SOC 20: MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to explain the connection between private troubles and public issues as they relate to social problems.
- Students will be able to identify various sociological perspectives used to analyze social problems.

Description

An identification and analysis of contemporary social problems including (1) the role of power and ideology in the definition of social problems, (2) their causes and consequences, (3) evaluations of proposed solutions, and (4) methods of intervention. Topics will vary.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of major social problems concerning the U.S.
2. Place local, regional, and national social problems in global context
3. Identify, and distinguish between, causes and consequences of social problems
4. Analyze social problems using sociological approaches and concepts
5. Analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative information about social problems
6. Identify and evaluate policies that address social problems and assess the policies' impact on society

Course Content

1. Sociological approaches to social problems
   a. Political economy of social problems
2. Studying social problems
   a. Social problems and the social research process
   b. Quantitative research and social problems, strengths and weaknesses of
   c. Qualitative research and social problems, strengths and weaknesses of
   d. Identifying causes and consequences of social problems
3. Problems of social inequality—wealth and power
   a. Poverty and wealth
   b. Racial and ethnic inequality
   c. Gender inequality
   d. Aging and inequality
4. Problems of deviance, conformity, and well-being
   a. Crime and criminal justice
   b. Violence
   c. Sexuality
   d. Alcohol and other drugs
   e. Physical and mental health and health care delivery
5. Problems of social institutions
   a. Social institutions as paths to justice
   b. Economy and politics
   c. Work and the workplace
   d. Family life
   e. Education
   f. Urban life
6. Global problems
   a. Population and global inequality
   b. Technology and the environment
   c. War and terrorism
7. Solutions to social problems
   a. Sociology, social problems, and social change
   b. Sociological paradox: structure and agency
   c. Sociological imagination and social problems
   d. The role of public policy
   e. Progressive public policy, strengths and weaknesses of
   f. Human agency: social change from the grassroots
   g. Individuals protesting and organizing for change
   h. Groups and communities working for social change

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught as an online distance learning section, students and faculty need ongoing and continuous internet and email access.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Class discussions
Active learning exercises
Oral presentations
Critical essay(s)
Examinations or quizzes

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture
Discussion
Oral presentations

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Mooney, Linda A., David Knox, and Caroline Schacht. Understanding Social Problems. 2017.

Eitzen, D. Stanley, Maxine Baca Zinn, and Kelly Eitzen Smith. Social Problems. 2018.

Leon-Guererro, Anna. Social Problems: Community, Policy and Social Action. 2019.

Macionis, John. Social Problems. 2020.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. College level readings from primary and secondary sources of approximately 50-100 pages per week
2. College level writing assignments based on primary and secondary source reflection and/or analysis

Discipline(s)

Sociology