

# MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY



## SO 212 – SOCIAL PROBLEMS FALL 2018 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES MWF 9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M./SSB-14

**Instructor:** Theresa V. Rash      **Office:** Social Sciences Q      **Office Phone:** 662-254-3014  
**Email:** [tvrash@mvsu.edu](mailto:tvrash@mvsu.edu)

### **Office Hours:**

**Monday: 1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.**

**Tuesday: 9:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.**

**Wednesday: 1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.**

**Friday: 12:00 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.**

All other office visits are by appointment only.

### **Required Text:**

Mooney, Linda A., David Knox and Caroline Schacht. 2017. *Understanding Social Problems*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition.

**Additional Reading will be assigned throughout the semester.**

It is also recommended that students purchase a copy of the following text to aid in the formatting of written assignments:

**American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> ed.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Assn.**

### **Catalogue Description (3 credit hours):**

Two main types of social problems are examined: (1) acts and conditions that violate the norms and values present in society, and (2) conditions induced by society that cause psychic and material suffering for any segment of the population. A main goal in this course is to engage the imagination and enthusiasm of students to incorporate the sociological perspective into their social analysis, adopting a critical stance toward all social forms (i.e., question authority, tradition, and the status quo) and considering the premise that individuals are, to a large extent, products of their social environments. **Prerequisite: 3 hours of Sociology.**

### **Course Requirements:**

The textbook is required. Attendance is required. Homework and assignments are due at the beginning of class. No late submissions will be accepted. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on assignments and requirements. It is your responsibility to hold yourself accountable for your own performance. Poor study habits plus failure to complete reading assignments = poor performance. Students must have a copy of this syllabus in their possession during each class meeting and may be required to produce this syllabus at any time without notice.

The objectives of this course will be pursued through required readings, class discussions, presentations, and written assignments. To that end, students must come to class prepared and actively participate in all class discussions. Preparation includes: 1) completing assigned readings prior to class, 2) noting questions or academic issues to address in class, 3) promptly attending each class session, 4) independently researching topics, and 5) submitting all assignments on time. Final evaluation of student work will be based on the quality of contributions to class discussions and performance on all assignments/exams. It is expected that all assignments be completed by deadlines indicated in the syllabus.

### **Important Note:**

All papers must be typed, double-spaced with one inch margins, maximum 12 point font, and APA style. Your paper will receive an automatic 0 if the margins or the font exceed the above limit. This means that I will not read the paper. A well-written paper successfully conveys your message. Poor grammar, sentence construction, organization and/or spelling errors make it difficult for your instructor to understand intended message and could also affect your grade. **ALL PAPERS MUST HAVE A TITLE PAGE.** A reference is required only if you use your textbook and other sources (articles, books, magazines, etc.). The internet is NEVER required or to be used as a source.

### **Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will demonstrate competency in the sociological analysis of social problems including race, class, and gender inequality.
2. Students will be able to discuss the causes of inequality within gender relationships and show how these micro level problems are linked to macro level social problems.
3. Students will be able to discuss the role of poverty on social problems; its correlates, causes and effects.
4. Students will be able to analyze minority group relations by using sociological concepts discussed in class and examine how racial issues contribute to the definition of social problems in contemporary United States.

### **Class Format and Activities:**

Every reasonable effort will be made in this course to help you be successful. Class meetings will be organized on a lecture/discussions basis, with questions, comments, and discussion encouraged during all class meetings. Class meetings may also be including activities, such as videos, guest speakers, group discussions, homework assignments, and students' presentations. Learning through instruction and self-motivation and intellectual challenge are mutual goals for professor and students and the responsibility must be mutually shared. Students must take charge of their educational goals and be fully prepared to engage in the process of learning.

### **Performance Evaluation:**

Final Grades in SO 212 will be based on the following:

- Class Attendance and Participation,
- Required activities including, but not limited to: in-class group discussions, oral presentations, articles, gathering and analyzing information and keeping all work for future reference, and
- Assignments detailed below.

**Quizzes/Exams:** There will be 10 quizzes given during the course of the semester on the chapters/readings you are required to read. The quizzes will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true-false, matching, listing, and essays. There will be two exams (**Mid-term and Final Exam**) given this fall semester as scheduled on the course outline. The exam will be given on the same format as the weekly quizzes. Test questions will come from lecture, textbook, PowerPoint presentations, quizzes, etc.

### **Personal Definition of Social Problem(s):**

After we spent a few weeks discussing understanding social problems, students will devise a personal definition that sums up their idea of what is a social problem. This definition should be no less than 50 words and no longer than 100 words. Special care should be taken in the development of such a definition as it can serve as your personal guidepost for the remaining class discussions. Granted there are no perfect definitions; however, make sure your definition is focused on the social world as it applies to sociology. You are also welcome to draw upon your own philosophical, theoretical, conceptual, and experiential ideologies to develop this core definition. The definition should be double-spaced, with a title page and a reference page (if needed). This assignment should be written using the APA format. **This assignment must be submitted through turnitin. This assignment is due Friday, September 14, 2018.**

### **Research Paper**

Students (group of three) are required to do a five-page research paper on a type of social problem(s) that is/are occurring in our world today. Students are also required to present the paper in class using powerpoint. You must have a minimum of five references. You can not use the internet as a reference. References must be in the form of peer-reviewed journal articles, magazines, newspaper, and books. **You are to submit your topic by Wednesday, September 12, 2018.** No one can have the same topic and the topic must be more than two words. For example, drug addiction or child abuse is not acceptable. Topics such as these may be used: How does/do social problem(s) such as (list social problem(s)) in the family or schools affect the community as a whole? Or, How does/do social problem(s) (list social problem(s)) in the community affect the family as a whole? Some social problems that we are faced with daily are: teenage pregnancy, drugs, alcohol, premarital sex, domestic violence, etc..... Your topic must be approved by the instructor before you start working or writing on your paper. You must have a title page and a reference page. The title page and reference page do not count as part of the five-page research paper. **This assignment must be submitted through turnitin. The Final Paper is due Friday, November 9, 2018.**

**Student Presentations:**

Students (group of three) are required to present their research paper in class using PowerPoint. The presentation should be 15 minutes or longer. A minimum of 10 slides or more are required. The title page, reference page, pictures, charts or graphs are not required as part of the 10 slides for the PowerPoint. A rubric will be used to determine your grade for the presentation. A copy of your presentation must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on the same day of your presentation.

**Turnitin:** You are required to submit your Social Problem Definition and Research Paper through turnitin. The website is turnitin.com. To use turnitin, you must setup an account. If you already have an account, then all you have to do is login using your ID and password. Once you have created an account or if you already have an account, then you will need to submit the class ID and enrollment password for this course to submit your response paper. Your class ID is **18724910** and your enrollment password is **probfac**.

**NOTE:** Failure to submit your Personal Definition of Social Problems and Research Paper using turnitin will result in you getting an “F” on the assignments.

**Make-up Policy:** Students may make up assignments, quizzes, or exams under extenuating circumstances. The final decision regarding make-up work will be at the discretion of Professor Rash. There will be no drop grades in this class. There are no extra credit work in the class.

**Grading Scale:**

**A total of 415 points is possible in this course.**

(10) Pop Quizzes *20 points each	200 points
Personal Definition of Social Problem	20 points
Research Paper	50 points
Research Paper Presentation	25 points
Mid-term Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Attendance & Class Participation	<u>20 points</u>

**Total points: 515**

**Grading Scale:**

- A= 90 – 100% = (463.5-515)**
- B= 89 – 80% = (412-462.5)**
- C= 79 – 70% = (360.5-411)**
- D= 69 – 60% = (309-359.5)**
- F= 59 – 0% = (257.5-308)**

**Attendance Policy:**

A daily attendance sheet will be used to record attendance. NO absence excuses a student from meeting assigned course requirements. Absences will be counted from the first day on which classes officially begin through the day on which the final exam is scheduled. Regular and punctual attendance is required for all classes and activities earning credit. Students must comply with class attendance policies set by individual faculty members and complete all work required for each course. Students who miss more than **3 classes will receive an automatic F in this class.** After the roll is signed or called, you are absent. If you leave early, you are absent. If you walk out to take a call on your cell phone, you are absent. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of absences. There will be no notification prior to being dropped from the class. Faculty members are obligated to notify students in writing at the beginning of each semester of the policies and procedures on absences and make-up work. When students must be absent from class, they are required to make arrangements satisfactory to the instructor with regard to work missed. When students know in advance that they will be absent from class, instructors should be notified and arrangements made to secure assignments.

Students may obtain from the Vice President of Student Affairs an official excuse from class due to an emergency (illness, accidents, jury duty, or death in the immediate family) or for attendance at officially-authorized functions and authorized field trips sponsored by the University. Official absences presented to the instructor within seven days from the date of the absence entitle the students to make up any work missed.

Faculty members are required to submit absences and never attended reports to Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students who never attended class(es) will be administratively dropped from class(es) which may affect the students' eligibility for financial aid.

***NOTE: Not officially withdrawing from the University may impact your financial aid and result in you owing the University.***

**Special Needs and Accommodations:**

Mississippi Valley State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If you feel you are eligible to receive accommodations for a covered disability (medical, physical, psychiatric, learning, vision, hearing, etc.) and would like to request it for this course, you must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) program administered by University College. It is recommended that you visit the Disabilities Office located inside the EMAP Computer Lab in the Technical Education (IT) Building to register for the program at the beginning of each semester. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact Mr. Billy Benson, Jr. via phone or email at 662-254-3005 or [billy.benson@mvsu.edu](mailto:billy.benson@mvsu.edu).

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity includes a commitment to the values of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, respect and responsibility. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act that is committed in an academic context. Honesty and integrity are essential values of the Mississippi Valley State University's mission to pursue truth and knowledge. Therefore, Mississippi Valley State University will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form and will impose sanctions if clearly demonstrated. Academic dishonesty erodes the quality and value of degree conferred.

Although the faculty is responsible for establishing standards for moral and academic excellence in teaching and learning, these standards can be reached only with the cooperation and support of students. Students are expected, therefore, to accept responsibility for maintaining honesty and integrity in all acts inside and outside the classroom, studio or laboratory.

For a detailed description of sanctions and appeal procedures consult Student Handbook and/or Undergraduate Catalog.

**Grade Appeals:**

Any student who believes he/she has been graded unfairly, even after talking to me, may appeal that grade by following the procedures set out by the University in the Student Handbook. It is your responsibility to prove that you deserve a higher grade. Keep all copies of your work.

**Diversity Policy:**

All students, regardless of religious affiliation, race, color, nationality, creed or sexual orientation must feel safe within this space. Please conduct all discussions with regard to the right to human dignity and respect for all individuals.

*Before Entering Class, your cell phones and pagers must be turned off/silent. No phone equipment should be visible on any person. Turned off does not mean "vibrate." If you leave this class to answer your cell phone, you will be graded as absent for the entire class. If your cell phone goes off in class (ring or vibrate), 10 points will be deducted from the next assignment(s) each time the instructor hears your phone.*

*Absolutely no sagging pants which display your underwear or pajamas, mid-drift shirts or dresses, baseball caps, headscarves, head wraps, or sunshades are to be worn during classroom instruction.*

*Any student engaging in non-productive or threatening behavior or behavior considered by the instructor to be disruptive to the learning environment will be removed from the classroom.*

### **Tentative Course Outline:**

Since every class progresses through material at a different rate, this schedule of classes is only a tentative outline, and will most likely be revised throughout the semester. Students are responsible for knowing what the reading assignments are prior to class time. In addition, the dates of the exams may change, but I will **not** hold an exam **earlier** than the date scheduled on the syllabus.

#### **Week 1. August 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>:**

Course Overview, Introduction to Social Problems  
Read Chapter 1: Thinking About Social Problems

#### **Week 2. August 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>:**

Read Chapter 1: Thinking About Social Problems  
Read Chapter 2: Physical and Mental Health and Health Care

#### **Week 3. September 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 2: Physical and Mental Health and Health Care  
Read Chapter 3: Alcohol and Other Drugs  
**Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY/NO CLASS**

#### **Week 4. September 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 3: Alcohol and Other Drugs  
Read Chapter 4: Crime and Social Control  
**Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>: Last Day to Drop/Add Classes**  
**Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>: Research Topics/Groups Due**  
**Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>: Personal Definition of Social Problems Due in Turnitin**  
**Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>: Report of Non-Attendance Due**

#### **Week 5. September 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>:**

Read Chapter 4: Crime and Social Control  
Read Chapter 5: Family Problems

#### **Week 6. September 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 5: Family Problems  
Read Chapter 6: Poverty and Economic Inequality  
**Review for Mid-term Exam**

#### **Week 7. October 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>:**

**MID-TERM EXAMINATION/CHAPTERS 1-6**

#### **Week 8. October 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 7: Work and Unemployment  
Read Chapter 8: Problems in Education  
**Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>: Deadline to Submit Mid-Term Grades**  
**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 9. October 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 7: Work and Unemployment

Read Chapter 8: Problems in Education

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 10. October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 9: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Read Chapter 10: Gender Inequality

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 11. October 29<sup>th</sup> – November 2<sup>nd</sup>:**

Read Chapter 9: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Read Chapter 10: Gender Inequality

**Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>: Last Day to Withdraw from a Class**

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 12. November 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 11: Sexual Orientation and the Struggle for Equality

Read Chapter 12: Population Growth and Aging

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

**Friday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>: Final Research Paper Due in Turnitin**

**Friday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>: Last Day to Withdraw from the University**

**Week 13. November 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>:**

Read Chapter 11: Sexual Orientation and the Struggle for Equality

Read Chapter 12: Population Growth and Aging

**Week 14. November 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>:**

**FALL BREAK FOR FACULTY AND STUDENT/THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS**

**Week 15. November 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>:**

**Review for Final Examination**

**Make-up Work**

**Week 16. December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>:**

**FINAL EXAMINATION/CHAPTERS 7-12**

**Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>: Deadline to Submit Final Grades**

***NOTE: This document does not constitute a contract with the University. It contains guidelines. The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary.***