



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2019

SO1020 (A2): SOCIAL PROBLEMS – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael Holland

PHONE: 780-539-2973

OFFICE: C-404

E-MAIL: mholland@gprc.ab.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays and Wednesdays 11 am-12 pm; Thursdays 1-2 pm. Or anytime by appointment.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

Analysis of the social construction of social problems, focusing on selected structural and behavioural problems such as inequality, substance abuse, family violence, pornography, mental and physical handicaps. Personal and societal responses and intervention attempts will be explored.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: SO1000

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Kendall, D., E. G. Thompson, and V. L. Nygaard. 2007. *Social Problems in a Diverse Society (Fourth Edition)*. Toronto: Pearson Canada Inc.

- Supplemental readings will be provided for free on our Moodle website.
 - Be certain to follow our course outline carefully in order to complete readings prior to each lecture.

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lectures & Discussions

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Students will:

- Be shown how to acquire a critical sociological understanding of how social problems become perceived, or how they cease to be understood as problematic.
- Be familiarized with social practices in society.
- Be presented with sociological theories that attempt to explain the construction of social reality.
- Be encouraged to apply the meanings of “ideology”, “social cohesion”, “conflict”, “discourse”, “social stratification”, “hegemony”, and other concepts to help people consider social problems.

- Utilize different sociological interpretations of a range of social experiences.
- Shown how to develop thinking, talking and writing skills on particular theories used by sociologists to explain social problems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon completion of the course, students will:

- Explain the wider introductory social problems literature.
- Explain the causes and consequences of social problems.
- Illustrate the applicability of sociological knowledge to understand and solve social problems.
- Identify and explain the research tools used by sociologists in the study of social problems.

TRANSFERABILITY: UA, UC, AU, UL, AF, CU, CUC, GMU, KUC

***Warning:** Although we strive to make the transferability information in this document up-to-date and accurate, **the student has the final responsibility for ensuring the transferability of this course to Alberta Colleges and Universities.** Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at Alberta Transfer Guide at <http://transferalberta.alberta.ca/transfer-alberta-search/#/audienceTypeStep>

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions.**

Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.

EVALUATIONS:

In-class test:	25%
4 Group Discussions and reflections	10%
Research Outline Assignment	25%
Participation & Attendance	10%
Final Exam	30%

Please note: It is simply unfair to alter the course evaluation for any individual. Therefore, under any conditions, there will be no alternative tests or assignments if you miss or do poorly on a requirement.

- **Furthermore, it is your responsibility to track your own grades: Please do not contact the professor for such information.**

Submission & Late Policies:

- Equally important to learn and apply professional communication skills, such as writing proper e-mail messages, it is very important to learn to meet deadlines. Complete your assignments on time!
- Late and/or incomplete assignments will receive a grade of 0% unless you have a valid reason supported with appropriate documentation (i.e., a medical note from an M.D.) and you discuss it with me **well in advance of any due date**.

Test and Final Exam

The Mid-Term Test (25%) and Final Examination (30%) will consist of any combination of multiple choice, true/false, or short answer questions. There will be a brief review before each of these evaluations. The final exam is cumulative (emphasis on ‘big picture’ themes and concepts). The test and final exam will be based on all course material (textbook, journal articles, classroom discussions, and video clips).

Group Discussions and Responses

You are required to participate in 4 group discussions (reactions to course content, films, lectures). To earn 10% (2.5% x 4) each) you must: a) attend class; b) participate in the group discussion near the end of class; c) hand in your response to the questions. The discussion questions will be given to you immediately following the lectures/videos on the respective dates.

The response can be done individually or as a group. It’s up to you! Just make sure your name and student number are clearly listed.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you complete all four responses for full credit.

Research Outline Assignment

There will be a research project assigned during the first weeks of the course. This is essentially a “non-essay” assignment, in which students will learn strategies for locating peer-reviewed, academic resources, and then organizing research into a logical essay outline. A late penalty will be enforced should you miss the class on the date which it is due. **Hard copies only**. Essentially, you will be submitting a detailed research outline (rather than a completed formal essay) which includes paraphrasing research and utilizing proper citations.

Participation & Attendance

To receive full credit for participation marks, students are expected to engage actively in **class discussion**, to show up to class with a question or comment prompted by the readings to show critical thought and reflection in the course material.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	90-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-89		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	0-49

COURSE OUTLINE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1	Introduction to the course Studying Social Problems	Chapters 1	
Week 2	Wealth and Poverty as Economic Inequalities	Chapters 1 (continued) Chapter 2 Sewell et al. 1969. "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process." American Sociological Review 34(1):82-92.	
Week 3	Racism and Ethnic Inequality	Chapter 3	Group Discussion #1 Responses Due at End of Second Class
Week 4	Gender Inequality	Chapter 4	
Week 5	Inequality based on Age Review	Chapter 5	Group Discussion #2 Responses Due at End of Second Class
Week 6	Inequality and Sexual Orientation	Chapter 6	
Week 7	Pornography and the Sex Trade	Chapter 7	
Week 8	Alcohol and Other Drugs	Chapter 8	Mid-Term Test (chapters 1-8, articles, film, and lectures)
Week 9	Crime and Criminal Justice	Chapter 9	Group Discussion #3 Responses Due at End of Second Class
Week 10	Problems in the Institution of Education.	Chapter 12 Lareau, Annette. 1987. "Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Cultural Capital." Sociology of Education 60:73-85.	
Week 11	Problems in the Globalized Economy and Politics.	Chapter 13 (review Chapter 2)	

Week 12	Problems in the Media.	Chapter 14	Group Discussion #4 Responses Due at End of Second Class
Week 13	Population and the Environmental Crisis	Chapter 15	
Week 14	Solutions to Social Problems Review	Chapter 18	Research Outline Assignment is due at the beginning of class Final Exam (cumulative) Scheduled by the Registrar Office

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Attendance and Exam Policies:

Attendance at lectures is strongly encouraged, as are your participation in class discussions and group discussions.

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a student's learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating to the administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). *Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.*

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes by asking fellow students for the material covered, and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and/or notes that may be due.

PLEASE NOTE:

In order to fair to everyone in this course, **I will not alter the evaluation**, so any missed testing or assignments will not be accommodated.

If at any point in the semester you feel you are struggling with the course material or with your course work, please do not hesitate to ask me for assistance. Come and see me during my office hours, and I will assist you or point you towards other suitable sources of support. If you are scheduled to attend lectures or have other commitments during my office hours, please contact me by e-mail for an appointment.

Moodle:

This course will make extensive use of our website on Moodle to support your learning. You are expected to keep current with the content of the site, and I advise you to log on often.

Academic Misconduct:

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own.
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating).
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work.
- Substitution in an examination by another person.
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment.
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the GPRC credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS:

Counselling and Disability Services:

Counselling Services provides a wide range of specialized counselling services to prospective and registered students, including personal, career and academic counselling.

Students with Disabilities:

It is the College's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please let your instructor know immediately so options can be discussed. You are also welcome to contact Accessibility Services to establish reasonable accommodations. <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/services/accessibility/>

Learning Support Centre:

The Learning Support Centre is accessible through the Library at the Main campus of GPRC, where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff.

The Learning Support Centre, through a variety of delivery methods, provides assistance in skill development to GPRC students. Assistance is provided by instructors, staff and student tutors. Individuals wishing to improve their mathematics, writing, grammar, study, or other skills, can take advantage of this unique service.

Professional Conduct:

- Please be aware that I respect that everyone's time is precious and valuable, please afford me the same courtesy.
- Instead of preoccupying your mind with questions such as, "how do I get an 'A'?" Instead, ask yourself, "how can I work to expand my knowledge, perspective, and outlook on the real world?"

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the section on Plagiarism and Cheating in the College policy titled Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic at (<https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/fetch.php?ID=68>).

Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments. **Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and during exams.**

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/>

Additional Information:

- Please only use your **GPRC e-mail account** to avoid having your message blocked by SPAM filters.
- Always include “SO 1020” in the subject line (or I may never even receive your message).
- Finally, in our academic environment, please practice writing e-mails *formally*, as you will need to do on a regular basis upon graduation. For example, use a simple greeting, do not use slang or abbreviations, and always sign off with your name!