

**Social Problems (SOC 1020-80)**

**Winter Session (2015-2016)**

**12/26/15 – 01/14/16**

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**Winter Session:**

<http://www.wpunj.edu/winter/>

**Blackboard Support:**

<http://www.wpunj.edu/bb/students/>

**Library:**

<http://www.wpunj.edu/wintersession/library.dot>

**(1) Remember to use Chrome as your web browser when accessing and doing this course. Other browsers are known to cut off documents and give other kinds of problems.**

**(2) Print this syllabus out and have it near you when you do this course. Scroll and read all the way to the end.**

**(3) Technology Needed for this Course:** Contact IRT and or see Blackboard Student Help.

**Professor's Internet Address:** [ellism@wpunj.edu](mailto:ellism@wpunj.edu)

**Office Hours:** *I will be online at least once a day during the run of this course.*

**Who or what started social problems?**

*The Book of Genesis According to St. Miguelito:*

<http://allpoetry.com/poem/8582915->

[The Book of Genesis According to St. Miguelito-by-Miguel Pinero](#)

*We Didn't Start the Fire:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a2SS0zqmzk&feature=related>

**Identify and analyze the following social problems and issues.**

Gun Control

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6uYZdpLF1U>

Global Warming and the Environment

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pouYRrk-gyI>

Terrorism

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdgGj7wON10>

Oleanna

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMTbQ1g6vI8>

Precious

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpU8rJ\\_ZwOs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpU8rJ_ZwOs)

When the Levees Broke

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pD1aVJaRsM&feature=fvw>

Trading Schools

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpfMD9gWNf8>

Legalizing Syringe and Needle Exchange Programs

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpTKQAaC-Yw>

Pariah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNRdxsTmV1U>

The Unequal Opportunity Race

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBb5TgOXgNY>

Body Projects

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTImho\\_RovY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTImho_RovY)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaB5K-PvnSY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9Ctt7FGFBo>

We will explore the social problems in these video clips along with many other contemporary issues including crime, juvenile delinquency, bullying, family responsibilities and how the human body is problematized in society.

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**Course Description:**

This course presents fundamental sociological concepts and analyzes major problems of contemporary society including micro and macro social causes. We will examine the individual and structural components of society that contextualize behavior while exploring topics such as but not limited to: the social construction and dissemination of power; poverty; racism; ethnic conflict; gendered inequalities; the environment; suburban and urban life; drugs and crime; social deviance; health and body-related issues; the family; and, educational inequality. In addition, we will examine “facts”, theories, and methods sociologists use in the study of social problems. Last, we will also consider how other nations address problems that are familiar in the United States.

**Course Prerequisites: None****Course Objectives:***To enable students to understand and utilize:*

- a. Their “Sociological Imaginations”;
- b. Basic sociological research methods in the study of social problems;
- c. Sociological theories to understand how prevalent social problems are conceptualized within the American value system;
- d. Primary sociological interpretations toward the analysis and resolution of social problems for societal betterment;
- e. The role of social institutions in shaping and transforming society;
- f. The variation in what individuals and groups define as social problems and how a society solves its problems;
- g. Contemporary U.S. and global perspectives when examining major social issues and behaviors identified as social problems and.

**Student Learning Outcomes:***Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:*

- a. Demonstrate knowledge of how past, present and future social events and problems are inextricably linked;
- b. Formulate strategies and methods to locate, research, evaluate and apply information through mini research projects;
- c. Utilize sociological theories to study, ask meaningful questions about, and address complex social problems;
- d. Analyze social policies and recommend solutions to resolve social problems and conflicts for the betterment of society;

- e. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of social institutions in creating and solving social problems;
- f. Demonstrate knowledge of how social problems are defined and contextualized by a definition of a situation and how society solves problems;
- g. Display an understanding of how contemporary U.S. and global perspectives are utilized to define social problems

**Required Textbook:**

Social Problems, 13th Edition by Eitzen, Zinn and Eitzen-Smith

**Here is the ISBN: 0205949185**

Here is the link to the book:

<http://www.mypersonstore.com/bookstore/social-problems-plus-new-mysoclab-with-etext-access-0205949185>

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**Topical Outline and Course Content:**

*Due dates and times along with specific assignments will be provided when the course starts.*

**Module 1: (Defining and Analyzing Social Problems; and Conflict Resolution)**

**Module 2: (Social Inequality; Deviance; Drugs; and Crime and Justice)**

**Module 3: (Race; and Gender)**

**Module 4: (Marriage and Family; and Education)**

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**Method of Instruction and Student Learning Activities:**

This is an online course, which means all lessons/lectures, discussions, writing, group work, activities, etc. will be transmitted via the computer. Discussion Board, mini writing assignments which will include individual responses to the weekly readings along with a traditional essay final exam will be a part of this online course. Again, it is important that students be on discussion board regularly and respond to all deadlines. **You cannot be absent from the course and then all of a sudden appear and submit back/late work.**

Please read announcements and emails daily to check for any course changes.

### **Make up Exam Policy; Plagiarism; and Other Important Notes:**

The need to make up the final exam will have to be verified. All work submitted automatically goes into a shell where I run it to check for plagiarism/past submissions. Again, you will not be allowed to make up late work or post discussions late. All cases of academic dishonesty will be turned over to the Dean's office.

### **Method of Evaluation/Assessment – Grading:**

1) Discussion Board Original Responses to Assignments = 30%

2) Responding Back to Other Students' Original Responses = 30%

3) Reaction Papers 20%

5) Final Exam = 20%

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Total = 100%

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### **Bibliography of Supportive Texts:**

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Economic Policy Institute:

<http://www.epi.org/>

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Parrillo, Vincent N. 2008. *The Encyclopedia of Social Problems*. New York: Sage Publications, Inc.

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Saletan, W. 2003. *Bearing Right: How the Conservatives Won the Abortion War*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Society for the Study of Social Problems:

<http://www.sssp1.org/>

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Viguerie, R. A., & Franke, D. 2004. *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*. Chicago: Bonus Books.

Weber, Lynn. 2010. *Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Winant, Howard. 2009. "Just Do It: Notes on Politics and Race at the Dawn of the Obama Presidency." *DuBois Review* 6 (1): 49-70.

Zegart, A. B. 2004. Blue ribbons, black boxes: Toward a better understanding of presidential commissions. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 34: 366-393.

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