

SOC 264: SOCIAL PROBLEMS**Spring, 2008****Credit Hours: 3 hours****Location of Class Meeting: AB1, 307****Class Meeting Time: MWF: 9-9:50 a.m.****Instructor: Dr. Furjen Deng****Office: AB1, 311C Phone: (936)294-1515, Fax: (936)294-3573, Email: soc_fjd@shsu.edu****Office Hours: MWF: 11-2 p.m. or by appointment****Teaching Assistant: Tolee Hankee. Phone: (936)294-3506****TEXT:**

1. Macionis, John J., Social Problems, Third Edition, Prentice Hall, 2007.
2. A pack of lecture notes is on sale at Eagle Graphics (Phone #: 295-6343).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course has been designed to make application of sociological principles and concepts in the examination of major social problems in the U.S. and worldwide. This semester we will be looking at several major social issues such as crime and violence, poverty, problems of inequality related to racism and sexism, and concerns found in the major social institutions of family, education, health care and economy. In addition, we will also examine issues related to global inequality and environmental problems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide a clear and concise description and analysis of above problems.
2. To use theories (or perspectives) of sociology -- structural functionalism, power conflict theory, and symbolic interactionist perspective to analyze the social problems taken up in this course.
3. To find the usefulness of the sociological perspective in explaining and resolving social problems.
4. To help students establish knowledge, which will provide a good foundation for advanced courses, individual study, or leading to expertise with respect to these problems.

GRADING POLICY:

The requirements for this course include completing the assigned readings, taking required examinations, and participating in regular class meetings and discussion.

Reading assignments: Regular class meetings will be structured around a combined lecture and discussion format. Hence, completing assigned readings prior to coming to class will be essential for informed discussion and debate.

Examinations: There will be **four major exams** (25% each). All exams will be a combination of true/false and multiple-choice questions. Each exam will cover assigned readings, lectures, films, and

supplemental materials that we have discussed up to the time of each exam. The specific date for each exam will be announced in the class and the Blackboard as the course progresses.

Class participation (5%): Following University policy pertaining to class attendance, regular and punctual attendance is expected of each student. A record of attendance will be maintained by the instructor. Students are expected to show appropriate cause for both absences and tardiness and are also expected to initiate action to satisfy all missed class work. Particular in borderline cases, exceptionally fine or weak class involvement will be considered in the calculation of the final grade. The highest-class involvement grade without significant involvement in class discussion is an “A” and this allows up to six hours absence. Involvement in class discussion (quantitative and qualitative) is necessarily for an “A” (5% of the grade).

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

<u>Source</u>	<u>Percent</u>
4 major exams	100
<u>Class participation</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	105

Extra credits: A five (5) point extra credit opportunity will be made available during the semester. The extra credit will involve watching a movie and answering a short quiz on the movie. A study guide will be provided. A maximum of five points will be added to your third exam score.

You should get about 90% overall for an "A", 80% for a "B", 70% for a "C", and 60% for a "D". The cut-offs, however, are flexible and I may change them at the end of the semester if I consider it necessary. Dates for major exams, grades, and other important announcements related to the course are posted on Blackboard. To access Blackboard, go to www.shsu.edu and select “Blackboard” at “University Fast Links”.

MISSED EXAMS:

The student is allowed to make up one missed exam **if he or she receives consent from the instructor before the exam. Any makeup exam will be held at the end of the semester and is a comprehensive exam.**

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom.

Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. At a minimum the student will receive a failing grade on the assignment in which dishonesty was involved.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

DISABLED STUDENT POLICY

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center (Lee Drain Annex, (936)294-1720).

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

To enhance the quality of teaching, each student will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT

Each student is expected to be fully acquainted and comply with all published policies, rules, and regulations of Sam Houston State University. Students are also expected to comply with all federal and state laws.

Section 5.2.22 of the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines that campus disruptive activities or disorderly conduct on component-owned or controlled property or at a component-sponsored or supervised function that inhibit or interfere with the educational responsibility of the component community or the component's social-educational activities shall include but not be limited to: using abusive, indecent, profane or vulgar language; making offensive gestures or displays that tend to incite a breach of the peace; perpetrating fights, assaults, acts of sexual violence, abuse, or threats; or evincing some obviously offensive manner or committing an act that causes a person to feel threatened. Such prohibition includes disorderly classroom conduct

that obstructs, interferes with, inhibits and/or disrupts teaching and/or related classroom activities. **All cell phones should also be turn off or put in silent mode during the class.**

IMPORTED DATE

March 7 Last day to drop without a grade of “F”

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

(These dates are tentative and subject to change as the course progresses)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics/Assigned Readings</u>
Jan. 16	Orientations and Introduction
Jan. 18-25	Thinking about Social Problems, Concepts, Theoretical Perspectives and Research Method (Text: Chapter 1; Notes: Topic 1)
Jan, 28- Feb.1	Crime, Violence, Drug and Criminal Justice System (Text: Chapters 6 & 7; Notes: Topic 2)
Feb. 4 -11	Physical and Mental Health (Text: Chapters 9 & 10; Notes: Topic 3)
Feb. 13	Exam 1
Feb 15-22	Poverty (Text: Chapter 2; Topic 4)
Feb 25- March 5	Racial Inequality: Race and Ethnic Relations (Text: Chapter 3; Notes: Topic 5)
March 7-21	Gender Inequality and Sexual Orientation (Text: Chapters 4 and 8; Notes: Topic 6)
March 10-14	Spring Break
March 24	Exam 2
March 26-April 4	Family-Related Problems (Text: Chapters 8 & 13; Notes: Topic 7)
April 7 -11	Problems in Education (Text: Chapter 14; Topic 8)
April 14	Exam 3

April 16-23	Wealth and Power: The Bias of the Economic and Political System (Text: Chapters, 11 & 12; Notes: Topic 9)
April 25-May 5	Cities in Crisis and Population and Environmental Problems (Text: Chapters 15, 16 and 17; Notes: Topic 10)
May 9	Final Exam Study Day
May 14	Final Exam (8-10 a.m., Wednesday)