

SOC-2: Modern Social Problems  
Spring 2019 ONLINE Syllabus, Sections 4311, 4345  
Instructor: Dr. Dan Morgan

***Office Hours***

- ***By telephone:*** Phone messages are forwarded to me by the Department of Behavioral Sciences: (707) 527-4228 or (707) 527-4226.
- ***By e-mail:*** [dmorgan@santarosa.edu](mailto:dmorgan@santarosa.edu)
- ***I also plan to host individual and small group meetings via Zoom***

Course Description

Analysis of contemporary social problems. Topics include globalization, environmental issues, poverty, work, health and mental health care, the educational system, criminal justice, the basis of inequalities, and the role of power in defining social problems.

Textbook

*Social Problems – Continuity and Change*

<https://www.saylor.org/site/textbooks/Social%20Problems%20-%20Continuity%20and%20Change.pdf>

This is a free textbook.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

Analyze the major recognized social problems in modern society.

Critically evaluate proposed solutions to modern social problems.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and explain social problems from a sociological perspective.
2. Analyze trends in poverty and wealth in the United States and the world.
3. Summarize the major issues for racial and ethnic group relations.
4. Evaluate the role of gender in the policies of contemporary social institutions.
5. Compare the health policies of the United States to those of other nations.
6. Summarize structural changes in the U.S. economy including the effects of deindustrialization and the rise of information technology.
7. Analyze the foundations of educational inequality.
8. Identify the impact of environmental issues on the society.
9. Compare and contrast corporate crime with street crime.

### METHODS OF EVALUATION/BASIS OF GRADE

Assignment	Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Discussions (15 points, 14 Weeks)	210	30%
5 Short Writing Assignments (10 points each)	50 points	7%
Mid-Term Exam	125	17%
Research Paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Topic and Preliminary Bibliography: 25 points, due week 3</li><li>• Annotated Bibliography: 25 points, due week 9</li><li>• Draft: due week 14</li><li>• Final Paper: 100 points, due week 17</li></ul>	150 points	21%
Final Exam	175	25%
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>100%</b>

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90% to 100%
B	80% to 89%
C	70% to 79%
D	60% to 69%
F	Below 60%

## Explanation of Graded Components

**Discussions.** The weekly discussions are an integral part of the course. Meaningful virtual classroom discussions promote understanding of the major concepts and principles underlying the complex relationship between our society and technology. I will lead these discussions, asking questions and providing feedback to your responses. Each student will respond to the initial questions and respond to the other students in the course.

In the Discussion areas of the course, you, as a student, can interact with your instructor and classmates to explore questions and comments related to the content of this course. Discussions will be open Monday, 8:00 a.m. through Sunday, 11:59 p.m. **Santa Rosa TIME.** The graded discussions are not chat rooms or blogs. Use academic language as opposed to text message language or tweets. For example, “I” is a proper noun, always capitalized. Discussions will be graded according to the rubric found at the end of this course syllabus.

Rationale:

1. Participation in graded discussions promotes understanding of course material, concepts and terminology.
2. Discussing concepts and experiences with one another allows us to better understand one another, our cultures and values.
3. Attendance and participation promote student engagement with other students, adding value to the learning.
4. Participation in graded discussions promotes faculty/student engagement in the class.

**Short Writing Assignments:** There are five short writing assignments assigned to this course, relevant to course content that we are covering at that particular time. You may complete these writing assignments at any time during the semester, up until week 16. (This means that you will need to complete your first one by at least week 12). Each writing assignment will address material from a different course module. Short Writing Assignments will generally be 1-2 pages in length, double spaced. Include an additional cover page. No reference page is required. Short writing assignments will be graded according to the rubric found in the Appendix.

Rationale:

1. Short writing assignments allow you to think more deeply and consciously about your actions or behaviors surrounding a particular part of your life or experience.
2. Short writing assignments allow you to develop expertise in understating the sociological imagination.
3. Short writing assignments help you to study for the quizzes and the final exam.

**Research Paper.** Students will write a scholarly research paper that pertains to any social problem that can be described and analyzed from a sociological perspective. Papers will be 7 – 10 pages (7 pages minimum), and will include at least three (5) scholarly references. The research paper will be graded in stages, allowing students time to incorporate course material and concepts along the way. Grading is

indicated above.

Rationale:

1. Writing an original research paper allows each student to relate course concepts to an area of specialized interest that may not otherwise be emphasized in weekly discussions.
2. Smaller, graded components allow for continuous feedback and ensure that student's writing and direction meet course standards and instructor expectations.
3. Writing a course paper promotes mentorship, and enhances student engagement.

Once you submit your topic, you are required to stay with that topic; **you may not change your topic after Week 3, so choose carefully.** Conduct some preliminary research before choosing your topic. This video will help you: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0B3Gjlu-1o>

### **Mid-Term and Final Exams.**

Rationale:

1. Studying for exams engages students with course material.
2. The exam-taking process affirms accuracy of course terminology.
3. Exams are used as learning tools as well as learning assessments as you prepare the research paper.

**Allow yourself plenty of time to upload assignments and to complete the exams. I do not accept late assignments or last-minute messages about how you are having trouble with Canvas. I also do not accept assignments via e-mail. If an assignment is not submitted to Canvas by the due date and time, it does not exist.**

### **Access for Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy of the Sonoma County Junior College District to provide equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal law and regulations including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title 5 of the California Administrative Code. Pursuant to Title 5, the District has developed the Disability Resources Department to assist students with disabilities in securing appropriate instruction, academic accommodations and auxiliary aids. It is the intent of the District that such individuals be served by regular classes and programs whenever possible. To that end, students with disabilities shall be admitted to courses and programs and matriculate through such courses and programs on an equal basis with all other students. To ensure equality of access for students with disabilities, academic accommodations and auxiliary aids shall be provided to the extent necessary to comply with state and federal law and regulations. For each student, academic accommodations and auxiliary aids shall specifically address those functional limitations of the disability, which adversely affect equal educational opportunity. When the severity of the disability of an otherwise qualified student precludes successful completion of a course required for graduation from SRJC, despite an earnest effort on the

part of the student to complete the course and despite provision of academic accommodations and/or auxiliary aids, a course substitution or waiver of the course requirement shall be considered.

The District will maintain specific criteria and procedures to implement this policy.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

Sonoma County Junior College District (SCJCD) holds that its primary function is the development of intellectual curiosity, integrity, and accomplishment in an atmosphere that upholds the principles of academic freedom. All members of the academic community - student, faculty, staff, and administrator - must assume responsibility for providing an environment of the highest standards, characterized by a spirit of academic honesty and mutual respect. Because personal accountability is inherent in an academic community of integrity, this institution will not tolerate or ignore any form of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is regarded as any act of deception, benign or malicious in nature, in the completion of any academic exercise. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and other academic misconduct.

### **SRJC Attendance Policy**

#### **A. Attendance**

1. Students are expected to attend, and in the case of online classes, participate in, all sessions/modules of the course in which they are enrolled.
2. A student may be dropped from any class when that student's absences exceed ten percent (10%) of the total hours of class time.
3. With advanced notice and appropriate documentation, members of the U.S. Military Armed Services and Reservists shall have their absences accommodated due to service obligations provided that satisfactory academic progress is being made prior to suspending their studies. For the purpose of this policy, a student is making satisfactory academic progress so long as, at the start of the absence, the student has the potential to pass the class after completing the remaining assignments.

#### **B. Nonattendance**

1. Students who fail to attend the first class meeting may be dropped by the instructor. For classes that meet online, students who fail to log on and initiate participation by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time of the first day of the class may be dropped by the instructor. The start date for full semester online classes is the official first day of the semester; for short-term classes, the first day will be specified in the schedule of classes.
2. Instructors are required to drop all No-Show students immediately following the second class meeting. A No-Show is an enrolled student who has not attended any class meeting of the course. For classes that meet online, a No-Show is an enrolled student who has not logged on and initiated active participation by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time of the second day of the class.

#### **C. Excessive absence defined**

1. Instructors shall state in each course syllabus what constitutes excessive absence for that course. **In this course, excessive absence is defined as failure to participate in graded discussions during one weekly module.**

2. Any student with excessive absences may be dropped from the class.

### CLASS MODULES AND PROPOSED CALENDAR

Week	Topic/Deliverable
One: January 14 - 20	Chapter 1: Understanding Social Problems  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
*January 21, 2019  *January 22, 2019	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday  Professional Development Flex Day (Class is open and available for students)
Two: January 23 – 27  *January 27, 2019	Chapter 2: Poverty  First discussion posts due by Wednesday  Last day to drop semester length class and be eligible for a refund
Three: January 28 – February 3  *February 3, 2019	Graded Discussion: The Research Process  First discussion posts due by Wednesday  Research Paper Topic and Preliminary Bibliographies Due in Canvas by 11:59 PM Sunday, February 3  Last day to drop a class without “W” symbol
Four: February 4 - 10	Chapter 3: Racial and Ethnic Inequality  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Five: February 11 – 17	Chapter 4: Gender Inequality Chapter 5: Sexual Orientation and Inequality  First discussion posts due by Wednesday

*February 14, 2019	Mandatory Professional Development Activity Institutional Day (Class is open and available for students)
Six: February 18 - 24	Chapter 6: Aging and Ageism  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Seven: February 25 – March 3	Chapter 7: Alcohol and Other Drugs  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Eight: March 4 - 10	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>
Nine: March 11 - 17	Graded Discussion: Annotated Bibliographies  First discussion posts due by Wednesday  Annotated Bibliographies Due in Canvas by 11:59 PM Sunday, March 17
*March 18-24, 2019	Spring Break
Ten: March 25 – 31	Chapter 8: Crime and Criminal Justice  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Eleven: April 1 - 7	Chapter 9: Sexual Behavior  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Twelve: April 8 - 14	Chapter 10: The Changing Family  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Thirteen: April 15 – 18  *April 19 - 21  *April 21, 2019	Graded Discussion: Research Paper Drafts & Feedback  Post Drafts by Monday, Offer Feedback to two peers by Wednesday  Holiday Weekend  Last day to drop a class <u>with</u> “W” symbol
Fourteen: April 22 - 28	Chapter 13: Health and Health Care  First discussion posts due by Wednesday

Fifteen: April 29 – May 5	Chapter 14: Urban and Rural Problems  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
Sixteen: May 6 - 12	Chapter 15: Population and the Environment  First discussion posts due by Wednesday
May 13 - 17	Non-Graded Discussions: The Final Paper  Final Version of Research Papers Due in Canvas by 11:59 PM <b>FRIDAY</b> , May 17 <sup>th</sup>
May 18 - 24	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>



**Appendix: Short Writing Assignment Grading Rubric: 10 points**

	<b>Poor 0 pts</b>	<b>Fair 1 pts</b>	<b>Good 1.5 pts</b>	<b>Excellent 2 pts</b>
<b>Depth of reflection</b>	<u><b>Poor</b></u> Writing demonstrates lack of reflection on the selected topic, with no details.	<u><b>Fair</b></u> Writing demonstrates a minimal reflection on the selected topic, including a few supporting details and examples.	<u><b>Good</b></u> Writing demonstrates a general reflection on the selected topic, including some supporting details and examples.	<u><b>Excellent</b></u> Writing demonstrates an in-depth reflection on the selected topic, including supporting details and examples.
<b>Required components</b>	<u><b>Poor</b></u> Writing does not include the required components of the selected topic.	<u><b>Fair</b></u> Writing includes the a few components of the selected topic.	<u><b>Good</b></u> Writing includes the required components of the selected topic.	<u><b>Excellent</b></u> Writing surpasses the required components of the selected topic.
<b>Quality of Information</b>	<u><b>Poor</b></u> Information has little to do with the main topic.	<u><b>Fair</b></u> Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	<u><b>Good</b></u> Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	<u><b>Excellent</b></u> Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.
<b>Structure &amp; Organization</b>	<u><b>Poor</b></u> Writing unclear, disorganized. Thoughts make little to no sense.	<u><b>Fair</b></u> Writing is unclear, and thoughts are not well organized. Thoughts are not expressed in a logical manner.	<u><b>Good</b></u> Writing is mostly clear, concise, and organized with the use of excellent sentence/paragraph structure. Thoughts are expressed in a logical manner.	<u><b>Excellent</b></u> Writing is clear, concise, and well organized with the use of excellent sentence/paragraph structure. Thoughts are expressed in a logical manner.
<b>Grammar</b>	<u><b>Poor</b></u> There are numerous spelling or grammar errors per page of writing reflection.	<u><b>Fair</b></u> There are more than five spelling or grammar errors per page of writing reflection.	<u><b>Good</b></u> There are no more than five spelling or grammar errors per page of writing reflection.	<u><b>Excellent</b></u> There are no more than three spelling or grammar errors per page of writing reflection.