

**SOCIOLOGY 2140-
650 SOCIAL
PROBLEMS
Summer 2018**

Instructor: Cathy Thorpe
Office Hours: by appointment
Department of Sociology
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Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize students with the issues and theories in the sociological study of social problems, with particular attention to contemporary Canadian society.

Prerequisite(s) and Antirequisite(s):

None

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the major sociological theories and research used to understand social problems
- Understand that various inequalities based on age, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation exist
- Appreciate the various social issues confronting Canadians and the global community
- Understand the strategies being utilized to reduce inequalities in social problems

Required Text:

Available at the Bookstore: Holmes, Mooney, Knox, Schacht, *Understanding Social Problems* (Fifth Canadian Edition), 2016, Toronto: Nelson. ISBN: 9780176745929

Method of Evaluation:

Evaluation Breakdown:

Course grades will be determined on the basis of two formal discussion questions, a mid-term, a participation grade, and a final exam. The following distribution applies:

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|
| First formal discussion (submission due) | Week Four | 10% |
| Midterm exam | Week Seven | 30% |
| Second formal discussion (submission due) | Week Ten | 10% |
| Participation | Continuous | 15% |
| Final Exam | July 30th – August 2nd, TBA | <u>35%</u> |
| | | 100% |

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:

The schedule on the Owl site for the course will show the specific due dates for graded material.

Posted Discussion Questions:

Part of your grade will be based on two separately posted formal discussion questions (each worth 10% of your final grade). These questions will be posted in the Forums section of the course under Formal Discussions. The messages are "threaded" together around an original posting that raises a specific question or subject for discussion. The question will be posted on a specific day (as indicated on the OWL schedule). Once the question is posted, students will have one week to contribute to the discussion. The posting date (the date the instructor posts the discussion question), the closing date and time will be indicated on the OWL schedule). There will be no excuses accepted for late submissions. As everyone has an entire week in which to log on and overcome any technological difficulties that may unexpectedly arise, excuses are not plausible. Students' grades for this portion of the course will not be based solely on posting a response to the discussion (e.g. simply responding to the question). Both grammar and content will be considered. I will be looking for substantive comments in relation to the question (e.g. the student's ability to relate comments to course material as well as reflective ideas on other students' postings). More information as to the precise format of the discussion component will be available on OWL when the question is posted. Standards of "netiquette" will be adhered to. Please see <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/index.html> for details.

Participation Grade:

As the course Forums section allows everyone to read all of the posted messages, we will also use this forum for class participation. Your grade for class participation will be based on your submissions (with the **exception** of the introductory message and the formal discussion questions) to the Unit Weekly Discussions. You can earn up to 15% of your grade by submitting messages spaced throughout the course related to the course content. For

example, these messages can be in response to issues raised in the course notes, or you may wish to share your thoughts or ideas on the readings. You may also want to apply aspects of the course material to the news of the day. In order to facilitate active participation by all, you may not post more than 2 participation comments per week. It is recommended that you participate once a week in order to receive full credit for this component.

Although **not** for credit, you may also use the General Discussion section of Forums to raise any substantive or technical questions you may have. Just create a new topic for these discussions.

Finally, as I hope to be able to encourage a sense of community among students through the use of this form of communication, I will require that all students post an introductory message to the discussion section in the first week of classes (see the Forums area of OWL).

Technical Support: Student Problems with OWL...

- If you are experiencing problems, please contact the ITS Help Desk at (519) 661-3800. For hours and additional contact information please visit <http://wts.uwo.ca/helpdesk/> Troubleshooting and help information is available for you in the OWL Documentation Site. To join the site:
 - Log into OWL (<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>)
 - From My Workspace, select Membership from the left-hand side
 - Click the "Joinable Sites" link
 - Find "OWL Documentation" in the list of Joinable Sites
 - Click the "Join" link
 - Click the "Home" link at the left to refresh the page
 - The site "OWL Documentation" will now be one of your active sites.

A Note on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Exams:

Exams will be based on material covered in the on-line course notes and the assigned readings. You are responsible for all material covered. Both the midterm and final exam will be two hours in length. Each of the exams will consist of multiple choice questions. The tests and examinations are not cumulative. **Note: Both the midterm test and the final exam will be written in person at one of the designated exam centres.**

In the case of midterm tests, the approval of the Dean is not required when rescheduling term tests. However, to be considered for a make-up, you must notify the instructor **before** the scheduled exam (by e-mail, or phone or in person) **and** you must provide appropriate documentation as soon as possible.

There will be no provision for make-up exams or other work for the purpose of improving grades. Be sure that you note the date of the midterm test and the final exam schedule. No electronic devices are permitted in exams.

Scantron exams:

You should also be aware that "Computer-marked multiple choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Syllabus and Reading Assignment General Information:

It is advised that you read the assigned readings prior to accessing the on-line lessons/course notes. The on-line course notes can be thought of as the equivalent of lectures in a traditional setting. As such, they are an important part of the course and it is expected that you will give the course notes the same attention that you would lectures/classes in the traditional setting. Please check the OWL schedule very carefully, including any changes that are required throughout the term.

| <i>Unit -Week ending</i> | Topic | Textbook Readings |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Unit 1 – May 11 | Introduction to the Course and The Study of Social Problems; Research Methodology | Holmes et al., Ch. 1 |
| Unit 2 – May 18 | Illness and Health Care | Holmes et al., Ch. 2 |
| Unit 3 – May 25 | Alcohol and Other Drugs <i>Discussion # 1 question will be posted May 25</i> | Holmes et al., Ch. 3 |
| Unit 4 – June 1 | Crime and Violence <i>Discussion # 1 question will be due June 1</i> | Holmes et al., Ch. 4 |
| Unit 5 – June 8 | Family Problems | Holmes et al., Ch. 5 |
| Unit 6 – June 15 | Youth and Aging | Holmes et al., Ch. 6 |
| Midterm exam | <i>Late June, TBA (worth 30%)</i> | |
| Unit 7 – June 22 | Gender Inequality | Holmes et al., Ch. 7 |
| Unit 8 – June 29 | Race and Ethnicity | Holmes et al., Ch. 8 |
| Unit 9 – July 6 | Sexualities <i>Discussion # 2 question will be posted July 6</i> | Holmes et al., Ch. 9 |
| Unit 10 – July 13 | Poverty <i>Discussion # 2 submission will be due July 13</i> | Holmes et al., Ch. 10 |

Unit 11 – Work and Unemployment
July 20

Holmes et al., Ch. 11

Unit 12 – Environmental Problems
July 27

Holmes et al., Ch. 13

Final Exam –date TBA: July 30 – August 2nd, 2018 (worth 35%)