

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Soc 101: Social Problems
Fall 2006

Instructor: Hong Xiao
Class Hours: M-F 9 – 9:50; 11 – 11:50
Office Hours: MTWTh 2-3, F 1-2, and by appointment.

Office: Farrell Hall 438
Email: xiaoh@cwu.edu
Phone: 963-2227

Required Texts:

1. Linda Mooney, David Knox, and Caroline Schacht, Understanding Social Problems 4th edition, 2004. (Mooney et al. in reading assignments)
2. Jerome H. Skolnick and Elliot Curie, Crisis in American Institutions 12th edition, 2004 (S and C in reading assignments)

These books are available in the University Bookstore.

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive introduction to the sociological analysis of major social problems (such as poverty, discrimination, crime, environmental degradation). We will examine human behaviors and social conditions that violate the dominant norms and values in society or that represent potential threats to the general quality of life. The course will begin by examining the fundamental assumptions of the sociological perspective in defining social problems. Much of the material presented in this course will challenge your values and beliefs since adopting a sociological perspective entails looking at the world from a different vantage point than the one you typically use. Using a textbook and a reader, the course will examine social problems in ten (10) areas. While many of these social problems have a global impact, the social structure of U.S. society is the basic unit of analysis for interpreting and understanding them. The course will also look at the policies and programs that are identified to resolve these social problems.

Course Objectives:

This course aims to help students acquire knowledge as well as to develop skills.

A. Knowledge Acquisition—

1. Distinguish between social problems and personal troubles
2. Identify and describe various theoretical perspectives on social problems and deviant behavior.
3. Gain a better understanding of how social conditions shape individual behavior.

B. Skill Development—

1. Enhance critical thinking skills in evaluating arguments and assessing evidence.
2. Strengthen oral communication skills in academic discussion.
3. Improve writing competence.

Course Requirements:

Reading Assignments: This course is oriented mainly toward lecture and discussion. You are expected to engage in class discussion. In order for you to contribute constructively to class/group discussions and to profit from lectures, it is essential that you read carefully and think about the assigned material before coming to class. The ratio of outside study to class time is 2 to 1; that is, students should spend 10 hours per week on course assignments outside of class. I may give unannounced quizzes. This is not a course in which you can wait until exam time to begin studying. To do well in this course, you need to work conscientiously and consistently come to class prepared.

Exams and Assignments: There are **three** exams based on the assigned readings, class lectures, discussions, and films. These exams constitute of multiple choice and true/false questions. They are not cumulative. Make-up exams will not be given, except for a documented medical or other emergency. A make-up exam will be more difficult than the regularly scheduled exam. There are also several short written assignments. Some of them are to be completed in class and others have a later due date. **Written work due on a specified date must be turned in on that date.** Late written assignment will be penalized one full letter grade each calendar day late.

Class Attendance and Participation: Students are required to attend class regularly. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Some of the material covered in class is not discussed in your readings. Thus, you must have a complete set of lecture notes to adequately prepare for each exam.

Films: Throughout the quarter, you will watch several films. All of the films will be scheduled for in class viewing. Very often, you will be asked to discuss about them. Some of the exam questions will be based on them too. So it is in your best interest not to miss them. If you do miss a film, you are responsible for obtaining and viewing the film on your own time.

Academic Honesty Statement:

Central Washington University has high academic standards. These standards are set forth in the Student Judicial Code, which is contained in the current undergraduate/graduate catalog. The instructor expects all students in this course to know and affirm to the University academic standards. Look up the section on “Proscribed Conduct” in the catalog. It is

academically dishonest to claim that someone else's work is your own (plagiarism). The consequence of one incident of academic dishonesty will be a failing grade in the course.

Disability Access Statement:

Students who have special needs or disabilities that may need an accommodation are encouraged to contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please also contact the Office of Disability Support Services on the CWU campus at 963-2171 to verify your eligibility for additional disability accommodations.

Grading Scheme:

Please use the following grading formula and grading scale to monitor your progress and performance throughout the quarter.

Grading Formula:

Class Participation (including attendance)	10% (50 points)
Writing Assignments	20% (100 points)
First Exam	20% (100 points)
Second Exam	20% (100 points)
Third Exam	30% (150 points)

Grading Scale:

A = 93% - 100% (465-500 points)	A- = 90% - 92% (450-464 points)
B+ = 87% - 89% (435-449 points)	B = 83% - 86% (415-434 points)
B- = 80% - 82% (400-414 points)	C+ = 77% - 79% (385-399 points)
C = 73% - 76% (365-384 points)	C- = 70% - 72% (350-364 points)
D+ = 67% - 69% (335-349 points)	D = 63% - 66% (315-334 points)
D- = 60% - 62% (300-314 points)	F = 59% and lower (Below 300 points)

Important Notes:

1. Every student must have an active CWU account. Class assignments will not be sent to other email addresses.
2. There will be no extra credit work or "make-ups" for missed in-class work.

Tentative Course Outline

Date	Content	Reading/Assignment
Week 1 Sept 20-22	Course Introduction Definition of Social Problems	Mooney et al.: Ch 1
Week 2 Sept 25-29	Social Inequality and Poverty	Mooney et al.: Ch 10 S and C: Article 9, 11
Week 3 Oct 2-6	Economy and Work	Mooney et al.: Ch 11 S and C: Article 8
Week 4 Oct 9-13	Education First Exam on Oct 9	Mooney et al.: Ch 12 S and C: Article 35
Week 5 Oct 16-20	Race and Ethnic Relations	Mooney et al.: Ch 6 S and C: Article 14
Week 6 Oct 23-27	Gender Inequality	Mooney et al.: Ch 7 S and C: Article 18
Week 7 Oct 30-Nov 3	Health and Welfare Second Exam on Oct 30	Mooney et al.: Ch 2 S and C: Article 29
Week 8 Nov 6-10	The Family <i>No Class on Nov 10 (Veterans Day)</i>	Mooney et al.: Ch 5 S and C: Article 20, 22
Week 9 Nov 13-17	Population and Environment	Mooney et al.: Ch 13 and 14 S and C: Article 23
Week 10 Nov 20-24	Terrorism <i>No Class on Nov 22-24 (Thanksgiving)</i>	Mooney et al.: Ch 16
Week 11 Nov 27-Dec 1	Crime and Justice Third Exam on Dec 1	Mooney et al.: Ch 4 S and C: Article 36
Week 12 Dec 5	Course Assessment	

This syllabus is tentative. Changes (such as additions, deletions, or assignment due dates) may be made from time to time. Students are responsible for keeping up with the changes announced in class or via email.