

Rhodes College
Social Problems(Anthro/Soc. 206)
Fall 2000

Instructor: Eva Brown

Office Hours: MWF 11:00-11:30 and after 3:00 p.m.

Phone: 843-3930 (main office, Rhodes, Mrs. Benton)
678-3488 (personal office, U of M)
678-2611 (sociology main office, U of M)

Required Texts:

Social Problems, 7th ed.
D. Stanley Eitzen & Maxine Baca Zinn

Crisis in American Institutions, 7th ed.
Jerome H. Skolnick & Elliott Currie

Course Description:

This course provides an analysis of a variety of social problems such as racism and poverty. Emphasis will be on understanding how situations are defined as problems and what efforts are made to solve them. Of particular concern will be the complexity of such problems in contemporary urban settings, the influence of urbanization on social problems, and the influence of social problems on urban living.

Theory, research, social policy, and the application of these to social phenomena will be examined through a social science framework. An important focus is the structural influences on social problems and the daily lives of American population. Attention will be given to various fundamental social institutions and how they influence social problems and how social problems affect these institutions.

Course Objectives:

1. Application of social science paradigms to social problems
2. Examination of the myths, pitfalls, and paradoxes inherent in analyzing social problems

3. Placing social problems in the context of structural relations arising in social interaction and inherent in modern social arrangements
4. Describing how cultural phenomena such as values, beliefs, norms, statuses, roles, group dynamics, organizations, and institutions relate to the emergence of, maintenance of, recognition of, and solutions to social problems
5. How individuals, groups, systems, and social organization in general perpetuate or attempt to address the issues of social problems
6. Recognition of significant factors which contribute to or generate many of the social problems of American culture
7. Analyzing how social systems work
8. Learning about power and how it works as a central part of the American social structure
9. Determining the benefits and detriments of existing social arrangements
10. Viewing social problems as socially constructed realities promoted by numerous professional, organizational, and special-interest groups
11. Promoting usable knowledge about the social problems individuals currently encounter in their everyday lives and those they may expect to confront in their future social arrangements, e.g., families, careers, religions, politics and the like
12. Provide and explanatory framework for the structural, organizational, and group dilemmas discussed
13. Promote the process of individuals broadening their views of the social worlds in which they live and those at large

Ultimately the goal is to enable students to think critically about the human condition through the sharpening of social awareness and social conscience. It is imperative to critically analyze the severity, causes, consequences, and possible solutions of social problems.

Attendance:

Attendance is a vital factor in class discussion and provides a fundamental means of integrating, synthesizing, and organizing the material presented in text, lecture, and other sources introduced. Information missed may have direct consequences on performance in the class. It is your responsibility to obtain any information missed as a result of an absence. It is impossible to give you a personal lecture on material missed. Find a colleague who can help you in this area.

Examinations:

There are three exams, graded on a 100 point scale. The format for these exams is essay, short answer, and identification. Material on the exams includes information from lecture, class discussion, text, handouts, and any other sources brought to the class.

ALL MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES!!!

Writing Assignment:

You are responsible for addressing one of the social issues covered this semester. From texts and lecture choose a social problem and analyze the issue using the sociological tools introduced in class. You should provide a theoretical base for analysis and include applied perspectives in your critique of the issue as well as in the possible solutions.

Grading Scale:	93 - 100	A
	90 - 92	A-
	88 - 89	B+
	83 - 87	B
	80 - 82	B-
	78 - 79	C+
	73 - 77	C
	70 - 72	C-

Course Calendar:

Aug. 26	Intro to the Course & The Sociological Perspective
Aug. 31	Concepts & Theory
Sept. 2	Chapter 1: The Sociological Approach in Eitzen & Baca Zinn
Sept. 7	Chapter 2: Smoke Screen Chapter 4: Missing From the News (Skolnich & Currie)
Sept. 9	Chapter 2: Wealth & Power in Eitzen & Baca Zinn
Sept. 14	Chapter 5: Losing Out to Mexico Chapter 6: When You Stop, You Die (Skolnick & Currie) Chapter 11: Day By Day
Sept. 16	Chapter 3: World Population & Global Inequality in Eitzen & Baca Zinn
Sept. 21	Chapter 4: Threats to the Environment in Eitzen & Baca Zinn Chapter 24: Environmental Racism (Skolnick & Currie)
Sept. 23	Writing Assignment Due!!!
Sept. 28	Chapter 6: Urban Problems in the U.S. in Eitzen & Baca Zinn
Sept. 30	Urban Problems (cont.)
Oct. 5	Chapter 7: Poverty in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Oct. 7 Chapter 29: Excess Mortality in Harlem (Skolnick & Currie)

Oct. 12 **MIDTERM EXAM!!!**

Oct. 14 Demographic Transitions in the U.S.

Oct. 19 **FALL RECESS - NO CLASS!!!**

Oct. 21 Chapter 8: Racial & Ethnic Inequality in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Oct. 26 Chapter 15: Immigration to the Burn Zone (Skolnick & Currie)
Chapter 16: Asian Americans, The Myth of the Model Minority (Skolnick & Currie)

Oct. 28 Chapter 9: Gender Inequality in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Nov. 2 Chapter 17: The Wages of Backlash (Skolnick & Currie)

Nov. 4 Chapter 10: Sexual Orientation in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Nov. 9 Chapter 11: Work in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Nov. 11 Chapter 26: How Labor Fares in Advanced Societies
Chapter 27: The Forgotten Americans
Chapter 28: Political Economy & Urban Racial Tensions
(all in Skolnick & Currie)

Nov. 16 Chapter 12: Families in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Nov. 18 **RESEARCH PAPER DUE!!!**
Chapter 13: Education in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Nov. 23 Chapter 20: Families on the Fault Line
Chapter 22: 'Til Death Do Us Part
Chapter 33: Life on the Mississippi
(all in Skolnick & Currie)

Nov. 25 **THANKSGIVING RECESS - NO CLASS!!!**

Nov. 30 Chapter 18: Learning Silence
Chapter 36: Crime & Work
Chapter 39: Workaday World, Crack Economy

(all in Skolnick & Currie)
Chapter 16: Crime & Justice in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Dec. 2 Chapter 17: Drugs in Eitzen & Baca Zinn

Dec. 7 Chapters 16 & 17 in Eitzen & Baca Zinn (cont.)

Dec. 10 **FINAL EXAM!!!**
5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Note: Dates of chapters covered are tentative since progress may vary depending on the needs of the class.