

**Ohio Articulation Number (OAN)
Course Submission Form
2005-2006**



College/University Kent State University

Course(s) Submitted(Title & Course #) SOC 22778: Social Problems for
Ohio Articulation Number OSS025

Date Sept. 29, 2006 Course 1 of a 1 Course OAN mapping.

Name and title of individual submitting on behalf of the college/university

Name Gayle L. Ormiston Title Associate Provost, Faculty Affairs and Curriculum

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Credit Hours 03 qtr _____ sem x

Lecture Hours 03

Laboratory Hours 0 (if applicable)

Pre-Requisites(s) Course work (if applicable)

None

Placement Score (if applicable)

(Name of test)

(Domain) (Score)

Catalog/Course Description (Includes Course Title and Course #)

SOC 22778 SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Contemporary American and Global social problems and issues analyzed from sociological perspectives. Several cases are used to illustrate the emergence, development and decline of problems in social context.

Prerequisite: None. This course may be used to satisfy the LERs and the university Diversity Requirement.

Texts/Outside Readings/Ancillary Materials

TEXTBOOKS: (1) The most frequently used textbook for SOC 22778 is Donileen Loseke. 1999. *Thinking About Social Problems: An Introduction to Constructionist Perspectives*. Walter De Gruyter. (2) Eitzen, D. Stanley and Maxine Baca Zinn. 2006. *Social Problems*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
 MONOGRAPHS: (3) Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2001. *Nickle and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. NY: Henry Hold. (4) Thomas, Piri. 1997. *Down These Mean Streets*. NY: Vintage.
 PACKET: (5) Packet of auxiliary readings and case studies.

Course Objectives and/or Plan of Work

- (1) SOC 22778 emphasizes a social constructionist perspective to address the processes by which social problems are identified and legitimated. This perspective typically addresses the following issues: who are the claims makers that identify the problem and define it in a particular way (e. g., medicalization of social issues), how does the media present an issue as it becomes a “problem” that needs to be “solved” (i.e., processes of agenda setting and framing), and who benefits and who loses in society from the way a particular problem is “constructed” (e.g., pharmaceutical corporations who develop drugs to calm “hyperactive” children).
- (2) SOC 22778 provides students with an overview of the various Sociological perspectives for studying social problems. However, the scholarship about social problems and most social problems textbooks tend to be relative non-theoretical. Therefore SOC 22778 has been designed to emphasize the social constructionist perspective, and the basic sociological approach which emphasizes the role of cultural images and meanings, social structures such as interest groups and governmental agencies, and the individual’s ability to influence the development of social policies to resolve social problems.
- (3) SOC 22778 uses social science research to dispel myths about specific social problems, to examine the factors creating social problems, and to ground social policy proposals in empirical evidence rather than myths.
- (4) SOC 22778 focuses on the role of social structure in creating social problems and resolving them. Case studies usually address social problems across the major institutions in society: wealth, power, and poverty (political economy), mental illness, AIDS, abortion, Medicare (medicine), school segregation, low achievement for racial/ethnic minorities (education), violence, drug addition (justice system), pay inequity, deindustrialization, glass ceiling (gender and work).

Description of Assessment and/or Evaluation of Student Learning

- (1) Three exams, consisting of objective and essay questions, are used to evaluate the student’s ability to apply key sociological concepts and theories.
- (2) Papers can take various formats ranging from book reports to term papers to research papers.

- (3) Various activities are used to engage students in an in-depth examination of selective social problems. For example, in-class debates help students to explore multiple viewpoints about a single problem, or researching an organization working to reduce a social problem enable students to sociological research and concepts into practical solutions (e.g., Letter and Small Group activities in Dr. Rooks' syllabus).
- (4) Reaction papers and class participation encourage students to be "active learners."

Master Syllabi and Working Syllabi (if both are used)

We do not use master syllabi in Sociology at Kent State. See syllabus for Dr. Rooks' Summer 2006 course.

Additional Documentation

SOCIAL PROBLEMS
Summer Session I 2006, 3 credits
SOC 22778/010, Merrill Hall, Rm. 105
M-Th 12-1:55 p.m.

Instructors: Ronica N. Rooks, Ph.D.
 Office: Merrill Hall/Sociology Bldg., Rms. 329
 Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 2 - 3 p.m., also by appointment
 Telephone: 330/672-9809
 E-mail: rrooks@kent.edu

** If you cannot reach me, leave a message with one of the secretaries in the main office at 330/672-8338.

Course Overview

This course offers a systematic study of the institutional roots and social consequences of major social problemsBex. racial, gender, and social class inequalitiesBas well as institutional problems in education, work, family life, health care, and the justice system. It includes a critical analysis of assumptions underlying popular and theoretical explanations of social problems, as well as programs and policies aimed at alleviating them.

Primary Course Objectives

For students to:

- Critically analyze society by examining what it is, how it works (and does not always work), and how to apply sociological concepts to understand and address social phenomenon.
- To understand the process through which social problems are defined, and to clarify links between individuals and their roles/responsibilities in a national and global society.
- To understand the theoretical perspectives used in sociology to explain social problems, and the research methods used to study them.
- Challenge you to use the concept of social structure to think in new ways about your life and others in society, hopefully reducing bias.
- To use sociological concepts and research methods to evaluate proposals attempting to reduce social problems
- Enhance skills in writing, conceptualizing abstract ideas, evaluating information, and discussing controversial issues in a respectful and productive manner.

Required Reading:

Eitzen, D. Stanley and Maxine Baca Zinn. 2006. *Social Problems*, 10th edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2001. *Nickle and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, LLC.

Course Expectations/Policies

The teaching methods used in this course will include: lectures, student discussion, in-class activities, and films. You are responsible for all materials covered in the course, including being present when assignments are distributed and seeing me in the event of an excused absence. Active participation and attendance are necessary for your success in this course. You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that is respectful to your classmates and instructor at all times. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are caught cheating on an exam, you will fail the exam and be referred to the Undergraduate Advisor for disciplinary action.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is **not mandatory**. However, participation in various in-class individual and group activities will be a part of your grade. These activities will not be announced in advance. Similar to pop-quizzes, if you are in class and participating in the assignment, you will receive the points. If you miss any of the in-class activities, as either unexcused or excused absences, you will not be able to make these points up in the future. Border-line grades will be decided based on your participation in class. In addition, if you plan to be late to class or must leave early from class, please notify me as to the reason for your absence. Otherwise, if I notice these actions consistently occurring, I will address you in front of your peers about this absence. Also, please be courteous at the beginning of class and turn off all of your cell-phones, etc.

Make-up Work/Exams: All assignments must be submitted as noted on the course calendar. If you are absent, you must have a valid reason to make up an exam or paper. You must notify me **within 24 hours** if you miss an exam or course assignment and provide documentation for an excused absence, i.e. physician or health center note, obituary notice, etc. If you do not have a valid reason, with documentation, you will not be allowed to make up the assignment.

Special Needs: University policy 3342-3-18 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me within the first two weeks of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330/672-3391 or visit <http://www.registrars.kent.edu/disability/default.htm> for more information on registration procedures).

Holidays: Students with religious holidays that conflict with the exams or assignment due dates should notify me of those dates **at least within 24 hours of the holiday.**

Grading Scale

First Exam (25%)		100 pts.	
Second Exam (25%)		100 pts.	
Final Exam (25%)			100 pts.
Letter & Small Groups (12.5%)	50 pts.		
Participation (12.5%)		50 pts.	

Total (100%)	400 pts		

Exams: Each exam will include the material covered during that portion of the course including lectures, readings, films, exercises, and discussions. The exams will include true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The exams will evaluate your ability to apply key sociological concepts and theories. Each exam is non-cumulative.

Letter: Your letter will focus on researching organizations and policies designed to address a social problem (at the individual-level and societal-level) of your choosing. A list of social problem topics follows later in the syllabus under *Letter and Small Group Assignments* (p. 7-10). **You must choose your letter topic by June 19th**, either from the list of social problems provided (p. 5-6) or your own social problem of interest. I will pass around a sign-up sheet at the end of class on this day, for you to write your name and topic of presentation.

Your letter is a 1 page writing assignment either written as an opinion editorial letter to a newspaper or a letter to a Congress person, discussing some sort of social action that you would like to see occur in order to help resolve your social problem. You may expand on an idea stated on one of your organizations' websites. You must include the real name and address of the newspaper or Congress person you are addressing. Although, it is not mandatory to submit this writing to the newspaper or your Congress person as part of the assignment, unless you wish to do so.

Small groups: This grade is based on small group critiques and discussions of your social problem. Each time a person presents in the small group, the remaining people will submit a short critique of the presenter (a paragraph), expressing the strengths and weaknesses of the presenter's research and his/her presentation.

Grading: Your course work will be graded on *content* - the degree to which you complete the assignment requirements and the level of analysis applied and on *form* - the clarity of the work you present in terms of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Study Habits: PowerPoint lecture notes, study guides, other assignments, and grades will be posted on VISTA at <http://vista.kent.edu>

Please stop by my office if you have any questions regarding the best approach to preparing for this class.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change)

**The professor reserves the right to alter or adjust the course calendar as necessary.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings (complete PRIOR to class)</u>	<u>DUE DATES</u>
Week One Mon. 6/12	Welcome/Syllabus review; Reading: Ch 1 Sociological Approach to Social Problems	
Tues. 6/13		Reading: Ch 2 Wealth and Power
Wed. 6/14	Reading: Ch 3 World Population and Global Inequality; Film: "The Bomb Under the World"	
Thurs. 6/15		Reading continued;

	Reading: Ch 5 Demographic Changes in the U.S.	
Week Two		
Mon. 6/19	Reading continued Film: "People Like Us"	DUE: Select Project Topic
Tues. 6/20	Reading: Ch 7 Poverty	
Wed. 6/21	Exam Review; First Exam	
Thurs. 6/22	Reading: Ch 8 Racial and Ethnic Inequality Film: "China's Lost Girls"	
Week Three		
Mon. 6/26	Reading: Ch 9 Gender Inequality; Film: "Tough Guise"	
Tues. 6/27		Reading continued;
	Reading: Ch 10 Sexual Orientation (and Sexuality)	
Wed. 6/28	Reading continued; Small Group presentations Presentations	DUE: and Group Critiques
Thurs. 6/29		Reading continued;
	Reading: Ch 16 Education; Film: "Children In America's Schools"	
Week Four		
Mon. 7/3	Exam Review; Second Exam	
Tues. 7/4	No class - Independence Day	
Wed. 7/5		Reading: Ch 14 Work;
	Review and Discuss <i>Nickel and Dimed</i>	

Thurs. 7/6

Reading: Ch
17 Health and Health
Care Delivery;

Week Five

Mon. 7/12

Reading: Ch
15 Families

Tues. 7/13

Reading: Ch
12 Crime and Justice

Film: "Hate.com"

Wed. 7/14

Reading: Ch
18 National Security
in the 21st Century

Thurs. 7/15

Exam
Review; **Final Exam**

Social Problems

Open Topics/Letter for Small Group Discussions

Economic Inequality, Population/Global Inequality, and The Environment

Growing gaps between rich/poor (individuals and/or nations)
 White Collar Corruption/Unfair Advantage (i.e. interlocking directorates)
 US Foreign Policy linked to US Corporate Interests
 Corporate Subsidies
 Political Campaign Financing

Population Growth (national or global)
 World Hunger/Poverty/Disease
 Corporate Dumping
 Slavery/Sex Trade Industry
 Urbanization and Suburban Sprawl

Environmental Racism (national or global)
 Pollution (chemical, air, solid waste/landfill, or water)
 Rain Forest Destruction
 Natural Resource Overuse (water or forestry)
 Global Warming
 Species Extinction

The Browning/Graying of Society and Poverty

Immigration Policy Changes in the U.S.
 Societal Positives and Negatives of Immigration
 Informal vs. Formal Caregiving for Older Adults
 Security Nets for Older Adults: Medicare and Social Security
 Euthanasia or Physician-assisted Suicide
 The Marketing of Old Age vs. Youth
 Elder Abuse

U.S. Poverty
 Children in Poverty
 Hunger
 Homelessness
 Affordable Housing

Racial/Ethnic and Gender Inequality, Sexual Orientation and Sexuality, and Disabilities

Institutional inequality (education, religion, media, health, politics, or law)
 Economic (pay equity, comparable worth, or discrimination)
 Sexual Harassment
 Sexual Violence/Assault

Lack of Civil Rights/Protections (discrimination)
 Institutional inequality (education, religion, media, politics, health or law)
 HIV/AIDS

OBR	
Received(time)	4:12 PM
Date	10/4/2006

Hate Crimes
Disability Rights Movement
Technological Improvements for those with Disabilities

Education and Work

Unequal Access
Curriculum
Tracking children
Funding

Increasing Minimum Wage
Sweatshops
Training Demands in a Post-industrial Economy
Multinational Corporations
Maquiladora Factories in Mexico

Healthcare and Families

Unequal Access
Universal Health Care
HIV/AIDS
Managed Care/Insurance
Medicaid
Mental Health
Disabilities--Civil Rights/Protections (discrimination)
Shortages in the Labor Supply of Nurses

Childcare/Family Support
TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) Policies
Single Parent Households
Divorce
Remarriage and Step-families
Family Violence (spousal and child abuse)

Crime and National Security

Violent/Street Crime
White Collar Crime
Hate crimes
Industrial Prison Complex
War on Drugs

Costs and Repercussions of War
Military Downsizing or Upsizing
Military Family Support Systems
Domestic or International Terrorist Threats
Arms Sales

Social Problems

Letter and Small Group Assignments

Due: Wednesday, June 28th

Purpose: The letter, small group presentation, and peer critiques should help you:

- § Do research on a social problem of interest, learning how individuals and groups address social problems at the individual- and institutional-levels.
- § Improve your presentation skills by conveying your research (and hopefully your passion about this topic) to an audience.
- § Learn how to critique others' presentations, with the hopes of learning techniques to improve your own presentation skills.

Grades:

Letter = 25 points

Small group presentation and peer critiques = 25 points

Format:

1 page, TYPED, 12 point easy-to-read font, single-spaced, 1" margins. Please cite the exact source of paraphrased or quoted material in your paper and at the end, in a reference section.

Letter Requirements:

1. Select one social problem from the list provided (p. 5-6).
2. Research a minimum of two formal organizations and/or governmental agencies (local, state, and/or federal) that are addressing the social problem you selected at an individual-level (i.e. meeting the needs of the individuals being directly affected).
3. Research a minimum of two formal organizations and/or governmental agencies that are addressing the social problem you selected at a societal-level (i.e. attempting to change institutions and/or policies to indirectly change the social problem).
4. Prepare your writing assignment as either an opinion editorial to a newspaper or to a Congress person discussing some sort of social action to help resolve your social problem. Be sure to include the correct address of the newspaper or Congressperson you are addressing. Your letter should address the techniques or solutions other groups, or even you, have used or that work the best to end your social problem. **This writing assignment is based on your research and opinion.** It is not mandatory to submit this writing to the newspaper or your Congress person as part of the assignment, unless you wish to do so.

My grading criteria for the letter include the following questions:

- Is your letter creative? Does it convey your passion about this topic?
- Do you give some background information about your social problem to familiarize your audience?

- As you present your background information, do you discuss at least one societal-level and at least one individual-level organization working to improve your social problem?
- Did you give your critique of these organizations?
 - Overall, assess the social problem and how it is being addressed by this organization.
 - Are there any specific shortcomings or advantages to how these organizations are addressing the problem?
 - What would you like to see happen to address the problem? Do you describe what you believe are one or two good solutions to help your social problem, either based on your research or your opinion?
- Do you state what you want your Congress person or newspaper readers to do, to help your social problem?
- Is your writing structurally correct (i.e. in the appropriate letter format, with the name and address of the Congress person or newspaper you are writing to)?
- Has your letter been proofread (i.e. free of spelling errors, run-on paragraphs, run-on sentences, improperly cited reference materials—websites, books, newsletters, etc.)?

Small Group Requirements:

1. On the small group days, students will present their research in front of the group for about 10 minutes. Students are encouraged to use visual aides in their presentations, to be interactive with their audience. Examples from previous classes include using endangered species puppets to discuss rainforest destruction, showing anti-terrorism gear to discuss national security, asking the audience to participate in a quiz to discuss sexual harassment, and using tables, charts, posters, or advertising campaign ads to help explain your social problem or solutions.
2. At the end of each student's presentation, the remainder of the group must discuss their critiques with the presenter. Critiques should take about 10 minutes for each presenter. Each written critique (a paragraph response but no more than 1 page!) is due at the beginning of the next class. Please type your critiques, using 12 point font and single-spacing. Also, be sure to include the presenter's name as well.
3. Letters are due the day of your presentation.

Presentation Guidelines:

1. **Define the Problem**
 - a. The big picture B larger social issues/including statistics (i.e. pollution)

- b. The specific aspect of the problem you are examining (i.e. drinking water pollution)
 - c. The group(s) of people affected

2. **Describe/Analyze Organizations Addressing the Problem (2 Individual- and 2 Societal-level).** **This is a suggested list of things to include in your discussion of these organizations. You do not have to include everything in this list.

 - a. Mission statements/goals
 - b. Specific means they use to meet their goals
 - c. How is the accomplishment of their goals (i.e. success) measured?
 - d. What aspect of the social problem is NOT met through the organization=s goals and/or their means?
 - e. Links/partnerships that exist with other organizations
 - f. Size and structure of organization (i.e. # of paid/unpaid workers; local, national, or global focused; etc.)
 - g. Are there other organizations in competition for resources with the selected organization?
 - h. What are the sources of support for the organization? Are there any issues with these sources (i.e. supply; conflicts of interest; etc.)?
 - i. In case your group asks, be sure to have a list of the websites you used available for your audience.

3. **Your Critique**
 - a. Overall assessment of problem and how it is being addressed
 - b. Specific shortcomings or advantages to how these organizations are addressing the problem
 - c. What you would like to see happen to address the problem?

4. **Conclusion:** Give a "take-home" point for the audience.
 - a. Imagine trying to make your point on a car bumper sticker (i.e. Anti-war organization: "Make Love, Not War!;" Anti-rape organization: "Seconds Until the Next Rape: 23").
 - b. While you may not be able to fit your point on a bumper sticker, this tactic may help you to figure out a clear and concise closing statement.

Suggested Critique Guidelines:

Each person writing a critique of the presentations should give positive and negative feedback and a letter grade to the presenter.

- Identify the topic and the primary issues/solutions that the presenters address.
- Did they give some background information about their social problem to familiarize the small group audience?

- Did they discuss two societal-level and two individual-level organizations working to improve their social problem?
- What ideas or evidence do they give to support their argument?
- Did they state what they want their Congress person or newspaper readers to do, to help their social problem?
- Did they give a critique of the organizations they chose?
- Was any part of the presentation unclear or confusing?
- Did they leave anything out of the presentation that you think should be addressed?
- Was the student's presentation creative? Did it convey his/her passion about the topic?
- Did the student just read his/her letter to the group as the presentation?

OBR Use	Action
Approved	
Additional Information Requested	
Rejected	
Date	