



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Summer, 2010

SYG2010: Social Problems

Monday and Wednesday: 7:00-8:40 p.m.
Professor: Dr. Olmedo J. Varela, Ph.D.
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Website: www.ojvarela.com

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Text:

Stanley Eitzen & Maxine Baca Zinn. 2006. **Social Problems**. Tenth Edition. McGraw Hill.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course examines the complexities of modern society, including the political economy of social problems; problems of people, the environment, and location; problems of inequality; social structure and individual deviance; and institutional problems. The course also incorporate discussion of potential solutions to the problems addressed.

The combination of subjects addressed during the course will provide students with a sociological framework that will help them analyze and understand society's social problems from a scientific perspective. Individual cases studies will be undertaken by students on specific social problems, including potential solutions and a conceptual design of a public campaign to promote public participation to help solve and/or prevent the problem. Upon completion of the course, students will have a better understanding of modern society and the way in which social scientists foresee the solutions for social problems.

Grading Policies:

2 assignments 20%
2 partial examinations 40%
Final examination 40%

Class Schedule: (12 weeks)

Week 1	Introduction to the course • Sustainable Development • Capital Investments and Common Good
Week 2	History, Definition, and Types of Social Problems
Week 3	Sociological Imagination and the Basic Unit of Analysis
Week 4	Review (May 31) and Partial Exam 1 (June 2). Pages 2-21
Week 5	Wealth and Power, the bias of the system • capitalism and socialism • U.S. economy: concentration of corporate wealth
Week 6	Political System: links between wealth and power





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Week 7	Bias of the political system
Week 8	Review (June 28) and Partial Exam 2 (June 30), Pages 22-54
Week 9	Solutions to Social Problems • Sociology, social problems, and social change • Progressive principles to guide public policy
Week 10	Cont. Solutions to Social Problems • Is a progressive social policy possible? • Human agency: social change from the bottom up
Week 11	Presentations of case studies by students
Week 12	Continues, presentations of case studies by students and Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: Wednesday, August 4, 2010; 6:30-9:00PM
Section I: Pages 571-591
Section II: Essay and PowerPoint presentation

Section II, Final Exam

The second section of the final exam consists of a five pages single space essay (2000 words), including pictures and other graphic representations. An addendum could be added to the five pages essay, with additional graphic representations, including videos and other types of animated representations.

- I. Identify a social problem or challenge in a country, region, city, town or neighborhood
- II. Describe the problem or challenge using pictures, videos, statistics and other sources of information
 - a. Provide a graphic representation describing the problem or challenge.
 - b. Provide an explanation of the spatial and temporal scope of the problem or challenge
 - c. Explain how the specific problem or challenge you attempt to analyze affects achievement of the common good
- III. Identify what you consider are the sources of the problem or challenge
- IV. Based on Chapter 19, pages 571-591, identify a potential solution
- V. Propose a campaign to promote awareness and specific actions people can take to help solve and/or prevent the problem or challenge.
- VI. Deliver and submit a Power Point presentation of your case study, including a sample of your campaign using pictures, videos, etc.