



**Social Sciences  
Southwest College**

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**SOCI 1306 – Contemporary Social Problems**

CRN 65798 – Fall 2013

West Loop Campus - Room C244 | Tu | 9:30 am – 11 am  
3 Hour Hybrid Course / 48 Hours per Semester / 16 Weeks

**Instructor Contact Information**

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*Office Location:* West Loop - C256

Your performance in my class is very important to me. I am available to hear your concerns or to simply discuss course topics. You certainly do not need to wait until you have received a poor grade before asking for my assistance. Please feel free to contact me concerning any problems that you are experiencing in this course. *The best way to get in touch with me is via Eagle Online's email system.* I will do my best to answer all student emails within 24 hours.

**Course Description:** SOCI 1306 is an inquiry into selected current social problems with specific reference to their original development and suggested solutions. Core Curriculum Course. [Note: The course you have signed up for is a *16 week hybrid course* that utilizes Eagle Online. The fact that this is a *hybrid* class means that the class meets half in the classroom and half online. This means you will be responsible for learning nearly all of the material entirely *on your own* with my support and guidance. We will dedicate our classroom time to briefly reviewing concepts and to applying the material. As such, to be successful in this class you need to be a self-directed, motivated learner and you *must* keep up with all reading and assignments.]

**Core Curriculum Statement:** Sociology 1306 is a core curriculum course. It may be used to fulfill the requirements for a core Social and Behavioral Sciences course. This is a *writing intensive course*.

**Prerequisites:** Must be placed into college-level reading (or take GUST 0342 as a co-requisite) and be placed into college-level writing (or take ENGL 0310/0349 as a co-requisite).

**Student Learning Outcomes** [One of these may be assessed during the course of the semester.]

1. Identify the sociological perspectives that are used to analyze social problems.
2. Apply the three major theoretical perspectives to the analysis of social problems.
3. Evaluate the four most common methods of researching social problems.
4. Examine the role of the basic institutions in the creation of social problems.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- *Apply* the sociological perspective to social problems.
- *Identify* and *define* a variety of concepts and theories related to social problems.
- *Understand* the social constructionist point of view that dominates the study of social problems.
- Critically and objectively *assess* the strengths and weaknesses of claims.
- *Think* beyond what you are reading and hearing to make a variety of intellectual connections and apply your knowledge to the real world.
- Better *understand* and *appreciate* our social world.

**Course Calendar** [Subject to change.]

<b>DATES</b>	<b>TOPIC &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</b>
Week 1	<i>Introduction to the Course</i> Before Class 8/27: - Welcome Aboard! Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 8/30
Week 2	<i>The Study of Social Problems</i> Before Class 9/3: Read Chapters 1 and 17 & Take Chapter 1+17 Quiz Chapter 1 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 9/6
Week 3	<i>Social Class and Poverty</i> Before Class 9/10: Read Chapter 2 & Take Chapter 2 Quiz Chapter 2 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 9/13
Week 4	<i>Race and Ethnicity</i> Before Class 9/17: Read Chapter 3 & Take Chapter 3 Quiz Chapter 3 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 9/20
Week 5	<b>NO CLASS 9/24: FINAL PAPER WORK WEEK</b>
Week 6	<i>Gender</i> Before Class 10/1: Read Chapter 4 & Take Chapter 4 Quiz Start Chapter 4 Assignments
Week 7	<i>Gender Continued</i> Before Class 10/8: Read Chapter 4 & Take Chapter 4 Quiz Chapter 4 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 10/11
Week 8	<i>Sexual Orientation</i> Before Class 10/15: Read Chapter 5 & Take Chapter 5 Quiz Chapter 5 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 10/18
Week 9	<i>Age and Aging</i> Before Class 10/22: Read Chapter 6 & Take Chapter 6 Quiz Chapter 6 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 10/25
Week 10	<i>Work and the Economy</i> Before Class 10/29: Read Chapter 9 & Take Chapter 9 Quiz Chapter 9 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 11/1
Week 11	<i>Health and Medicine</i> Before Class 11/5: Read Chapter 10 & Take Chapter 10 Quiz Chapter 10 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 11/8
Week 12	<i>The Media</i> Before Class 11/12: Read Chapter 11 & Take Chapter 11 Quiz Chapter 11 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 11/15
Week 13	<i>Crime and Criminal Justice</i> Before Class 11/19: Read Chapter 13 & Take Chapter 13 Quiz Chapter 13 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 11/22
Week 14	<b>NO CLASS 11/26: THANKSGIVING</b> <b>Optional Final Paper Draft due before 11:55 pm Friday 11/29</b>
Week 15	<i>War and Terrorism</i> Before Class 12/3: Read Chapter 16 & Take Chapter 16 Quiz Chapter 16 Assignments due before 11:55 pm on Friday 12/6
Week 16 Finals	<b>NO CLASS: FINAL EXAM WEEK</b> <b>Final Paper due before 11:55 pm on Friday 12/13</b>

## **Instructional Methods**

The primary methods of instruction in this course are class discussion and in-class group activities. It is imperative that all students come to class prepared and confident in their mastery of the material. Any lectures in this course will be extremely discussion-oriented and will involve an on-going dialogue between the instructor and the students. Additional instruction methods may include games, the use of multimedia, and student presentations of material.

## **Student Assignments**

Assignments and activities are designed to enhance your learning. To help you master the course material, you will be asked to complete assignments and activities that cover key information necessary for success in this course and beyond. Below is a description of all the assignments and activities planned for this course.

*Readings:* You are required to read all of the assigned material prior to coming to class. This material includes the textbook, readings posted on Eagle Online, and any additional reading assignments given during class. This will ultimately improve your ability to be an effective, efficient, perceptive and critical reader and will ensure you are prepared to participate in all classroom activities. Your ability to succeed in this class is dependent on your preparedness each day, so it is imperative that you complete the readings as they are assigned and that you bring copies of the readings to class when indicated (refer to the Course Calendar for details).

*Quizzes:* Before each class, you will be required to complete a quiz (or quizzes) on the assigned reading for the day. Quizzes typically consist primarily of multiple choice questions but may also include true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Quizzes do not need to be taken in the presence of a proctor. However, you will only have 15 minutes to complete each quiz and you only get 1 attempt per quiz, so I encourage you to be prepared and not to rely on your book and/or notes. It is your responsibility to be prepared for each quiz and to ensure that you complete each quiz before the due date. You will be able to see which questions you missed along with the correct answers after the quiz deadline has passed. I have a zero-tolerance policy for late work, so if you miss a quiz then you will receive a 0 for that quiz. Quizzes are worth **20%** of your final grade.

*Assignments:* Each chapter has at least one assignment. I have designed all of the assignments to help you master important concepts and ideas and to give you an opportunity to enhance your critical thinking and writing skills. All of your submissions should be well-written and well thought-out meaning they should utilize full sentences with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation and should demonstrate critical thinking skills and subject knowledge. Refer to the Rubric for Written Work on Eagle Online for details on how written work is assessed. All of the assignments and detailed instructions for completion and submission are available on Eagle Online. I strongly encourage you to avoid procrastinating and to work on the assignments early and often. Assignments are worth **50%** of your final grade.

*Participation:* In order to best facilitate your success and to nurture the most productive and useful learning community possible, you are expected to arrive on time, to be fully prepared for class, to actively participate, and to remain in class for the entire period every single meeting. This is particularly important in a hybrid course since we meet less frequently. As such, arriving late or leaving early counts as half of an absence. You are responsible for any material that you miss as a result of arriving late, leaving early, or being absent. If a situation arises that may impact your attendance, you should contact me as soon as possible. You may be dropped from the class for excessive absences or tardiness, and both will factor heavily into your final participation grade. Note that participation is worth **15%** of your final grade.

*Final Paper:* Near the end of the semester you will be required to submit a final paper. The final paper is a 3-5 page research paper on a social problem of your choice. Detailed instructions on how to complete and submit the final paper are available on Eagle Online. I strongly encourage you to avoid procrastinating and to work on the final paper throughout the course of the semester. The final paper is worth **15%** of your final grade.

*Extra Credit:* You may be given the opportunity to earn extra credit for various activities during the course of the semester. Any and all extra credit opportunities will be posted on Eagle Online and will be due at the same time as the other assignments in the topic area. Please note that extra credit is not guaranteed.

*Helpful Hints:* Do not complete any assignments in the text box provided by Eagle Online. Instead, work on your assignments in a word processing program (such as Microsoft Word, Notepad, or Open Office) so that you can save them regularly as you work. Once the assignment is complete, you can save it a final time and then cut and paste it into the text box provided. Assignments should NOT be submitted as attachments. A long list of additional helpful hints, along with a rubric that explains how written work is graded, is available on Eagle Online. I strongly suggest you read the list of helpful hints and familiarize yourself with the Rubric for Written Work immediately.

### **Student Assessment**

Assignments:	50%
Quizzes:	20%
Class Participation:	15%
Final Project:	<u>15%</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Instructional Materials**

*Textbook:* Leon-Guerrero, Anna. 2013. *Social Problems: Community, Policy, and Social Action*. 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

*Textbook Websites:* <http://www.prenhall.com/macionis/>

*Course Website:* <https://hccs1.mrooms3.net/login/index.php>

### **HCC Policy Statement: ADA**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office. For more information, go to the HCC ADA Website or call Dr. Becky Hauri at (713) 718-7910.

### **HCC Policy Statement: Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism and collusion. If you engage in any form of academic dishonesty, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken and you will receive a failing grade for the course. [Note: If you are caught engaging in any form of academic dishonesty in this course, you will fail the course and you will be reported to HCC administration. Trust me – IT IS NOT WORTH IT!]

### **HCC Policy Statement: Meningitis Immunization**

Texas Senate Bill 1107 passed in May 2011, requires that new HCC students and former HCC students returning after an absence of at least one fall or spring semester who are under the age of 30 are required to present a physician-signed certificate showing they have been vaccinated against bacterial meningitis. Students must satisfy this requirement prior to enrollment. For more information and a list of exemptions please go to <http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/admissions-registration-center/new-student-general-admissions-steps/submit-meningitis-documentation>.

**HCC Policy Statement: Attendance**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly. Students are responsible for material covered during their absences, and it is the student's responsibility to consult with me for makeup assignments. I am required to check class attendance daily. Although it is the responsibility of the student to drop a course for non-attendance, I have the authority to drop a student for excessive absences. A student may be dropped from a course for absenteeism after the student has accumulated absences in excess of 12.5 percent of the hours of instruction (including lecture and laboratory time). Additionally, students who miss any classes prior to the official day of record will be dropped from the class.

**HCC Policy Statement: Repeating Courses**

The State of Texas encourages students to complete college without having to repeat failed classes. To increase student success, students who repeat the same course more than twice, are required to pay extra tuition. The purpose of this extra tuition fee is to encourage students to pass their courses and to graduate. Effective fall 2006, HCC will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

**HCC Policy Statement: Withdrawal**

If you feel that you cannot complete this course, **you** will need to withdraw from the course prior to the final date of withdrawal. Before, you withdraw from your course; please take the time to meet with the instructor to discuss why you feel it is necessary to do so. The instructor may be able to provide you with suggestions that would enable you to complete the course. Your success is very important. Beginning in Fall 2007, the Texas Legislature passed a law limiting first time entering freshmen to no more than **SIX** total course withdrawals throughout their educational career in obtaining a certificate and/or degree. If you plan on withdrawing from your class, you **MUST** contact a HCC counselor or your professor prior to withdrawing (dropping) the class for approval and this must be done **PRIOR** to the withdrawal deadline to receive a "W" on your transcript. Final withdrawal deadlines vary each semester and/or depending on class length, please visit the online registration calendars, HCC schedule of classes and catalog, any HCC Registration Office, or any HCC counselor to determine class withdrawal deadlines. Remember to allow a 24-hour response time when communicating via email and/or telephone with a professor and/or counselor. Do not submit a request to discuss withdrawal options less than a day before the deadline. If **you** do not withdraw before the deadline, you will receive the grade that you are making in the class as your final grade.

Information on other policies and additional information on these policies can be found in the [HCC Student Handbook](#) (available on the HCC website).

**HCC Distance Education Policy Statement**

The Distance Education Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should have reviewed the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link: <http://de.hccs.edu/de/de-student-handbook>.

## Requirements

As your instructor, it is **my responsibility** to:

- Facilitate an effective learning environment through class activities, discussions, and lectures.
- Describe and discuss any special projects or assignments.
- Make adjustments and changes to the course as necessary to best serve the needs of the class.
- Keep an open line of communication with students during and outside of class time.
- Provide the course outline and calendar.
- Provide a detailed grading formula explaining how student grades will be derived.
- Inform students of HCC and classroom policies.

To be successful in this course, it is **your responsibility** to:

- Attend all in-class meetings.
- Participate meaningfully in all online and in class activities and discussions.
- Log in to Eagle Online *and* check HCC email **DAILY**.
- Complete all readings and assignments before the due date.
- Successfully complete all of the scheduled quizzes before the due date.
- Take responsibility for your own learning.
- Comply with all policies and expectations.
- Ask for assistance when you need it.

Additionally, it is your responsibility to actively engage in the process of learning and thinking. Learning is not a passive process whereby experts impart knowledge upon you; rather, learning is an active process that requires extensive effort and involvement from both the teacher and the student. **I expect you to focus on truly learning and understanding the material, not simply committing it to memory. You will get as much out of the class as you are willing to put in.** Please note that your education is not simply a means to an end (such as a better career or higher income), but is also an end in and of itself – try to slow down and enjoy the learning process!

## HCC Grading Scale

A: 90-100      B: 80-89      C: 70-79      D: 60-69      F: <60

## Instructor Grading Criteria

The quizzes, assignments, and other assessments that you are given throughout the semester are tools that you can use to determine how successful you are at achieving the course learning outcomes (mastery of course content and skills) outlined in the syllabus. If you find you are not mastering the material and skills, I encourage you to reflect on how you study and prepare for each class. I welcome a dialogue on what you discover and may be able to assist you in finding resources on campus that will improve your performance. All of your grades will be available to you on Eagle Online and you can find a grade calculation spreadsheet in the Student Resources module. Please note that I rarely round scores up at the end of the semester even if you are within half of a point of the next letter grade.

## Specific Classroom Policies

*Participation:* In order to best facilitate your success and to nurture the most productive and useful learning community possible, you are expected to actively participate in this course throughout the semester. This includes logging in to Eagle Online at least once per day, attending all in-class sessions, being on time for class and staying the entire time, coming to class prepared, and actively participating in all discussions and activities.

*Late Work:* There is a zero-tolerance policy for late work in this course. You must submit all quizzes and other assignments in their entirety before the posted deadline – no exceptions or excuses.

*Technical Compliance:* Students are expected to maintain a state of technical compliance, including (but not limited to): up-to-date software as required by the instructor; a stable Internet connection; and use of the Firefox browser when using Eagle Online. The instructor will not give consideration for lost/missing/unacceptable work stemming from technical non-compliance and/or end-user technical issues.

*Email Etiquette:* Because I teach multiple classes each semester, all email correspondence (outside of Eagle Online) must reference your last name and the CRN number (ex: Smith 123456) in the subject line. If your non-Eagle email does not meet these guidelines, it will be immediately deleted. However, the best way to contact me is via Eagle Online Mail. Additionally, all emails should be written using proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling and should avoid the use of slang words and “text speak” (such as cuz or plz).

*Respect:* To create a safe and enjoyable learning community, you are expected to respect each other’s opinions and experiences during classroom discussion, online, and at all other times. I also expect you to respect the course, myself and your fellow students by refraining from engaging in casual conversation or other disruptive behavior. It is particularly crucial that you do not speak when others are speaking. Disrespectful behavior may result in a decrease in your grade.

*Electronic Devices:* Because it severely disrupts the learning environment and distracts you from the important tasks we complete during class, the use of any electronic device (cell phones, pagers, mp3 players, hand-held games, etc.) during class is not allowed unless specifically requested by the instructor. Each violation of this policy will result in a three-point decrease in your final grade.

### **Disclaimer**

The material in this syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. Any changes made will be clearly described and explained. The ability to alter the syllabus provides us with the flexibility necessary to ensure success.