SOC 1306.002 – U.S. Social Problems
COURSE SYLLABUS:
Spring 2013

Instructor:	**Class Times:**	**Class Location:**
Louis Lufkin	Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 12pm-12:50pm	McDowell Adm. 257

Office Location:
Ferguson SS 219

Office Hours:
Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 2pm-4pm or by appointment
Tuesday-Thursday, 11am-1pm or by appointment

Office Phone: 903-468-3259
Office Fax: 903-886-5330

University Email Address: Louis.Lufkin@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Henslin, James M. (2011). *Social Problems: A down to earth approach*. 10e. Pearson.

Course Description:

A critical discussion of the sociological perspectives on studying descriptions, causes, and prevention of social problems such as crime, mental illness, drug abuse, environmental degradation, poverty, terrorism, and declining quality of life in today's world.

Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is intended to enable you to learn and think critically about:

1. What social problems are (and what they are not) and how they occur
2. Why social problems occur (explanations will be addressed with the help of sociological theories)
3. Inform you on how social problems affect us or what their consequences are for the individual and for society
4. How to deal or cope with social problems (including realization that the problems in society are realities, they will occur in one form or another, even if we don't want them

to, and that we may not necessarily 'solve' them or illuminate them; only that we may develop ways to prevent them as much as possible)

5. To describe the social connections in social life, to analyze them with sociological theories, and apply these analyses to hypothetical or real life situations.
6. To develop critical thinking skills as they relate to understanding the ongoing social life in any society.
7. To allow you to expand your understanding of basic sociological terminology and concepts as they relate to current social issues.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following hardware and software are necessary in order to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to ECollege, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

For those of you who are not familiar with eCollege, I suggest you take the tutorial offered online. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the folks in Technology Services.

ACCESS and NAVIGATION

This course will be enhanced using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To log in to the course, go to: https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx.

You will need your CWID and password to long in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. Once you log in to eCollege, click on My Courses and select SOC 1306 – U.S. Social Problems.

Please note that this course is combination of face-to-face instruction and on-line instruction; and as such, many aspects of the course (including assignments / discussions / comments / exams, etc.) **may be turned in / completed through eCollege. Your grades will also be available in eCollege.**

After logging in to the course, students will notice that the weekly/unit content area is located on the left navigation bar. These weekly/unit content areas are identified as Week 1, Week 2, etc. (this corresponds to the course schedule located in the syllabus.)

Student should access course materials by clicking on the proper weekly/unit content area. Students should read the weekly overview that contains information about what is to be

covered in class, along with a series of weekly tasks (these tasks correspond to the links available in each weekly unit and to what appears in the syllabus).

Students should then click on the **Lecture** link and take the time to read/view any material/presentations I have posted. The lecture/presentation is an attempt to integrate information from the course readings and includes information from the text/readings as well as other information that I consider important to your understanding of the subject matter.

Students will complete and submit any on-line assignments by clicking on the **Assignments** link that will be visible if an assignment is scheduled for that week. Students should be sure to submit any assignments according to established instructions and to submit any assignments into the properly named / numbered dropbox, if any. Any assignments are answered and grades are calculated within the eCollege system.

Students will complete assigned exams by clicking on the **Exam** link that will be visible, if an exam is scheduled for that week. Exams are answered and grades are calculated within the eCollege system.

COMMUNICATION and SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

My primary form of communication with the class will be through announcements in-class, eCollege, and e-mail. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students via Announcements and your official University e-mail address available to me through MyLeo. It will be your responsibility to check your University e-mail regularly.

Students who wish to discuss an issue with me personally should do so through e-mail or through my (in person) office hours.

Students who e-mail me can expect a reply (at MY earliest convenience) within 24 hours Monday-Thursday. Students who e-mail me during holidays or over the weekend, i.e. Friday-Sunday, can expect a reply (at MY earliest convenience) on the next regularly scheduled business day. <u>This will be strictly adhered to!!!</u>

eCollege Student Technical Support:

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on *'Live Support'* on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the *'Help'* button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc…)

For assistance with the library: To access the Library databases and Library tutorials you must open a separate browser session. Minimize your eCollege session and open another browser window going to the Library's web site directly: http://www.tamuc.edu/library not from within eCollege.

Policy for Reporting Problems with eCollege:

Should students encounter eCollege-based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed.

• Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
• Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
• Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should Email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
• At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the helpdesk. I strongly encourage you to check for compatibility of your browser BEFORE the course begins and to take the eCollege tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the eCollege platform. ONLY eCollege-based problems are legitimate.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes for the course. Each week you will work on various combinations of assignments, activities, discussions, and readings.

Due to the technical nature of the materials being presented, it is highly recommended that the student take notes over the readings, class lectures, discussions, videos and assignment activities. **Attendance at all class meetings is required!!!**

Grading

A total of 400 points are attainable in the course. The breakdown of points is as follows:

Quizzes	15@ 10 pts	= 150 points
Assignments	1 @ 100 pts	= 100 points
Regular Exams	3 @ 50 pts	= 150 points

		= 400 points total

The final grades in this course will be calculated according to the following scale:

A 360-400 points
B 320-359 points
C 280-319 points
D 240-279 points
F 239 points and below

The student's grade in this course will be a direct result of the student's personal dedication to the course requirements. **There will be no curving of grades.**

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Attendance Policy

The course meeting times are M, W, F, 12pm-12:50pm, according to the University schedule. It is each student's responsibility to attend the course meetings and complete any assignments, activities, and exams as outlined in this syllabus.

Class Assignment

Preparation of a portfolio, consisting of four (4) articles from newspaper, magazine, or professional journal sources that illustrate the principles of sociology as presented in the chapters of the textbook. No blogs or non-scholarly proven internet sources will be allowed. If you have a question about a source, please contact the professor prior to submitting each article on its due date.

Each of the four (4) articles will have a submission due date and time. Each article will be assessed and returned to the student and shall be added to the portfolio which will be submitted in its entirety at the end of the semester for the final grade.

Each submission will consist of a brief typed, written summary of the article (**half a page**) and a typed, written discussion of the sociological principles represented (**one page**). A copy of the first page of the article used, shall be attached to each submission. **Completed portfolios shall be presented in a presentation folder (with the clear front cover), which contains a fastener(s) for papers.**

The briefs and discussions should be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and shall be in APA style format.

Weekly Quizzes

There will be 15 weekly quizzes, consisting of 10 questions each, worth 10 points per quiz. **Attendance in class is mandatory in order to take the quizzes, which will be on eCollege. With the exception of Quiz 1, each quiz will be password protected and the passwords will be provided (in class)…a portion of the password on Monday, a portion of the password on Wednesday, and the remainder of the password on Friday.** The quizzes must be completed by the due date and time or no points will be assessed.

Examination Policy

There will be three (3) exams, consisting of 50 questions each. The exams will be worth a total of 50 points each. They will be completed on E-college and will be multiple choice and true/false format. It is the student's responsibility to complete the exams by the due-date and time.

Academic Dishonesty

The University will strictly enforce policies regarding academic dishonesty. If you are found in violation of these policies, you will be reported to both the Department Head, as well as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. These administrators may impose penalties, separate of my actions.

Penalties for academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, receiving a failing grade, failing the course, and/or dismissal from the university.

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to the following acts:

Cheating- Copying another's work, using unauthorized Materials during assignments or exams, Perpetrating the work of another as your own, etc.

Plagiarism- Failure to site the work of another in your own Submissions, perpetrating the work of another, etc.

Student Behavior

As stated in the student handbook: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment". (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information.) **Class rules regarding electronic devices: iPods are not allowed during class meetings. Cell phones, pagers, and any other electronic devices should be set to silent or turned off. No texting during class meetings. If you receive an emergency call or text during class and it is of the magnitude that you should take the call or respond, please remove yourself from the class and I will see you the next class meeting date. No cell phones or other electronic devices should be visible or checked during class meetings or examinations. Computers of any sort will not be allowed during class, without expressed permission from the instructor. This means, you take notes the traditional way…with paper and pen/pencil.** Please take care of restroom activities prior to class, however if you must go, during class, please make as little disruption as possible. All efforts should be made to keep any and all class interruptions at a minimum, out of respect for your fellow students and myself. At my discretion, you may be asked to leave for any activities deemed distractive to the class.

Make-up Work – Drop Policy

I will not discuss missed work or requests for make-up work in-class.
It is the student's responsibility to drop or withdraw from the course by the appropriate dates, according to the university calendar.

University Specific Procedures:

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week #:	**Dates:**	**Weekly Content Items / Activities / Assignments:**
Week 1:	1/14-1/18	Course Introductions / Ch. 1 / Quiz 1 (due 1/18, 11:30pm)
Week 2:	1/21-1/25	Ch. 2 / Quiz 2 (due 1/25, 11:30pm)
Week 3:	1/28-2/1	Ch. 3 / Quiz 3 (due 2/1, 11:30pm)
Week 4:	2/4-2/8	Ch. 4 / Article 1 (due 2/4, (in-class) / Quiz 4 (due 2/8, 11:30pm)
Week 5:	2/11-2/15	Ch. 5 / **Exam 1 (due 2/13, 11:30pm)** / Quiz 5 (due 2/15, 11:30pm)
Week 6:	2/18-2/22	Ch. 6 / Quiz 6 (due 2/22, 11:30pm)
Week 7:	2/25-3/1	Ch. 7 / Quiz 7 (due 3/1, 11:30pm)
Week 8:	3/4-3/8	Ch. 8 / Article 2 (due 3/4, (in-class) / Quiz 8 (due 3/8, 11:30pm)
Week 9:	3/11-3/15	*****SPRING BREAK*****
Week 10:	3/18-3/22	Ch. 9 / **Exam 2 (due 3/20, 11:30pm)** / Quiz 9 (due 3/22, 11:30pm)
Week 11:	3/25-3/29	Ch. 10 / Quiz 10 (due 3/29, 11:30pm)
Week 12:	4/1-4/5	Ch. 11 / Quiz 11 (due 4/5, 11:30pm)
Week 13:	4/8-4/12	Ch. 12 / Article 3 (due 4/8, (in-class) / Quiz 12 (due 4/12, 11:30pm)
Week 14:	4/15-4/19	Ch. 13 / **Exam 3 (due 4/17, 11:30pm)** / Quiz 13 (due 4/19, 11:30pm)
Week 15:	4/22-4/26	Ch. 14 / Quiz 14 (due 4/26, 11:30pm)
Week 16:	4/29-5/3	Quiz 15 (due 5/1, 11:30pm)
Week 17:	5/6-5/10	Article 4 with completed portfolio (due 5/6, (bring to SS-210))

Every effort will be made to adhere to the course schedule as noted above. However, Circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via university e-mail, in-class, or on eCollege. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule if necessary and depending on the progress of the class. I highly recommend that you follow the schedule outlined above **VERY CAREFULLY** so that you are sure to complete readings as assigned and turn your assignments in on time.