

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2022

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

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael Holland **PHONE:** 780-539-2973
OFFICE: C-404 **E-MAIL:** mholland@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 am, or 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:

Tepperman, L., Curtis, J., & La Touche, R. L. (2020). *Social Problems*. Oxford University Press.

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lectures, class discussion, group work, class presentations, written tests, written projects.

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 be able to:

- 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:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferralberta.ca>.

** 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:

Assessment	Total Point Value	Weight
4 Critical Reflection Assignments (written or presented) 20 pts each	80 pts	20 %
Midterm	60 pts	20 %
Research Project: <i>Proposal (written or presented) (5 pts; 5 %)</i> <i>Outline (20 pts; 10 %)</i> <i>Complete paper (50 pts; 15%)</i>	75 pts	30 %
Final Exam	100 pts	30 %
Total	315 pts	100 %

Please note that 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 grades. Please do not contact the professor for such information.

Submission & Late Policies: It is very important to complete your assignments on time. Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day (including weekends). 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.

Critical Reflection Assignments

Throughout the semester, there will be 4 reflection assignments. You will have the choice to submit written reflections or present them in class. Topics are up to you, but they must be related to the course. Paper submissions (electronically submitted on myClass) are due by the start of class on the assigned dates (see below). In-class presentation versions will be arranged according to a reasonable schedule. No citations or outside resources are needed for these assignments. Rather, I'm interested in your thoughts, ideas, and critical thinking. Further details will be given out early in the semester.

Research Project

You will complete a full research paper based on a community problem relevant to your community. The topic is up to you, but options will be given upon request. The project will be broken down into the following steps: First, you will complete a **proposal**. This involves coming up with a research topic (of your choice), writing a research problem statement, and a working thesis or argument. You have the option of either submitting a written proposal or an in-class presentation. More details about these options will be discussed in class.

This first project will be evaluated and must be approved by the instructor before moving on to the **outline assignment**. The outline assignment consists of locating peer-reviewed, academic resources, and then organizing research into a logical essay in which you paraphrase research and utilize proper citations (APA 7th edition citation style). Finally, you will complete a **full research paper** that consists of full sentences, paragraphs, and a complete title page and reference page. All of these assignments have strict due dates. **You must complete each part of these assignments in order before moving on to the next.** Specific information about this assignment will be provided and discussed in class.

Midterm Test and Final Exam

The Midterm term and Final Examination will consist of multiple-choice, true/false questions, and a short answer. There will be a brief review before each of these evaluations. The final exam is cumulative (emphasis on 'big picture' themes and concepts). The midterm test and final exam will be based on all course material (chapters, classroom discussions, lectures, and videos shown).

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 SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
Sept 7	Introduction to the course Meet and greet	Syllabus	
Sept 12, 14	Studying Social Problems	Chapter 1	
Sept 19, 21	Class and Poverty	Chapter 2	Critical reflection 1 due Sept 21
Sept 26, 28	Racism and Ethnic Inequality	Chapter 3	
Oct 3, 5	Gender Inequality	Chapter 4	Essay Proposal due Oct 5, Presentations (if any)
Oct 10-14	Thanksgiving and Fall Break – No classes		
Oct 17, 19	Sexualities (Oct 17) Crime and Violence (Oct 19)	Chapter 5 + 6	
Oct 24, 26	Midterm review Oct 24 Midterm Oct 26		
Oct 31, Nov 2	Health and Addictions	Chapter 7	Critical reflection 2 due Nov 2
Nov 7, 9	Global Inequality	Chapter 8	Essay Outline due Nov 9
Nov 14, 16	Families	Chapter 9	
Nov 21, 23	Aging	Chapter 10	
Nov 28, 30	Schools	Chapter 11	Critical reflection 3 due Nov 23
Dec 5, 7	Work and the Economy	Chapter 12	Critical reflection 4 due Dec 7
Dec 12	Population and Environment Brief Final Exam Review	Chapter 13	Complete Research paper due Dec 12 Final Exam (cumulative)

			Scheduled by the Registrar Office
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OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Sept 5 – Labour Day –No classes
 Sept 30 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – No classes
 Oct 10 – Thanksgiving Day – No classes
 Oct 11-14 – Fall Break – No classes
 Nov 11 – Remembrance Day – No classes
 Dec 12 – Last day of classes
 Dec 14 – Exam Start
 Dec 22 – Last day of Final exams

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Attendance and Exam Policies:

Attendance at lectures is strongly encouraged, as is 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 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:

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

EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS:

Exam accommodations are used by any number of students whose learning disabilities affect processing and comprehending printed material, learning, and/or concentration (either due to the condition itself, or the effects of the medication which is used to treat the condition).

Accommodations can also be sought by students with conditions that include, but are not limited to, mental health conditions, chronic illness, neurological disorders, visual disabilities, and motor disabilities. If you require exam accommodations due to a disability or condition, you must contact Accessibility Supports (in the library). More information is available at

<https://libguides.nwpolYTECH.ca/learningcommons/AccessibilityServices>

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 Student Conduct section of the

Northwestern Polytechnic Calendar at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/calendar/> or the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy which can be found at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Additional Information:

myClass:

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

Professional Conduct:

- Please be aware that I respect that everyone's time is valuable; please afford me the same courtesy.

Please note: 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.

- Please only use your **NWP 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 regularly upon graduation. For example, use a simple greeting, do not use slang or abbreviations, and always sign off with your name!

Student Performance

- Please note that you won't always perform your best on assignments, tests, or final exams. Life happens, too. If you receive a less than satisfactory grade or comments, don't take this as the world is ending. Instead, see this as an opportunity to improve on things that you currently have trouble understanding. Education is also improvement!
- If you receive a grade for an assignment and you wish to speak with me about it, I suggest waiting at least one day before you send off that e-mail asking me "why did I get this mark? I worked really hard!". Sometimes it helps to take a breather and to sort out your thoughts before writing them in an e-mail.
- 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?"
- It is my priority, as your instructor, to give you the tools to be as successful as possible. I am always available for help, whether in person or via e-mail.