



**SOCIOLOGY 1306.901 – SOCIAL PROBLEMS**  
**MW, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM - COMMERCE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**Spring 2013**

Instructor: Katherine Pearl Lind, M.S.  
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Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice  
Office hours: By appointment only, 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday  
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**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Required Reading**

Textbook: *Social Problems: A Down-to-Earth Approach*, 10th Edition, by James M. Henslin.  
Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, ISBN-13: 9780205004164.  
Available at the university bookstore, their phone number is (903)886-5830.  
Amazon.com has several used copies available.

**Course Description**

SOC 1306 - (SOC 112) - A critical discussion of the sociological perspective will unfold to investigate descriptions of, causes, and possible prevention of social problems such as crime, mental illness, drug abuse, environmental degradation, poverty, terrorism, and whether this affects the quality of life in today's world. An interdisciplinary approach to the material will be used by integrating other subjects such as history, economics, philosophy, and political science into the curriculum. Social problems along with these disciplines will be juxtaposed with sociological theory to reveal how problems of society at given points in history are 'socially located'.

**Course Purpose/Goals**

The course is designed to increase the awareness of, and the ability to understand the social world in which we live. It provides an overview of major issues including culture, social order, socialization, social control, social stratification, sex and gender, race and ethnicity, social deviance, social institutions, and social change as they relate to the issues and impact on society and the individual. The course will assist the student in broadening their worldview of human behavior and societal issues. Students will be encouraged to examine different perspectives of sociological theory, critical thinking, and personal

responsibility in social action and social issues.

### **Student Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives**

The major objective of this course is to provide students with a critical understanding of contemporary social problems from a sociological perspective. The course will provide an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice in dealing with social problems. The course is intended to enable students to learn and think critically about:

What social problems are (and what they are not), and how they occur; how do they impact us in our society and in today's world.

Why do social problems occur?

Inform of how social problems affect us or what their consequences are for the individual and for society.

How do we deal or cope with social problems, even though we cannot solve or completely eliminate them, but we may develop ways to *prevent them as much as possible*.

To describe the social connections in social life, to analyze them with sociological theories, and apply these analyses to hypothetical or real life situations.

To develop critical thinking skills as they relate to understanding the ongoing social life in any society.

To allow the student to expand their understanding of basic sociological terminology and concepts as they relate to current social issues.

To expose the high school honors student to college web based learning and familiarize them with e-College, MyLeo, and the university library database.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Grading and Assignments**

The final grade for the semester will be based on completion of the following:

The student is expected to attend each class and participate by contributing to the class discussion with relevant material from the assigned readings, presentations, web based discussion, peer groups, and lecture.

Every Monday evening an essay question will be posted on e-College through MyLeo. Students will have until the following Sunday to post a response, and must comment on at least one other students response. This will be due no later than Sunday afternoon by 12:00 PM. late responses will not be accepted. Partial responses will not be accepted for grading and will result in a grade of zero for that week. Responses are worth up to 20 points each, with 200 possible points by the end of the semester.

The student will submit two (2) newspaper, magazine, professional journal, or internet articles that introduce a social problem and illustrate the principles of sociology as presented in the chapters of the textbook. Each article will consist of a brief written summary of the article juxtaposed against one of the three main paradigms of sociological theory as it relates to social problems; students will critically analyze their social issue and present their paper to a smaller peer discussion group. Each of the articles and in class participation will count 25 points toward the final grade for a total of 50 points.

There will be a mid-term examination for this class in the form of a take home essay. Students will have one week to work on the exam, which will consist of short answer essay questions. The final exam will take place in class and consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions. The exams are worth 100 points each, for a total of 200 points.

Each student will make an oral presentation to the class about a social problem of interest to the student. The student will report on observations made that illustrate the nature of the issue and discuss the relevant sociological principles that relate to understanding and explaining the importance of the issue to an individual and the collectivity. Students should consider theoretical implications, micro/macro analysis of the problem, and possible research methods one might use to investigate and analyze the problem. Each presentation will be presented in PowerPoint and will be 3- 4 minutes in length. Students must prepare an outline of their presentation to be turned in at the end of class. Students must also be prepared for feedback or possible questions from their peers about their work. The presentation and outline is worth 50 points. A failing grade will result if both components of the assignment are not submitted together.

Consult the course schedule for due dates for all assignments and exams. Failure to complete an assignment will earn "0" points toward the computation of the student's grade. A student must have extenuating circumstances (to be determined by the instructor), or a school excused field trip/absence; otherwise no late work will be accepted.

**\*Note: If students fail to inform the instructor of a school excused absence beforehand or make arrangements, late work will not be accepted and the absence will not be excused.**

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

500 – 450 points	A
449 - 400	B
399 - 350	C
349 - 300	D
299 and below	F

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

If you would like to schedule an appointment, or have any questions regarding course content, contact me through my TAMUC e-mail: [pearl.lind@tamuc.edu](mailto:pearl.lind@tamuc.edu) Please allow 24 hours for a response. It is the students' responsibility to email the instructor in the case of an emergency or illness if you are to miss class. It is the students' responsibility to contact the instructor regarding any assignments missed due to an absence.

**\*Note: When writing any correspondence, do not use text acronyms or slang. All such correspondence will be ignored and go unanswered.**

### **Technology Requirements**

The technical requirements for this class are as follows:

Intermediate knowledge of Microsoft Word and PowerPoint - a windows operating system (XP or better) is recommended.

High-speed internet connection

Access to the tamu-c library database

A MyLeo e-mail account and login and password to MyLeo (this should be set up before the first class day).

**A tutorial is scheduled the first class day to introduce students to MyLeo, the library database, and e-College. All sites are user friendly, easy to use.**

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Attendance**

Regular classroom attendance is important for student success, therefore all students are expected to attend class unless they are prohibited by illness or a personal emergency. If you must miss a class session, please contact the instructor by e-mail.

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

Texas A&M University-Commerce and Commerce High School does not tolerate plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. Students are expected to produce original work in all assignments and appropriate credit will be given to the use of professional research conducted by others and obtained from journals and other resource material. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

**\*If you are not sure what plagiarism is, ask me.**

**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**

**Student Conduct**

All students at Commerce High School will follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

Please make sure that cell phones are turned OFF (not just on vibrate) and put away before coming into class. Cell phones are not to be turned on or answered in the classroom.

Do not work on other homework or get caught surfing the net during class.

With the exception of bottled water, no other food or drinks are allowed in the classroom.

**COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR**

**January 14<sup>th</sup>** - e-College, library, and MyLeo Tutorial  
Review course syllabus.

**January 16<sup>th</sup>** - Lecture, Chapter 1- *How Sociologists View Social Problems*

**January 21<sup>st</sup>** – MLK Day, school closed.  
Discussion Board available by 1/21 at 7:00 PM  
Response due by Sunday, 1/27 at 12:00 PM

**January 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Lecture, Chapter 2 – *Interpreting Social Problems*  
Discussion about first article/current event and handout (due 1/30/2013)  
Students will be divided into peer groups

**January 28<sup>th</sup>** – Discussion regarding e-College discussion board and grading of responses  
Discussion board available by January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
Response due Sunday, 2/3 by 12:00 PM  
Begin lecture on Chapter 3, *Human Sexual Behavior*

**January 30<sup>th</sup>** – Peer groups meet in class and discuss each group member's social problem  
Finish lecture on chapter 3

**February 4<sup>th</sup>** – Class discussion about previous weeks' question/responses  
 Lecture, Chapter 4, *Alcohol and Other Drugs*  
 Discussion board available by 7:00 PM  
 Response due Sunday, 2/10 by 12:00 PM

**February 6<sup>th</sup>** – Finish lecture on chapter 4  
 Discuss article/current event assignment and hand back

**February 11<sup>th</sup>** – Class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
 In classroom assignment, *In Search of Respect: Life in El Barrio*  
 Discussion board available by 7:00 PM  
 Response due Sunday, 2/17 by 12:00 PM

**February 13<sup>th</sup>** – Lecture, Chapter 5, *Violence in Society*  
 Assignment: TBA

**February 18<sup>th</sup>** – Class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
 Finish lecture on Chapter 5  
 No discussion board this week  
 New article/current event due 2/25

**February 20<sup>th</sup>** – Discuss midterm and what to expect  
 Begin lecture on Chapter 6, *Crime and Criminal Justice*

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** – Finish lecture on Chapter 6  
 Break class up into peer groups/article due

**February 27<sup>th</sup>** – Lecture, Chapter 8, *Racial-Ethnic Relations*  
 Pass out midterm. **Due Wednesday, March 6, 2013**

**March 4<sup>th</sup>** – Help students with take home midterm and answer any questions they may have.  
 Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
 Response Due Sunday, 3/10 by noon

**March 6<sup>th</sup>** – midterm due  
 Pass back article/current event  
 Class: TBA

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** – discussion of midterm and hand back  
 Class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
 Begin lecture, Chapter 7, *Economic Problems*  
 Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
 Response due Sunday, 3/24 at noon

**March 20<sup>th</sup>** – Finish lecture, Chapter 7

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** - Class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
 Begin lecture, Chapter 9, *Sex Discrimination*  
 Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
 Response due Sunday, 3/31 at noon

**March 27<sup>th</sup>** – Finish Chapter 9 lecture  
Begin Chapter 11 lecture, *The Changing Family*

**April 1<sup>st</sup>** - Class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
Discuss and pass out handout about upcoming PowerPoint presentation assignment, due Monday 4/15/2013

Finish Chapter 11  
Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
Response due Sunday, 4/7 by noon

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>** – TBA (a film about a current social problem will be shown during this time).

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** – Finish viewing film and have a class discussion  
Have a class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
No discussion question this week

**April 10<sup>th</sup>** – Lecture, Chapter 13, *The Environmental Crisis*

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** – PowerPoint presentations and outline due

**April 17<sup>th</sup>** - PowerPoint presentations and outline due

**April 22<sup>th</sup>** – Finish Chapter 13  
Hand back outline/grade for presentations  
Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
Response due Sunday, 4/28 by noon

**April 24<sup>th</sup>** – Lecture, Chapter 14, *War, Terrorism, and the Balance of Power*

**April 29<sup>th</sup>** - Have a class discussion about previous weeks' question and responses  
Finish Chapter 14, Begin Chapter 12, *Urbanization and Population*  
Discussion board opens at 7:00 PM  
Response due Sunday, 5/5 by noon

**May 1<sup>st</sup>** – Finish lecture, Chapter 12  
Discuss final exam

**May 6 – 10, 2013** – finals week. TBA