

Sociology 202-10

SUMMER 2015

Social Problems

M-F 9:00a-12:00p

Professor: Dr. Brooms

SOCIOLOGY 202-10 SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Course Title:	Social Problems	Instructor:	Dr. Brooms
Course Number:	SOC 202	Office:	118 Lutz Hall
Classroom:	Davidson 306	Telephone:	502.852.8026
Class Time:	M-F 9:00a - 11:50a	Email:	dr.brooms@louisville.edu
Office Hours:	M 8:00a - 9:00a / W 4:00 - 5:00p		

Because sociology addresses the most challenging issues of our time, it is a rapidly expanding field whose potential is increasingly tapped by those who craft policies and create programs. Sociologists understand social inequality, patterns of behavior, forces for social change and resistance, and how social systems work.

-- American Sociological Association Web site, "What is Sociology?"

Course Goals/Objectives:

In this class we start with the “sociological imagination,” which is a term coined by sociologist C. Wright Mills. Mills used the term to refer to the ability to understand the relationship between what is happening in people’s personal lives and the social forces that surround them. The questions that take primary interest for us are: How are individual life experiences and understandings shaped by the larger context? How can changes in American society be understood as part of a globalized system in which wealth is produced through financial investment, goods are globally produced, and consumerism plays the major role in advanced economies? How have these changes impacted personal and social life? How might we now better theorize the relationships of social structure and individual life? These are some of the questions that we wrestle with in this class before moving on to suggest ways to facilitate social justice.

Course Goals:
Knowledge- Students will be able to:
1. Use the sociological imagination as an analytical tool for understanding the social world; particularly in describing the nature of contemporary social issues.
2. Explain the development and consequences of social problems at the micro and macro levels.
3. Critically explore social issues and work to develop solutions.
Skills- Students will:
1. Improve their abilities in learning how to learn, specifically in reading, writing, class discussion, and presenting ideas/opinions orally.
2. Improve critical thinking and analytic skills.
3. Develop interpersonal skills through class discussions, presentations and debates.
4. Organize, present and lead a discussion on a selected social issue in the class.

Required Texts:

Hochschild (2012), *The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home*
Jones & Newman (1998), *Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago* [Paperback]
Kozol (2012), *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*
Shipler (2004), *Working Poor: Invisible in America*

Several readings may be available through email / Blackboard

<https://blackboard.louisville.edu/>

*** Required Activity ***

Activation of Student Email Account: Obtain your free email account by going to <http://louisville.edu/email/>. Your instructor will use your Prairie State email account to contact you and send reminders and other helpful information this semester.

Course Expectations:

To complete this course, you must satisfy the following requirements: Read all assigned material. Students are responsible for all materials presented in text, class notes and handouts. The professor is **NOT** responsible for any missed materials.

Students will be expected to adhere to the policies outlined in the student conduct below:

- **Attendance and Office Hours:** Regular attendance and participation in class discussion is expected. Excessive absences and or tardiness will result in a lower than average attendance/participation grade. Students should make every effort to attend each class and to arrive on time. If a class is missed, it is the student's responsibility to find out what material s/he missed and should try and get notes from another student (i.e. not from me). Students who attend regularly should feel under no obligation to provide notes to habitually absent students. Students must notify me ahead of time regarding any foreseen absence that will conflict with a test date, due date, etc. Please feel free to come to my office hours to discuss any question you might have about the course or the assignments, as well as any other question about readings, lectures, assignments or grades. In general, email is a more reliable and efficient means of contacting me than telephone.
- **Commitment:** Students should plan on spending at least TWO hours of study for every ONE hour in class. Outside preparation and class attendance alone do not guarantee success or the highest grade for this course; rather, mastery of the material and acquisition of necessary skills determine success and grades.
- **Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism -- the use of others' words as your own -- will not be tolerated in this class. **Plagiarism on any assignment will result in your receiving an F in the course. In addition, plagiarism cases will be reported to the College Dean and a record of the plagiarism will be placed in your permanent file.** Repeat offenses can result in suspension or expulsion from the university. Plagiarism includes the significant use of textbook or other reading materials, or other papers (published or unpublished). If you have questions about

plagiarism and/or about the proper way to cite materials, feel free to ask the professor, your TA, or consult the undergraduate catalog's statement on this issue.

Plagiarism includes any of the following:

1. Handing in someone else's work as your own.
 2. Taking credit for ideas that you have heard or read somewhere, without citing your sources.
 3. Including exact phrases, sentences, paragraphs or any text from a book, article or website without marking the text as a quotation and citing the source.
 4. *Paraphrasing* text from another source (that is, changing the words slightly or summarizing the information) without citing the source.
- **Civility:** All members of the community are expected to communicate in a civil, professional manner at all times, both in and out of the classroom. Academic discourse, including discussion and argumentation, is to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified manner that is respectful of and understanding toward both peers and professors.
 - **Disruptive Behavior:** Any activity which constitutes as unreasonable interruption of the learning process, including, but not limited to the following:
 - Tardiness, leaving and returning during class, leaving class early without previous authorization all have the potential to disrupt the learning environment.
 - Eating is not allowed in the classroom.
 - Side discussions and conversations that distract the learning process, or impede, hinder, or inhibit the ability of other students to obtain full benefit of the education process is disruptive.
 - Cell phones, iPods, and other personal electronic devices should not be used in the classroom. Please turn all cell phones on vibrate so as not to disturb the class. If you need to take a call, please leave the class to answer it.

Students with Disabilities:

All students with a disability who require special accommodation to participate in and complete this course must contact the Disability Resource Center (852-6938) for verification of eligibility and for determination of specific accommodation.

Class Format:

The format for this class will be a seminar style, which will combine lectures and class discussions. The lectures will cover and attempt to explain some of the complexities of understanding sociological concepts. You must do the reading, the paper assignments, and participate in class discussions. If you have circumstances that will not allow you the time for reading and contemplation, then you should consider another class.

Class Readings:

The books for this course can be purchased at the bookstore while articles will be made available to students on the reading list, through email notification, and/or through Blackboard.

*I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO PRINT PAPER COPIES OF THE ASSIGNED ARTICLES.
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I have repeated this statement in hopes that more students will take this advice. Printing a paper copy of the articles allows you to bring them to class to reference during discussions. Doing so also allows you to

underline, highlight, and take notes directly on the readings. Further it greatly facilitates being able to compare and contrast the articles with the textbook and with the other readings both of which you will need to do in order to do well in this class.

News:

The theories and ideas from class will be easier to learn if you can recognize the concepts outside of the classroom. Since the issues we deal with in this course are contemporary social problems, we will gear some of our readings and discussions within our current social world—that is, you will be required to make sense of current news as they relate to class topics.

We will weave in our news discussions throughout the semester. Below are links to newspapers and magazines that have regular web updates:

<http://www.nytimes.com>
<http://www.thenation.com>
<http://www.time.com/time>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>

Email:

You are expected to have access to your University of Louisville email for the duration of this course. We will use email from the beginning of the course until the end of the semester. I strongly encourage you to check your email often, as I will send important information about the course via email. At a minimum, please check it the day before class meets and one to two days afterwards. If you have problems with your emails, please notify me immediately.

2) Your email must have a **subject** written in the subject line. The first part of this subject is our course prefix and the second part of this subject will refer to the matter that you are bringing to my attention. Here is an example:

Subject: SOC 202-01 Paper #2

3) An email address is not a name. Sign your name. Similarly, my email address is not my name. Address me by name, as you would in a letter. Emails are not analogous to little slips of paper being passed around in the back row of a classroom. They are formal communications. Treat them as such. Try it this way:

Dr. Brooms,

I have a question regarding our assignment and wanted to know if you might be available on Monday after class. I wanted to discuss my paper with you.

*Thank you,
Ms. Hanna Student*

4) If you send me an email, as you can scan from the above example, I expect there to be a subject, greeting, something written in the message portion of the email, and a salutation (please include Mr. or Ms. as this is how I communicate with students). In this class, all email is considered professional communication.

Course Requirements:

The following is meant to give students an idea of what to expect.

- 1) Attendance: The format of this class is a seminar, which means that I will not lecture extensively. Students are expected to come to each class session prepared to discuss the assigned reading material. Given the small size of the class, failure to attend and to participate will place a greater burden on your classmates. Additionally, our class meets once per week and we cover a broad range of information. Each class missed after your third absence will result in the loss of ten (10) points toward your final grade.
- 2) Reflection Papers: Reflection papers are designed to teach you how to think critically about the many topics that we will cover in this class. They are also a way to make course material relevant to current events, provide you with a forum/opportunity to express your views, and to respond to reading assignments. Students should understand that writing is a learning activity. We will have a total of **four (4) Reflection Papers** for this course; the majority of our Reflection Papers will be two to three (2-3), double-spaced pages unless otherwise noted. All papers must be typed.

Reflection Papers:

All papers are to be written in a clear and coherent manner, using textual references to support your understanding. A Reflection Paper is typically 2-3 typed, double-spaced pages; **ALL** papers are to be Times New Roman 12-point font. Papers are to be well written, proofread, and typed, unless otherwise noted.

- Students are responsible for printing AND stapling their own papers. Papers must be submitted in class via hard copy—on or before the assigned due date.
- **No papers will be accepted late.**

- 3) Free Writes/Responses: There will be three (3) free-writing assignments given over the course of the semester. Free writes will serve as an opportunity for you to reflect on class material and activities. These assignments will be structured loosely and students can use an informal writing style; they primarily will serve as a way for us to check in with students regarding specific topics, allow opportunities for students to think on paper, and in response to various class activities.
- 4) In-Class Presentation: Students will use classroom learning and topics of interest to guide an in-class presentation. Students will choose a contemporary social problem facing the United States using the news media and other relevant sources to find a problem that concerns them. Students will research the problem and its causes and effects, and develop a plan to address the problem.
- 5) Midterm/Final Exams: Please note the dates on the schedule. The Midterm Exam will be used to assess student learning on the information that has been covered up to that point. The Final Exam is cumulative and will require students to pull information that has been covered throughout the semester. Both exams are writing intensive; students will be required to clearly define key terms in their own words, articulate concepts and connections for short answer questions, and write coherent responses to essay questions. **There are no make-up dates for exams.**

NOTE:

There is **NO** make-up exam for this class
All assignments should be submitted on the day that they are due
NO late papers will be accepted
There is **NO** extra-credit for this course

Grading:

The assignments in this class are worth a total of 200 points as follows:

1 Expectations/Goals (5/11/15)	2
1 In-Class Activity (5/11/15)	4
1 Class Response (5/11/15)	12
1 Email Response (5/11/15)	2
4 Reflection Papers @ 10 points each	40
2 Free Writes @ 5 points each	10
3 Class Activity @ 10 points	30
1 In-Class Presentation @ 20 points	20
1 Midterm Exam @ 20 points	20
1 Attendance/Participation @ 10 points	10
1 Final Exam @ 50 points	50
Total points for the class	200

The total number of points earned out of 200 will be converted into a letter grade. The grading scale, subject to my discretion, will be:

Total Points	Percentage of Possible Points	Letter Grade
196 – 200	98 – 100 %	A+
188 – 195	94 – 97%	A
180 – 187	90 – 93 %	A-
174 – 179	87 – 89%	B+
166 – 173	83 – 86%	B
160 – 165	80 – 82%	B-
154 – 159	77 – 79%	C+
146 – 153	73 – 76%	C
140 – 145	70 – 72%	C-
134 – 139	67 – 69%	D+
126 – 133	63 – 66%	D
120 – 125	60 – 62%	D-
119 and Below	Under 60 %	F

Each assignment will be reviewed and assigned a point value. Students can keep track of their grades by dividing their points received on each assignment by the total possible number of points. For instance, if a student received 5 points on one Class Activity (5), 8 points on two Free Write Assignments (10) and 28 on the first three Reflection Papers (30), that will give them 41 points. The most points that the student could have received were 45. By dividing 41 (points scored) by 45 (possible points), the student's percentage is 91%, which is a letter grade of A-.

A progressive grading method will be used for this class. As the semester progresses, expectations of student work will increase.

Note: There are **NO** make-up assignments or exams for this class and all assignments are to be submitted on the day that they are due, as there is **NO EXTRA-CREDIT** for this course.

Class Assignments and Schedule

Please note that this schedule may change in response to the needs and interests of the class. Other supplemental reading materials will be handed out in class or put on reserve in the library. Reading assignments are to be read for the day that they are listed.

M 5/11	Introduction	Expectations/ Goals
Tu 5/12	Theoretical Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ C. Wright Mills, “The Sociological Imagination” http://socialsciences.nsula.edu/assets/Site-Files/The-Promise.pdf● Ruane – The Sociological Perspective (posted on Blackboard)	Paper 1
W 5/13	Focus on Families <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hochschild – <i>The Second Shift</i>, ch 1-5 (pp 1-76)	
Th 5/14	Focus on Families <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hochschild – <i>The Second Shift</i>, ch 6-8 (pp 77-128)	
F 5/15	Focus on Families <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hochschild – <i>The Second Shift</i>, ch 10, 13-16	Paper 2
M 5/18	Work and Class <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Shipler – <i>Working Poor</i>, intro and ch 1-2	
Tu 5/19	Work and Class <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Shipler – <i>Working Poor</i>, intro and ch 4-5 (pp. 96-141)	MIDTERM EXAM
W 5/20	Focus on Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">● James Traub – What No School Can Do http://faculty.ucc.edu/english-chewing/traub.pdf● Kozol – <i>Savage Inequalities</i>, intro and ch 1	
Th 5/21	Focus on Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Kozol – <i>Savage Inequalities</i>, ch 2-3	Paper 3
F 5/22	Focus on Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Kozol – <i>Savage Inequalities</i>, ch 4-6	
M 5/25	NO CLASS – MEMORIAL DAY	
Tu 5/26	Focus: Social Problems and Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jones – Our America, Front Matter; ch 1-6 (pp 11-74)	Paper 4
W 5/27	Focus: Social Problems and Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jones – Our America, ch 7-12 (pp 75-112)	
Th 5/28	Focus: Social Problems and Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jones – Our America, ch 13-18 (pp 113-158)	
F 5/29	Class Conclusions... Bringing it all together <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jones – Our America, ch 19-25 (pp 159-208)	

NOTE:

** The Professor may alter this schedule and organizational structure when, in his judgment, doing so will enhance the educational experiences for the students.

** Student Presentations will be scheduled on Tuesday, May 26 through Thursday, May 28.

Syllabus Understanding and Agreement (SOC 202-10)

I have read and understood all portions of this syllabus. I understand that I must complete all assignments and follow all rules outlined in the syllabus.

By signing below, you are verifying that you completely understand the policies of the class.

Print your name: _____

Sign your name: _____

Date: _____