

Course Title: Social Problems

Course Prefix: SOCG

Course No.: 2043

Section No.: P01

Department of

Division of Social Work,
Behavioral and Political
Sciences

College of

**Brailsford College of Arts and
Sciences**

Instructor Name:

Veeda V. Williams, Ph.D.

Office Location:

Woolfolk 305

Office Phone:

936-261-3210

Fax:

936-261-3229

Email Address:

vwilliams@pvamu.edu

US Postal Address

P.O. Box 519
Mail Stop 2203
Prairie View, TX 77446

**Office Hours and Virtual
Hours:**

TR 11:00am – 3:00pm and by appt.

Course Location:

NSCI 101

**Class Meeting Days &
Times:**

MWF 100-150pm

Catalog Description:

(3-0) Credit 3 semester hours. Application of sociological principles to major social issues and problems in contemporary and global society with particular emphasis on the United States.

Prerequisites:

N/A

Co-requisites:

N/A

Required Text:

Carl, John D. 2013. *THINK Social Problems*, 2nd Ed. ISBN 9780205125623.

Required Readings:

Various articles as assigned by instructor.

Access to Learning

PVAMU Library:

Resources:

phone: (936) 261-1500;

web: <http://www.tamu.edu/pvamu/library/>

University Bookstore:

phone: (936) 261-1990;

web: <https://www.bkstr.com/Home/10001-10734-1?demoKey=d>

Course Goals or Overview:

The goal of this course is to introduce students to social issues/conditions that exist within communities/societies and stimulate critical thinking about the development/causes of these issues as well as implications for change.

Learning Outcomes/Objectives

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

Course learning outcome aligns with . . .	Program Learning Objective	Core Objective
Demonstrate knowledge of major social issues and problems in contemporary and global society with particular emphasis on the United States.	SLO#1: identify and apply basic sociological concepts used in micro and macro sociological theory	CO #4: Social responsibility
Be able to recognize the interrelatedness of the processes of social control exerted by social institutions and their effects on individual behavior.	SLO #4: examine social institutions and processes across cultures	CO #4: Social responsibility

Be able to apply sociological approaches and principles to the study of social problems, with a focus on Social Control Theory.	SLO#1: identify and apply basic sociological concepts used in micro and macro sociological theory	CO #1: Critical thinking
Examine and interpret recent research data connected to current events and social issues in the world.	SLO #4: examine social institutions and processes across cultures	CO: #3: Empirical and Quantitative Skills
Effectively communicate a clear understanding of contemporary (local and global) social issues and their effects within society	SLO#1: identify and apply basic sociological concepts used in micro and macro sociological theory	CO: #2: Communication

Course Requirements & Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the instruments listed in the following grading matrix to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course:

Quizzes – There will be 10 quizzes consisting of 15 points each covering specific course material – lowest quiz score dropped; these quizzes are designed to assess students’ basic knowledge of sociological concepts and will be used to assist in preparation for broader analysis and synthesis of material. **Two quizzes will specifically address students’ ability to examine, analyze and interpret numerical data associated with emerging social trends.**

Exams – There will be one multiple choice exam at Midterm and one essay Final Exam. The Midterm Exam consists of 50 m/c questions and the Final Exam will require students to write an essay critically analyzing how social policy is often derived as a result of the ways in which social problems are differentially identified, constructed and addressed from the perspective of Social Construction Theory. Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility and Communication (via Final Exam) core objectives will be stressed on these exams to assess students’ ability to critically evaluate information and apply the information across cultures.

Position Memos – There will be 5 short assignments designed to assess students’ comprehension, application and ability to present a stance on relevant social issues discussed in class. The critical thinking, communication and personal responsibility core objectives will be emphasized in these assignments to assess students’ ability to effectively discuss the impact of social processes across cultures.

Grading Matrix

Instrument	Value (points or percentages)	Total
Quizzes	10 at 15 points each	150
Exams	Midterm – 100points; Final – 50 points	150
Position Memos	5 written assignments at 20 points each	100
Total:		400
Instrument	Value (points or percentages)	Total

Grade determination:

- A = 400 – 350pts;
- B = 349 – 300pts;
- C = 299 – 250pts;
- D = 249 – 200pts;
- F = 199pts or below

Course Procedures

Exam Policy: Exam will be administered in-class according to Midterm Examination period. Once the exam begins, you may not leave the room. Exams should be taken as scheduled. No makeup examinations will be allowed except under documented emergencies (See Student Handbook and description below). Students must bring their own scantron and pencil on exam day. No hats—for women or men—are allowed on exam days. I will not grade your exam unless all these policies are followed.

Submission of Writing Assignments Policy: *Writing assignments are to be submitted online via eCourses on assigned due date and a hard copy brought to class for discussion as directed. No late assignments will be taken under any circumstances. All essays must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 point font. Your written analysis memo should be about one page of text; it will include a critical analysis of the week's assigned social issue/problem.*

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic crime and policy for students who commit plagiarism will be enforced. In general, plagiarism is using another person's words, statistics, and/or ideas as if they were your own. Plagiarism, which is formally defined in the University Rules and Procedures section of this syllabus, can come in many forms, such as directly quoting a source without quotation marks, directly quoting a source without giving a reference citation, paraphrasing a source without giving a reference citation and so forth. It is incumbent on students to seek help from the instructor or other University resources to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism in their work. Any student caught committing ANY type of plagiarism can receive one OR MORE of the following punishments, depending on the severity of the offense and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct:

1. Grade Penalty (an F for the assignment and/or an F for the course);
2. Letter of Reprimand
3. Probation
4. Suspension
5. Dismissal
6. Expulsion

Students must consult the University's Code of Conduct for other forms of academic dishonesty and the punishments.

Electronic Communication: Notes and other course materials may be posted on Moodle/Ecourses, which is available at <http://ecourses.pvamu.edu>. Note the frequently asked questions links in the left margin of this link. You are expected to use this website as a resource for the class. The University also maintains an email account for you. Periodically, I may send you class notices or other information. **I expect you to check your Prairie View A&M email account at least once a week.** If you have problems accessing your account, please call (936) 261-2525. Not having access to your Panther Email is not an excuse for missing important information. The new Moodle/Ecourses is heavily reliant on your PVAMU email..

Make-up Policy: You will only be allowed to make up an exam or assignment if you have a valid excuse. Valid excuses include *documented* illness, school or business trips, or family crises. Without proper documentation, there will be no makeup assignments. **If granted a make-up, you have a period of three (3) class days to schedule your make-up assignment or exam. After that point, the grade becomes a zero.** Please provide written documentation for why you need to make up an assignment from a university official, doctor, police officer, or coach. Student athletes must notify me **BEFORE** they attend an event to represent the school and **MUST** be proactive in getting their assignments completed. **Email will not be accepted as notification.** Make up exams may be an essay/short answer test or a modified version of the original exam. Any assigned extra credit cannot be made up.

Grade Groveling Policy: Students concerned about their grades should endeavor to attend all class sessions and complete all work to the best of their ability. Students **earn** high grades, based on demonstrating mastery of the subject matter and not based on what they want or need for their overall GPA. Therefore, no grade groveling will be entertained and no "do-overs" allowed.

Formatting Documents: Microsoft Word is the standard word processing tool used at PVAMU. If you're using other word processors, be sure to use the "save as" tool and save the document in either the Microsoft Word, Rich-Text, or plain text format. All writing assignments must use acceptable citation style and document all sources. **No assignments will be accepted via email under any circumstances.**

16 WEEK CALENDAR

Week One: Topic Assignment (s):	Introduction/Overview
Week Two: Topic Assignment (s):	Social Conditions, Issues & Problems In-class: Documentary Analysis of a social issue
Week Three: Topic Assignment (s):	Social Construction Theory & Public Policy - Intro
Week Four: Topic Assignment (s):	THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS Quiz 1
Week Five: Topic Assignment (s):	INEQUALITY: POVERTY AND WEALTH Quiz 2 Position Memo 1: “Has Welfare Reform Benefited the Poor?”
Week Six: Topic Assignment (s):	RACE AND IMMIGRATION Quiz 3 Position Memo 2: “Is Third World Immigration a Threat to America’s Way of Life”
Week Seven: Topic Assignment (s):	GENDER Quiz 4 Position Memo 3: “Are Boys and Men Disadvantaged Relative to Girls and Women?”
Week Eight: Topic Assignment (s):	CRIME Quiz 5 Midterm Examination Period
Week Nine: Topic	MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY Quiz 6
Week Ten: Topic Assignment (s):	PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION Quiz 7
Week Eleven: Topic Assignment (s):	SEX AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO SEXUALITY Quiz 8 Position Memo 4: “Should Same-sex Marriages be Legally Recognized?”
Week Twelve: Topic Assignment (s):	SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY Quiz 9
Week Thirteen: Topic Assignment (s):	CRIMINAL JUSTICE Quiz 10 Position Memo 5: “Should Mothers Stay Home with their Children?”
Week Fourteen: Topic Assignment (s):	WAR AND TERRORISM Quiz 11
Week Fifteen: Topic Assignment (s):	Social Construction Theory & Public Policy - Revisited Midterm Examination Review
Week Sixteen: Topic	Final Examination Period

University Rules and Procedures

Disability statement (See Student Handbook):

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in class should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal laws, a student requesting special accommodations must provide documentation of their disability to the SSD coordinator.

Academic misconduct (See Student Handbook):

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures.

Forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating: deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations.
2. Academic misconduct: tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.
3. Fabrication: use of invented information or falsified research.
4. Plagiarism: unacknowledged quotation and/or paraphrase of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting them as one's own work also constitutes plagiarism.

Nonacademic misconduct (See Student Handbook)

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, (2) the inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under nonacademic procedures.

Sexual misconduct (See Student Handbook):

Sexual harassment of students and employers at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Attendance Policy:

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Excessive absences will result in lowered grades. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of "F". Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class.

Student Academic Appeals Process

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rests with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the Undergraduate Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

Technical Considerations for Online and Web-Assist Courses

Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements:

- Pentium with Windows XP or PowerMac with OS 9
- 56K modem or network access
- Internet provider with SLIP or PPP
- 8X or greater CD-ROM
- 64MB RAM
- Hard drive with 40MB available space
- 15" monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit
- Sound card w/speakers
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Netscape Communicator ver. 4.61 or Microsoft Internet Explorer ver. 5.0 /plug-ins
- Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:
 - Sending and receiving email
 - A working knowledge of the Internet
 - Proficiency in Microsoft Word
 - Proficiency in the Acrobat PDF Reader
 - Basic knowledge of Windows or Mac O.S.

Netiquette (online etiquette): students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats when directed to do so. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others in the discussions. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. When referring to information from books, websites or articles, please use APA standards to reference sources.

Technical Support: Students should call the Prairie View A&M University Helpdesk at 936-261-2525 for technical issues with accessing your online course. The helpdesk is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. For other technical questions regarding your online course, call the Office of Distance Learning at 936-261-3290 or 936-261-3282

Communication Expectations and Standards:

All emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor within 48 hours.

You can send email anytime that is convenient to you, but I check my email messages continuously during the day throughout the work-week (Monday through Friday). I will respond to email messages during the work-week by the close of business (5:00 pm) on the day following ***my receipt*** of them. Emails that I receive on Friday will be responded to by the close of business on the following Monday.

Submission of Assignments:

Some Assignments, Papers, Exercises, and Projects will distributed and submitted through your online course. Directions for accessing your online course will be provided. Additional assistance can be obtained from the Office of Distance Learning.

Discussion Requirement:

Because this is an online course, there will be no required face to face meetings on campus. However, we will participate in conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course in a true seminar fashion. We will accomplish this by use of the discussion board.

Students are required to log-on to the course website often to participate in discussion. It is strongly advised that you check the discussion area daily to keep abreast of discussions. When a topic is posted, everyone is required to participate. The exact use of discussion will be determined by the instructor.

It is strongly suggested that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, it should be copied and pasted to the discussion board.