



Indian River State College
Department of Social Sciences

**SYG 2010 – Social Problems
Fall 2015**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Monique Moleon-Mathews

Office: R-242 (Main Campus)

Office Hours: MW: 8:30- 9:30 & 12:30- 1-30 (A-103 - Chastain)

TTh: 8:30-9:30 (J-216- **Pruitt Campus**) & 12:30 – 3:30 (**Main Campus**)

F: 9:00-12:00 (**Main Campus**)

Phone: (772) 462-7791

Email: mmathews@irsc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Required Text: “Social Problems” Second Edition Custom for Indian River State College by D. Stanley Eitzen, Maxine Baca Zinn, and Kelly Eitzen Smith. ISBN 13: 978-1-269-42249-9. **(Yes, you need the textbook in order to complete the course successfully).**

Student Responsibilities:

As a student, you need to take responsibility for your own academic success by completing all course requirements by the due dates, read the assigned pages prior to coming to class, actively participating in class discussions, and adhering to all policies and procedures.

- The required assignments for this course are as follows:
 - 1 term paper;
 - 12 online quizzes,
 - 12 in-class activities,
 - 4 multiple-choice tests (all assignments have to be completed by specific dates/deadlines).
- Students are expected to **spend at least nine (9) hours per week** (outside the classroom) working on course-related assignments (including reading assignments).
- Reading 5 to 6 pages every day is a must to complete this course successfully. **Students are expected to read the assigned pages before class.**
- Completing the “Chapter Study Questions” and “Chapter Learning Objectives” will help improve your performance on both the quizzes and the tests.
- You need to complete the “Syllabus Quiz” (in Blackboard) before you can access the online chapter quizzes.

Course Description

This course examines contemporary social issues and problems. The primary goal of the course is to help students develop a thorough understanding of today’s social problems by analyzing them from both a person-blame approach and a system-blame approach. Topics to be covered include: poverty, world population and global inequality, race and ethnic inequality, education, healthcare, crime and justice, wealth and power, demographic changes in the U.S, and national security.

Course Learning Objectives

Students will learn about the following:

- The history of social problems theory, the importance of applying the sociological approach to social problems and, the complex nature of social problems. They will also learn about the four basic research designs and research methods used by sociologists.
- The connection between capitalism and concentration of corporate wealth and, the consequences of concentrated power.
- The factors affecting world population growth, the connection between world population growth and social inequality and, U.S. relations with the developing world.
- The U.S. criminal justice system as well as demographic characteristics of people arrested for crimes. They will also learn about drug use and the factors influencing drug laws.
- The sociological processes and concepts, as well as contemporary social problems associated with race, ethnicity, gender, social status, and immigration.
- The problems in our educational system, our health care system and, national security in the 21st century.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students should be able to:

- ▲ Compare and contrast the two main types of social problems, explain and apply the sociological imagination to contemporary social problems, distinguish between person-blame approach and system-blame approach.
- ▲ Explain the mechanisms that promote monopolistic capitalism, discuss how the U.S. government is biased in favor of the wealthy and, explain the link between power, wealth and the U.S. political system.
- ▲ Explain the factors affecting world population growth, discuss the extent and consequences of world poverty and, explain the relationship between the U.S. and poor nations around the world.
- ▲ Explain the complicated nature of the definition of crime and how crime rates vary by sex, age, social class, and race. Discuss how the U.S. system of justice is biased against certain groups in society.
- ▲ Explain the politics behind the definition of drugs in the U.S., discuss the most commonly abused illegal and legal drugs.
- ▲ Explain how access to healthcare varies by social class, race, and gender, discuss how schools perpetuate class and race inequality and, describe the defense budget of the U.S. military as well as its size, strength, and cost.
- ▲ Define a wide range of global, social and cultural points of view and apply various perspectives to analyze human behavior.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Tests (3 tests at 150pts each = **450pts**)

There will be four (4) units of study and a test at the end of each unit. Each test will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. The lowest of the 4 test grades will be dropped (however the **final/test 4 cannot be dropped**). Dropping the lowest test score will not have any impact on your overall grade. As per the Grading Policies (on pg. 4), the tests will account for 450pts of your overall total meaning that you only need 3 tests (**including the final test**) at 150pts each.

You will be provided with a list of questions for each chapter (Chapter Study questions) that you can use to study and prepare yourself for both chapter quizzes and Unit tests. Test questions will come from the following sources:

- required readings (the textbook),
- the lectures/power point notes (available in Blackboard),
- chapter learning objectives assignments,
- and, the chapter study questions (available in Blackboard).

Make-up tests: Any student who missed a test (other than Test 4) must provide the instructor with a written medical or college excuse in order to take a make-up test. **The make-up test will be short answer format.** There will be 30 questions (at 5pts each) and you will have to write a short answer for each of the 30 questions. Like the regular tests, make up tests have to be completed without your notes/textbook.

Extra Credit: There will be **no** extra credit assignments at the end of the semester. However, you can earn up to 12 extra credit points by completing the Chapter Study Questions (1pt for each completed chapter study questions). If you choose to complete them, they have to be turned in online (in Blackboard) by a specific date/deadline (see “Important Dates & Deadlines” document for more information). Late extra credit assignments will not be accepted.

Writing Assignment (100pts) --- Due Date November 4

In accordance with the policy established by the Department of Social Sciences at Indian River State College, this course, like all General Education courses in the Social Sciences, has a writing component. Students will write a term paper that will require them to apply the sociological theories discussed in the textbook and in class to real life problems and experiences. The term paper will be used to assess whether or not students are meeting the Gen Ed learning outcome assigned to the social sciences. For more info, see the “*Writing Assignment*” document (also available in Blackboard under “Course Materials”).

Online Chapter Quizzes (10 quizzes at 20pts each = 200pts)

There are 12 quizzes to complete (each quiz corresponds to a chapter that will be covered in the course) however, only the highest 10 quiz grades will count toward your final grade (**the lowest two will be dropped**). Each quiz will consist of 20 multiple-choice and true/false questions and must be completed within 30 minutes. You may take each quiz twice and, **the average--not the highest--of those scores** will be recorded in the grade book (if you are ok with your first grade, no need to take the quiz a second time). Quizzes can be accessed by clicking on the link located in each of the modules (in Blackboard). Please check the “Schedule of Activities” for quiz dates and deadlines. Quizzes will not be available past their due dates; the only time you can make up missed quizzes is at the end of the semester (**December 5, 6, 7 & 8**).

Class Activities (10 activities at 10pts each 100pts)

The primary purpose of the class activities is to share thoughts and ideas on particular issues and concerns within our society. These activities are fairly simple, basically I expect you to apply the theoretical perspectives, and concepts that you’ll be learning in this course to everyday life. **Unlike the quizzes, there will be no make up for missed Class Activities at the end of the semester.**

GRADING POLICIES & GRADING SCALE

You can access the Grade Folder by clicking on **My Grades**. Also, a grade update/progress report will be posted online (under Announcements) and discussed in class after each test. As a student, it is your responsibility to keep up with your progress in the class by constantly **checking the Grade Folder, using the Grade Sheet, and talking to your instructor about your grade.** *Don't wait for the end of the semester to start asking questions about you grade!!!*

At the end of the semester, calculated grades will **NOT** be rounded to the next number. Your overall grade in the course will be based on the following assessments:

ASSESSMENTS	TOTAL POINTS	GRADING SCALE Students can earn a total of 850pts. At the end of the semester, letter grades will be assigned as follows:
3 Tests (150pts each)	450 points	A= 850-765
1 Writing Assignment (100pts)	100 points	B= 764-680
10 Quizzes (20pts each)	200 points	C= 679-595
10 Class Activities (10pts each)	100points	D= 594-510
TOTAL POINTS	850pts	F= 509 and below

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance: Class Attendance is a very important part of the learning process. Students are expected to arrive for class on time and to participate in class discussions and activities. After three (3) absences, points will be deducted from your class participation grade for each additional absence. Students with perfect attendance will have three (3) points added to their final grade at the end of the semester. Students who leave class early will be marked absent.

Academic honesty: A student who turns in a plagiarized term paper will receive an “F” for his/her work. Plagiarism includes purchasing papers written by others, cutting and pasting from websites, AND cutting and pasting while changing a few words. **Plagiarism also includes cheating on your tests.** Any student found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will have an F for the test and, will be referred to the Academic Review Board for disciplinary action that may result in probation, suspension or expulsion.

Make-up Policy: Any student who missed a test must provide the instructor with a medical or college excuse in order to take the make-up test. **Make-up tests will be in short answer format (30 short answer questions without the textbook).** If you missed the final test, your grade for that test will be zero, no exceptions (and the zero will be factored into your final grade). You can make up missed quizzes only at the end of the semester (**December 5, 6, 7 & 8**). **There is no make up for missed class activities.**

Student Assistance: If you are experiencing difficulty in the course, your first obligation is to work directly with your instructor to resolve the issue. If you are unable to settle your concerns with the assistance of your instructor, you may contact the Department Chair (Dr. Dean Wagstaffe, dwagstaf@irsc.edu), who will assist you or advise you about contacting the Academic Dean (Dr. Bruce Fraser, bfraser@irsc.edu) or Vice President (Dr. Anthony Iacono, aicono@irsc.edu).

Withdrawal Deadline: The last day to withdraw from this class with a “W” is **Nov 2nd, 2015**. **Students are responsible for initiating the withdrawal during the designated period.** After the Nov 2nd deadline, Instructor withdrawals **will NOT be given** for poor academic performance or poor attendance. **If you withdraw online, make sure that you print out the withdrawal slip or, get a screen shot of it to keep for your records.**

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require special accommodations, please let me know ASAP and make sure that you notify Student Disability Services.

Phones and Beepers: All audible cell phones and beepers must be turned off during class time. Failure to do so will result in expulsion from the classroom. If you have a serious emergency that will call you out in the middle of class, please discuss it with me before class begins.

Student-Instructor Contract – Social Problems

Please read the following statements carefully as these guidelines will help contribute to your success in this course...

As a student, I agree to take responsibility for my own academic success by:

Reviewing the course syllabus and contacting my instructor regarding any questions or concerns.

Purchasing required textbooks and materials the first week of class. Reading all required assignments before each class session. Bringing all course-related materials to each class.

Attending all classes. Arriving at class on time. Remaining until class is dismissed so as not to disrupt the learning environment. Taking care of personal tasks before or after class.

Completing all course requirements by the due dates, actively participating in class, and adhering to all policies and procedures. Notifying my instructor of absences prior to class if possible, realizing that I am responsible for making up all missed assignments as allowed by my instructor.

Keeping up with my overall grade and progress in the class by using the Grade Sheet provided by the instructor.

Working within an environment of academic honesty by doing my own work and completing assignments and course requirements. Understanding that my grade is dependent upon my test scores, completed assignments, study habits, attendance, and educational accomplishments.

Abiding by the behavioral expectations of the College and supporting an effective learning environment by turning off all electronic devices (unless instructor approved).

Knowing that respect for my instructor and my fellow students is required in any collegiate environment and agreeing to remain courteous, alert, and attentive during class.

Contacting my instructor immediately to address any problems or concerns related to the course requirements or assignments.

Knowing my instructor's contact information, including office location(s) and hours, email address(es), and telephone number(s).

As your instructor, I agree to exhibit instructional integrity by:

1. Providing a course syllabus in the first class session. Explaining the course requirements and grading and classroom policies for the semester within the first week.
2. Utilizing a textbook that enhances the learning experience through a contemporary approach to relevant issues confronting college students.
3. Starting all classes on time and using entire scheduled class period effectively. Facilitating the learning experience by returning all graded work and tests to students in a timely manner.
4. Creating and presenting a valuable course that will prepare students for a positive experience in the college environment and help equip them to achieve success in academic and personal endeavors.
5. Establishing a grading system that is fair and equitable for every student, ensuring that the grade each student receives is reflective of all course achievements.
6. Making grades and grade updates available online (in Blackboard) where students can access them easily.
7. Maintaining a positive learning environment that challenges students while encouraging freedom of thought and expression.
8. Giving all students the attention and respect they deserve as members of a collegiate learning environment.
9. Helping students complete course requirements by providing them with positive support.
10. Posting and keeping regular office hours and providing students with contact information, including telephone number(s), email address(es), and office location(s).