannot attend a class session for any reason. Please notify me if you cannot attend class for any reason. Lecture notes can be found on Canvas. If you need any assistance with this, please ask me **anytime**. I will also put study guides on Canvas a week before the test is scheduled.

Participation is part of your grade, and you must be in class to participate.

Please check your e-mail and Canvas regularly so you are informed of any changes to the class, for example if the instructor will be unable to make it to class. This will help you stay informed about the status of the class.

Please note that participation means being fully engaged in class discussion. This means you are listening attentively, involving yourself in class activities and discussion, and most importantly, not disrupting your fellow students.

Participation points WILL BE taken away from you each time you disrupt class in any way.

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 importance 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. 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.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Date or Week	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Due Dates/Tests
Week 1 Feb. 13-15	Syllabus & Introduction Chapter 1 Sociological Perspectives on Social Problems	
Week 2 Feb. 20-22	Chapter 2 Problems of Health and Health Care	
Feb. 27-29	Chapter 3 Problems of Mental Illness and Treatment	
Mar. 5-7	Review (Mar. 5) Exam 1 (Mar. 7)	Exam 1 (Ch. 1-3)
Mar. 12-14	Chapter 4 Alcohol and Other Drugs	
Mar. 19-21	Chapter 5 Crime and Violence	



Date or Week	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Due Dates/Tests
Mar. 26	Chapter 6 Poverty Amid Affluence (Mar. 26) No class March 28	Projects due!
Apr. 2-4	Spring Break!!!	
Apr. 9-11	Ch. 6 (Cont.)	Projects due!
Apr. 16-18	Review (Apr. 16) Exam 2 (Apr. 18)	Exam 2 (Ch. 4-6)
Apr. 23-25	Chapter 7 Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination	Projects due!
Apr. 30-May 2	Chapter 8 Sex and Gender	Projects due!
May 7-9	Chapter 10 The Changing Family	Projects due!
May 14-16	Review (May 14) Exam 3 (May 16)	Exam 3 (Ch. 7,8, and 10)
May 21-23	Chapter 11 Problems of Education	Projects due!
May 28-June 30	Chapter 12 Problems of Work and the Economy	Projects due!
June 4	Final	Ch. 11-12

*****Tentative, subject to change without prior notice*****

Other Course Information

SOCIOLOGY PROJECT ON SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Introduction

Understanding social problems in a variety of societies and communities is integral to this course. It is especially important to understand the origin and depth of social problems in our own communities as well. As part of your research project, you should show how various demographic communities are affected by a social problem and describe the problem as it presents itself in society. Focus on problems that exist in the United States.

Prompt

Document a selected social problem and describe how various groups/demographic communities are affected by it. The documentation should be a photographic power-point or slideshow (PowerPoint, Google Slides, etc...) presentation illustrating aspects of your research of the social problem. Where does the problem originate? Who is affected? What are some possible solutions? How is your chosen social problem related to other social problems? **Select which theoretical perspective will help to explain the documented social problem.**

The assignment is worth **100 points**. I will send out an announcement on Canvas asking you to officially choose your project topic. Due dates will be assigned randomly and posted on Canvas. I will send out an announcement with due dates for every student after topics are chosen. Everyone must submit their chosen topic by **Thursday, March 7. Only one student can choose a particular topic.** If you do not choose a topic, one will be assigned to you. Presentations are evaluated on validity of content and organization of information, meeting the slide number requirement, including visual aids (pictures, videos, graphs, etc...), submitting the assignment to the instructor on time, appropriate application of a theory, and accurate citation of sources used.

Required Content

- Introduce and explain the chosen social problem
- Document and describe how social problem affects various **demographic populations**
- Document existence of social problem in **wider society** (at the state, national, or global level)
- The documentation should be a **15 slide** minimum (PowerPoint, Google Slides, etc...) presentation illustrating aspects of your chosen topic.
- Include **visual aids** that help to illustrate your information (pictures, videos, graphs, etc...)
- Select which **theoretical perspective** will help to explain the situation of your chosen topic.
- What are some **possible solutions** that have been put forth by government, organizations, nonprofits, or individuals to solve this social problem?
- Include **Works Cited** page at the end, and cite sources within presentation as you use them

TOPIC EXAMPLES



1. Health (Obesity, chronic disease, allergies, asthma, long Covid symptoms and productivity, etc...)
2. Environmental (water pollution, air pollution, loss of biodiversity, environmental racism, etc...)
3. Poverty (homelessness, lack of affordable housing, unemployment, etc...)
4. Alcohol/drug abuse (DUI, violence, divorce, etc...)
5. Gender (the gender wage gap, discrimination in the workforce, affordability of child care, etc...)
6. Crime (violent crime, white-collar crime, hate crimes, etc...)
7. Immigration (treatment of undocumented immigrants, population growth, family separation, etc...)

Rubric:

Content, Knowledge, Validity of Information and Project Organization: 20 points

Discussion of social problem as it applies to or affects particular demographic communities (age, race/ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic status, etc...) :20 points

Discussion of social problem as it applies to wider society and resources available: 20 points

Meet 15-slide requirement: 10 points

Effectively apply sociological theory: 10 points

Turned in on Time (submit to instructor before or on due date): 10 points

Discussion of possible solutions: 10 points

Below are some project ideas. Choose one of these or choose your own:

Only one person may choose a particular topic

Maternal death rates in the U.S.

Environmental Racism

The costs of diabetes to society and the individual

Population Growth and Environmental Sustainability

Allergies, asthma and air quality

Teens and Stress

Health and water quality

The difficulty of surviving on minimum wage

Environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity

Voter Disenfranchisement

Criminalization of Homelessness

The Hunger Crisis in the U.S.

Lack of affordable housing

The Rise in Wealth Inequality and Income Inequality

Unemployment and underemployment

Employment Discrimination

Alcoholism

Bullying and Cyberbullying at School

Drug abuse (choose a specific drug to focus on)

Cuts to funding in education

Domestic violence	Lack of access to veterans' services
Teen pregnancy	The rising cost of higher education
Violent crime (specify crime)	Climate change
Cyber crime	Plastic pollution
Domestic terrorism	Bankruptcy and Medical Debt
The cost of corporate crime	Dating violence among college students
Lack of access to healthcare	Standardization in education
Lack of access to mental healthcare	Heroin, Fentanyl, and the Opioid Crisis
Rising suicide rates	The impacts of family separation at the border
White Privilege	Covid 19 and Prison/Jail
Racial Profiling in the Criminal Justice System	Lack of funding to infrastructure and its effect on communities
Vaping and related health problems	Violence directed toward the LGBTQ community
Housing discrimination	Tobacco/Nicotine addiction in the U.S.
Abuse of immigrants at ICE facilities	Divorce and Bankruptcy
The Increase in Hate crimes	The Gender Wage Gap
Women's Labor and Covid-19	White Supremacy and Law Enforcement
Sexual Assault and the Military	Aging Out of Foster Care
Mental Health and Minority Communities	The Elderly and Financial Abuse