



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2261B-650
Contemporary Social Problems
(Online, Asynchronous)
Summer 2023

Instructor: Dr. Lyn Hoang
Office Hours: By appointment on Zoom
Department of Sociology
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This is a DRAFT only. Please see your course OWL site for the final version.

Course Description:

Today's society is beset by many contentious social problems (e.g., racial/ethnic discrimination, sexual assault, poverty & inequality & the decline of the middle class). In this course, students will use a sociological perspective to examine the causes, consequences, and solutions to some of society's most troubling social problems.

The materials (lesson videos, readings, films, podcasts, and industry videos) explored in this course will enable you to examine the diverse range of social problems and how these disparities impact your lives and the lives of others. The course is designed to enhance your critical thinking skills by applying sociological concepts, theories, approaches, and ideas, to a range of social problems.

Prerequisite(s): None.

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 2140.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

1. Define social problems and explain how they differ from personal issues
2. Examine a range of social problems confronting Canadians historically and presently.
3. Explore theoretical perspectives used to understand social problems
4. Apply key concepts, ideas, and theoretical paradigms within sociology to the study of social problems, power, and inequality.
5. Critically evaluate the individual and collective strategies being utilized to reduce inequalities and social problems
6. Apply new learning to evaluate media portrayals of social problems

Course Materials:

- **Required Text(s):** There is **NO required** textbook for this course.
 - Weekly readings and video/audio materials will be posted on OWL in the corresponding “Lessons” tab
- **Supplementary Text: Social Problems: A Canadian Perspective. 5th Edition** (2020) by Lorne Tepperman, Josh Curtis, and Rachel La Touche. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.

- Students may benefit from the use of this supplemental textbook to aid in their learning of course materials. The use of this textbook is optional.
- Print and digital text available through Campus Bookstore at Western. Another resource for digital text: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/social-problems-lorne-tepperman-josh-curtis-v9780199032792>
- **Technical requirements:** You must have access to a laptop/computer capable of handling OWL (including uploading papers, completing online quizzes/exams, and download/streaming lesson videos). Stable internet connection is recommended.
 - If meeting with me for my office hours over Zoom: You will need a working microphone (*required*) and working webcam (*suggested*).

Communication:

- **How to contact me:** The best way to reach me is through email: lhoang3@uwo.ca. Emails will be monitored, and students will typically receive a response in 24 – 48 hours. Please note: Messages to me sent via OWL “messages” tool or discussion forum may not receive timely responses.
- **How to get important information:** Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

The use of ChatGPT, OpenAI or any other AI software is **NOT PERMITTED** within this course. Assignments and/or exams with suspected use of AI software will result in an automatic failure.

Evaluation Breakdown:

Description	Weight	Due Date
Quizzes x3	30% (10% each)	Dates listed below
Proposal	5%	June 30, 2023
Critical Film/TV Show Analysis	30%	July 19, 2023
Final Exam	35%	Exam Period
	<hr/> 100%	

Evaluation Details:

Proposal (5%) and Critical Film/TV Show Analysis (30% of your final grade)

Students will work individually and select a film or TV show and complete a critical analysis that applies sociological concepts, theories, and approaches to representations of inequality or social problems within the film/show. This assignment is broken up into two parts. Students will work independently and write a 1 – 2 page proposal and a 5-7 page final paper (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman, normal margins). More instructions will be distributed on OWL.

A digital copy of the paper will be submitted online to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism and AI use.

Late assignments will be docked at 5% per day. Assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Quizzes x3 (30% of your final grade):

There will be three quizzes (consisting of multiple choice/short answer) drawing from materials within the required readings, podcasts and/or YouTube/TedTalk videos only. (Note: Supplemental readings or videos will not be tested).

Quizzes will be completed asynchronously via OWL. They will be made available on the specified date for a 24-hour time frame. Students will have just 40 minutes to 1 hour to submit their completed quiz beginning once they have opened the assessment.

- QUIZ #1 – June 28 12am EST until 11:59pm EST (materials covered from June 19 – June 26)
- QUIZ #2 – July 12 12am EST until 11:59pm EST (materials covered from June 29 – July 10)
- QUIZ #3 – July 23 12am EST until 11:59pm EST (materials covered from July 13 – July 20)

Final Exam (35% of your final grade):

This will be written asynchronously online via OWL. The exam will be multiple choice and essay/long answer format. It will be open book. The final exam will be scheduled during the Final Exam Period and will be available on OWL for a 24-hour time frame. Students will have just 3 hours to submit their completed exam beginning once they have opened the examination.

Any technical issues are the sole responsibility of the student. Please save your work often, as the loss of data is not an acceptable reason to fail to submit. More directions will be distributed on OWL as soon as they are available.

The final exam will be cumulative of all *lecture materials only* from weeks 1 – 6 (NOTE: weekly readings, podcasts, and YouTube or TedTalk videos will not be tested).

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:

For work worth less than 10% of the total course grade (proposal assignment ONLY), the instructor is empowered to grant academic considerations without referring the student to their academic counsellors. Please reach out to me via email as soon as possible. Students will be granted 48-hour extension for the proposal assignment.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade (quizzes, final paper, and final exam), students **must** provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. This information can *only* be collected by the student's Academic Counselling unit, not the instructor.

Any missed assessments supported by your academic counsellor will be provided with an extension or make-up opportunity. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup

exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Academic Policies:

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](#)” document

https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health

2023