

## Social Problems

Course Number: 809-xxx-xxx

Prerequisites: Introduction to Sociology

Credits: 3

Textbook: James Henslin. Social Problems. Edition: 6th

Instructor:

Office:

Office phone:

Home phone:

Email (work):

Email (home):

### Course Description

Explores the causes of and possible solutions to selected social problems, such as inequality, crime and deviance, and poverty. Students will examine the interrelationship of social problems and their roots in fundamental societal institutions.

### Course Goals

1. Develop introductory level skills of communication in the terminology of the field of sociology.
2. Enhance critical thinking skills for making ethical decisions, solving problems, and dealing with issues
3. Appreciate the dynamics of society and its issues
4. Become more effective in one's work life and personal life

### Course Competencies

1. **Analyze social problems from a sociological perspective.**

#### **Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 1.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 1.b. you distinguish sociological perspectives from non-sociological perspectives.
- 1.c. you give concrete examples of how issues are seen from sociological perspectives.
- 1.d. you give concrete examples of how issues are seen from other perspectives.
- 1.e. you compare and contrast sociological perspectives and other perspectives.

2. **Explain and identify how social problems are socially constructed.**

#### **Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 2.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 2.b. you communicate the meaning of the social construction of reality.
- 2.c. you give a valid example of a socially constructed problem.
- 2.d. you provide evidence of the validity of your example.

3. **Analyze the interrelationship between social problems and the major social institutions in society.**

#### **Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 3.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 3.b. you identify the major social institutions.
- 3.c. you identify social problems related to social institutions.
- 3.d. you identify the impact social institutions have upon the socialization process.

4. **Analyze how social problems are reinforced and preserved by social groups who maintain wealth and power.**

#### **Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 4.a. you use sociological terms in context.

- 4.b. you identify who the power elite are.
- 4.c. you explain how the power elite influence the economic and political systems.
- 4.d. you explain how individual and collective behavior initiate change in society.

**5. Formulate potential solutions for social problems using a systematic and empirical approach.**

**Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 5.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 5.b. you identify an issue as a social problem.
- 5.c. you employ a formal systematic approach to problem solving.
- 5.d. you critically analyze potential solutions for such problem.
- 5.e. you decide on a feasible solution using empirical evidence as support.
- 5.f. you develop a solution to a given social problem.

**6. Analyze how attitudes towards human differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, and disabilities) are interrelated to the problems of inequality.**

**Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 6.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 6.b. you differentiate between the concepts of race and ethnicity
- 6.c. you differentiate between the concepts of sex and gender.
- 6.d. you identify what is meant by the concept of class.
- 6.e. you explain how societal attitudes and practices promote social inequality.

**7. Analyze how crime and deviance are socially constructed.**

**Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 7.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 7.b. you differentiate between crime and other forms of deviance.
- 7.c. you give examples of how deviance is relative to social context (e.g., time, place, and culture).
- 7.d. you distinguish between the various crime typologies (e.g., violent, white collar, and corporate).
- 7.e. you explain how social institutions promote deviance.

**8. Examine the impact of poverty on life chances.**

**Performance Standards**

*Performance will be successful when:*

- 8.a. you use sociological terms in context.
- 8.b. you identify the strategy that is used to calculate poverty.
- 8.c. you give evidence of the correlation between poverty and specific life chances (e.g., access to education, health care, housing, etc.).

**Course Policies:**

**Late Work:**

Late work will be accepted for full credit until 3 PM on the Friday of the week in which it is due. This means that if an assignment is due on Friday, then it needs to be in on the due date by 3 PM or it will not receive full credit. You can email or snail mail assignments to me if you will be absent. You can even send the assignment with another student! If an assignment is turned in after 3 PM on the Friday of the week in which it was due, it will earn a maximum score of 50%. So while there is value in doing the assignment even if it is late, you should strive to complete the assignments on time!

**Attendance:**

Attendance is expected at ALL classes. Research indicates that there is a strong correlation between student attendance and grade earned. In short, if you want to be successful, you need to be here. Students are expected to read all assigned portions of the text by the due date.

**Grading:**

Grades are based upon tests, homework, in class assignments, and participation. Please retain all of your work that is returned.

**Blackboard:**

This course is supplemented with the use of Blackboard. Students are expected to access the server on a regular basis for announcements, discussion, assignments, tests, resources, and course documents. If students do not have access to a computer at home, there are numerous computers available for use at school.

**Written tests:** A unit test may follow the completion of each unit. These tests may be objective and/or essay in format. Test material may be drawn from the assigned textbook readings, class lecture, discussion, handouts, activities, labs, and audiovisual material. You must take tests on the scheduled day unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. No make up tests will be allowed more than one week after the scheduled in-class test date. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule make up tests with the instructor.

**In-class/Out-of-class Assignments:** Activities and assignments related to unit content will be included in this course. These are usually application assignments relating to unit concepts. Due to the nature of the activity, in-class assignments can not be made-up and therefore regular attendance is critical. Out-of-class assignments will also be available to students periodically for course points. Out-of-class activities are designed to enhance student learning and must be completed by the assigned day.

**Participation:**

Quizzes based on the reading or past classes will be given at the outset of most class sessions. These quizzes are meant as practice and review. The quizzes themselves are not graded, but students earn participation points for doing the quizzes. Students will receive 3 points per quiz. **Note:** evening class participation is worth 6 points per quiz. Accumulation of these points will begin after the first full week of class.

**Grade Scale:**

Numerical scores earned on tests, assignments, and participation will be compiled during the semester. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

97-100%	A+	80-82%	B-	63-66%	D
93-96%	A	77-79%	C+	60-62%	D-
90-92%	A-	73-76%	C	Below 60%	F
87-89%	B+	70-72%%	C-		
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+		

**Faculty Recommendation Sheets:**

The end of the semester is very busy for everyone – students and teachers alike. If you would like me to fill out a faculty recommendation sheet for you, I will need it prior to the first day of the last full week of classes.

**Plagiarism Policy:**

One of the goals of this course is to enhance students’ ability to gather, synthesize and analyze material resulting in an academically appropriate presentation of their findings. Presentations may be in the form of oral or written projects. The fact that analysis is involved leads to the conclusion that we must **think** about the material we are synthesizing. Simply copying another author’s work and presenting it will not result in meeting the goal as stated above. To this end, **plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class.** Anyone found to have plagiarized will receive a zero on the entire assignment and may be referred to the college administration for further measures as specified on pages 82-83 of the student handbook.

The following websites should be used when doing any research based written or oral assignments for this course. Using either APA or MLA format is acceptable. If you are ever in doubt as to whether or not to

cite a source, err on the side of too much citation. As always, I will help you if you have questions on citing sources or creating a reference page for your work.

MLA

[http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLACitation\\_Info.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLACitation_Info.html)

APA (Includes Reference List information)

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_apa.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html)

**Student Rights Information:**

Chippewa Valley Technical College welcomes, values, and respects differences and commonalities of all people. By valuing differences, we demonstrate our commitment to treating everyone with fairness and respect. ***For the entire text of the CVTC Student Rights Information Document, please see the course Blackboard site.***

Please contact the instructor with any concerns or ideas for improving the class.

SAMPLE