



Social Problems

SOC 2601 (CRN: 34626)
Spring 2023: May 15 – July 2, 2023
Online, Asynchronous

Contact Information

Professor: Dr. Amanda Fehlbaum

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Office: DeBartolo Hall 437

Phone: 330-941-2716 (Office) or 330-406-9490 (Google Voice/Text)

Email: afehlbaum@ysu.edu

Preferred Contact Method: Email

Student Support Hours: By appointment during the Summer.

Communication Expectations: I typically respond to email within 24 hours on weekdays. I strive to grade assignments within one week.

Catalog Description

A sociological overview of various contemporary social issues, analyzing significant discrepancies between standards of expectation and actual social behavior, attempting to ascertain possible causes, and discussing trends and possible changes.

Course Description

Why are some social problems considered serious and others not? There are several social ills plaguing our society today, yet at various times and in different places, certain issues will become labeled by different people as being serious social problems.

This course provides students with an opportunity to examine major issues facing society. It also provides students with an opportunity to integrate sociological theories and concepts, and apply that integrated perspective to current social concerns presented to individuals, communities, nations, and the world. This course examines social problems as they relate to one's identity, social institutions, health and safety, and the global society.

The Social Sciences General Education knowledge domain goal will be met. With the successful completion of this course, you will demonstrate understanding of the development, diversity, and complexity of human behavior, institutions, and culture.

Course Materials

Required Textbooks:

Lauer, Robert and Jeanette Lauer. *Social Problems and the Quality of Life*. 15th Ed. McGraw-Hill. ISBN-13: 9781264300365

This is the eBook version of the textbook. The eBook is required as there are assignments associated with reading. If you do not have the book for whatever reason at the beginning of the semester, you can utilize their temporary, limited free trial so you do not fall behind.

Students are required to have access to [Blackboard](#) as this course takes place online. These are the [computer lab locations](#) on campus.

Course Learning Outcomes/Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the work of sociologists by using the sociological perspective, concepts, theories, and methods developed by sociologists to study society and the individual.
- Evaluate the ways in which stratification exists in the world. Specifically, students will interpret how factors such as race, class, and gender impact life chances.
- Examine the relationship between their individual behavior and the social groups to which they belong. Students will evaluate how stratification systems and institutions operate within the social structure to influence agency and life chances.
- Meet the Social Sciences General Education Learning Outcomes:
 - Demonstrate understanding of contexts and development of human cultures and institutions.
 - Demonstrate understanding of individual and social behavior.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of methodologies used in the social sciences.

Design of the Course

Our course “weeks” run from Monday through Sunday. Each week includes readings, lecture, an exam, and discussion. Students will also complete a syllabus quiz at the beginning of the course and one paper.

Students should expect to spend a minimum of 9 hours a week on reading and course assignments. Weekly assignments and exams must be uploaded no later than 11:59 pm on Sunday nights. Paper assignments are posted from the first day of class and may be completed and turned in early. Once the week is over, you can no longer go in and complete any assignments from the previous week. New assignments and discussion board questions will become available by 8:01 A.M. on Monday.

Readings

Completing the assigned readings for each class is crucial to your success in this course. Exam questions are based, in part, on the assigned readings. By completing the readings in the Connect eBook, you earn 10 points per chapter. Your lowest Connect grade will be dropped.

McGraw-Hill Connect

McGraw-Hill’s Connect is a web-based assignment and assessment solution *required* for this course. Connect is designed to assist you with your coursework based on your needs. As outlined in this syllabus, LearnSmart reading assignments will make-up a portion of your overall course grade.

Access

Connect access codes are available at the bookstore. NOTE: You can register in Connect and have access without a code for a limited time period (typically two weeks).

Registration

To register in Connect, please click on one of the Connect assignments, such as “Connect Orientation Videos” or “SmartBook 2.0 Overview” and then select “Register Now.”

Support and Tips

If you have any issues while registering or using Connect, please contact McGraw-Hill’s CARE team through <http://www.mhhe.com/support> or at 800-331-5094. To avoid problems related to unexpected technological issues, you are advised to not wait until the last moment to complete assignments. Please review the *Connect Student Quick Tips* document on Blackboard for further support.

Lectures

In this class, I provide recorded Power Point presentations as videos. They are accessible through the through Blackboard with a link to Microsoft Stream. You will have access to the presentations throughout the course, but I suggest taking notes while you are viewing the presentations, just like you would in the classroom. Lecture content will be in the quiz.

Exams

There are six exams in this class. In general, the exams are available for you to take from 8:01 A.M. on Monday to 11:59 P.M. on Sunday (Example: Exam 1 opens on May 22 at 8:01 A.M. and closes on May 28 at 11:59 P.M.). Exams are formatted to include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, etc. Exams cover all class material, presentations, assigned readings, and videos for that week. The last exam is not cumulative.

Once starting each exam, you will have 60 minutes to complete it. Your Internet browser will be “locked down” during the quiz. Each exam is worth 100 points and is graded immediately upon completion. Your lowest exam grade is dropped from final grade calculations. **Make-up assignments will not be given for any reason.** The dropping of the lowest exam grade is designed to accommodate people who experience unavoidable emergencies or conflicts of interest during the semester. If you have technical difficulties (i.e., your computer suddenly dies or the browser freezes and none of your answers save, etc.), you will be given *one* opportunity to re-take the exam. Note: Blackboard does not always cooperate when exams are taken using smart phones. You are encouraged to take your exams on a computer.

If you have a problem with an exam question, such as how it was worded or if you think the answers are incorrect or vague, you need to make an appointment or see me during my Student Support Hours to discuss it.

Syllabus Quiz

In addition to the six exams given during the course, a quiz worth up to ten points will be given. You have from the first day of class (May 15) to the end of the first week of class (May 21) to take the syllabus quiz. The syllabus quiz grade cannot be dropped. For the quiz, you need to be familiar with the general policies, assignments, and expectations of the course.

Papers

You have a choice among five paper assignments. You will sign up in advance to do one of the five assignments using a [SignUpGenius](#) that is set up for this course. The instructions for each paper assignment are posted under the Papers link on Blackboard – press the “view assessment” button. After the SignUpGenius has closed, a file titled “What Paper Did I Sign Up For?” will be posted under the Papers link on Blackboard as well in the event that you forget which assignments you signed up to complete.

Summary of Paper Due Dates

Topic	Due Date
Problems of Behavioral Deviance	6/4
Problems of Inequality	6/11
Probs Soc Inst: Gov, Work, Education	6/18
Probs Soc Inst: Health & Family	6/25
Global Impact of Inequality	7/2

Each paper must follow the *Written Assignment Guidelines* posted under the Papers link in Blackboard. Your paper must be two-to-three pages in length (one-and-a-half pages is not two full pages). Each paper is worth 50 points. Your paper must be submitted to the proper Safe Assign link by 11:59 P.M. on the due date.

You do not have to turn in a hard copy of your paper; however, I accept hard copied in addition to – not in lieu of – uploading your assignment to Blackboard. You must upload your paper assignment to Blackboard, regardless of if you turn in a hard copy. I do not accept the hard copy alone. If you are retaking this class to receive a higher/passing grade, you may not submit papers you previously submitted in the course.

While you may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help you get started in your writing, the content needs to be your own. AI will not create accurate citations for you. If you include inaccurate AI citations, you will receive a zero on your paper. Be very cautious of tone in your writing with AI. If the switch between yourself and AI is discernable, you will not receive a passing grade.

Although this course is not a writing class, part of the paper grade includes quality of writing and following directions. It is in your best interest to proofread your papers for proper grammar and spelling as well as follow formatting directions. Neglect to follow formatting directions will also result in deduction of points.

Note: Not adequately citing your sources, such as only listing sources at the end and not citing them within the paper, is a violation of academic integrity. Using fake citations is a violation of

academic integrity. If you do this in a paper or homework, you will receive a zero on your assignment and will be reported for academic dishonesty.

Submitting Written Assignments to the Safe Assign Folder on Blackboard

The reason you must submit written assignments to the Safe Assign link on Blackboard is so that a plagiarism check can be run on your assignment. If you turn in your assignment early and see that you had a high plagiarism rating in the originality report, you may have the opportunity to see what you did and correct the assignment before it is due. You may contact me to clear your original assignment so that you can submit an improved assignment. Plagiarism, regardless of intention, is taken seriously.¹

Please make sure you are submitting to the correct assignment file for the assignment. **If you have problems submitting to the assignment file, you need to e-mail me and let me know well before the assignment is due (e.g., two days, not two minutes).** Assignments should be submitted as .doc, .docx, .pdf, or .odt files. Other file types will not be accepted. You are responsible for converting your document, if necessary, into an acceptable format. **Do not just copy and paste the paper into the text box!** If you use Google Docs, you must save the doc as a PDF or Word Document.² If you use OneDrive, you need to download the document, then upload it to Blackboard – do not just copy and paste the link from OneDrive.³

Submitting a link to a Google Doc or OneDrive document will result in a grade of zero because it does not allow for the plagiarism check to take place.

Please take care to ensure that your paper properly uploaded to Blackboard.⁴ After you submit your file to the Safe Assign folder, you will see a blue bar stating that your submission was successful.

You may submit a rough draft via email or hard copy one week before a paper assignment is due. I will give you feedback and tell you if you are headed in the right direction.

Discussion Posts and Responses

This course is designed to be interactive. Please come to the discussion boards having completed the assigned readings and prepared to actively participate. I encourage vibrant and respectful interaction. Discussion should be directed to the entire class in hopes of having a dynamic discussion that lasts. Discussion forum participation provides an opportunity for members of the class to learn from one another based on the readings, different life experiences, and unique perspectives gained from studying course materials. It also assists you

¹ See section on Academic Integrity

² [This is a video on how to save a Google Doc as a Word Document.](#) I suggest saving the file to your Desktop so that you can easily find it to submit to Blackboard.

³ [This is a video on how to download a OneDrive file.](#)

⁴ [This video shows you how to upload an assignment](#)

in learning how to effectively communicate ideas to a group in a professional and respectful manner.

You are expected to complete all six discussion posts.

While you may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help you get started in your writing, the content needs to be your own. AI will not create accurate citations for you. If you include inaccurate AI citations, you will receive a zero on your paper. Be very cautious of tone in your writing with AI. If the switch between yourself and AI is discernable, you will not receive a passing grade.

You must make a post to the discussion board to have the option of responding to classmates' posts. Unless otherwise noted, most responses are optional. Responses, if made for extra credit, must be more than "I agree." They should follow the 3CQ format (compliment, connect, comment, question). Please see "About Discussions" located at the top of the Discussion Board page for details.

Extra Credit

You may also receive two extra credit points for responding to classmates' discussion posts (points are per Discussion assignment, not per response).

Any extra credit opportunities, if available, will be announced. Do not ask me to provide you with extra credit or for things to count as extra credit.

How to Succeed in This Course

I truly want everyone in this class to succeed not only in this course but throughout their college careers. To succeed in this course, I expect students to attend class regularly, engage with the course, complete the assigned readings for each class, participate in class discussion, complete assignments on time, proofread their papers, and not plagiarize.

Levels of engagement can vary from above average to below average and may be reflected in your grade.

Above average engagement involves:

- Spirited intellectual engagement with the course readings and the class
- Conscientious and insightful preparation of assignments
- Papers that make and support sophisticated arguments, are well-written and interesting to read, and are free of errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Active and thoughtful participation in class discussion

Average engagement involves:

- Clear demonstration in papers and in class discussion of understanding the sociological concepts we explore
- Papers with clear thesis statements and careful research
- Consistent participation in class discussion

Below average engagement involves:

- Work that shows minimal synthesis of concepts or original analysis
- Infrequent participation in discussion
- Assignments that are incomplete or late
- Papers that are not well-researched or are presented carelessly (not proofread or contain many mechanical errors)

My Student Support Hours (Office Hours) are by appointment. Please see me if you have any questions concerning the reading material, in-class assignments, quizzes, papers, study strategies, etc. If you are unable to meet me during these hours, but need to be seen, you can e-mail me to make an appointment.

Understanding Early Alerts

In all your classes, your professors can create a “flag” related to your performance in a class. Professors may indicate that you are having difficulty understanding course material, not attending class, missing assignments, etc. These alerts do NOT stay on a permanent record, and they are NOT used in any way as a penalty against you. The alerts are used to help you find a solution that is realistic and helps you succeed.

How to Get Help

YSU is committed to your success. As a student you have access to several resources that may be instrumental in helping you succeed in this course and others. Please do not hesitate to utilize any of these [free support services](#) to support your academic success, physical and mental health, and help you navigate your time as a YSU student.

One such support service is the [Writing Center](#). They provide writing consultations for any discipline as well as basic computer literacy help.

If you are reading this sentence before the end of the second week of class, send me an email with the subject line “Roar,” and include an image of your favorite dinosaur. I will award you 5 points. Thank you for reading the syllabus.

Attendance Expectations

[Youngstown State University’s Attendance Policy](#) reads as follows:

The faculty believes that classroom activities are essential to learning. The student is responsible for knowing and meeting all course requirements, including tests, assignments, and class participation, as indicated by the course instructor. The responsibility for work missed during absence rests with the student.

The instructor has no obligation to give make-up graded coursework or to review other class work missed by a student because of absence apart from absences due to participation in university-sponsored events, government-related activities, religious observances, death of a family member, and documented personal illness.

As this is an asynchronous online course, I will not be taking attendance. You are, however, responsible for completing the content of the course in a timely manner. This means you are expected to regularly log-in to Blackboard to check for messages, complete assignments, and communicate with the class.

Late Work Submission Policy

Due to the accelerated nature of this course, late papers are not accepted. Due to the dynamic nature of discussion, late discussion posts are not accepted.

Your lowest exam grade is dropped from final grade calculations. **Make-up exams will not be given for any reason.** Exams will only be offered during the week-long period they are open. The dropping of the lowest exam grade is designed to accommodate people who experience unavoidable emergencies or conflicts during the semester (including, but not limited to: work, religious holidays or celebrations, doctor's appointments, extracurricular events, etc.). If your schedule requires that you must frequently miss this week-long window, it may be in your best interest to drop this course.

Please Note

Technological difficulties are not considered a valid excuse for tardiness. Please contact me – email, call, text - well before an assignment (paper, exam, etc.) is due if you are having technical difficulties. I will do my best to work with you to address the situation.

Class Conduct

The American Sociological Association states, [“As sociological scholars and citizens, we have a responsibility to study and speak out regarding all forms of racism and injustice.”](#) I stand in solidarity and support the fight against systemic racism and the oppression of Black folks, Indigenous folks, and other People of Color, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and non-binary individuals.

In this class, we will discuss issues that are highly controversial. We all come from different perspectives on these issues. It is likely that we will disagree with one another. I welcome and encourage lively discussion, as that is necessary for true learning to occur. However, disagreements should not come in the form of personal attack. Mutual respect is required to maximize a healthy and fair learning environment. You may disagree with each other's ideas and the evidence used in the arguments, but you should respect each other as people.

I show several video clips from a variety of sources as part of the course curriculum and to aid your understanding of concepts that are sometimes abstract or hard to understand. If anyone is ever made to feel uncomfortable or feels something is inappropriate, I request that you talk to me about it to see if the issue can be resolved in a way that allows learning to occur on both of our parts.

A positive learning environment involves commitment of both instructor and students in a course. [Reciprocal Responsibilities for Undergraduate Students and Instructors](#) was developed

jointly with the Student Government Association and YSU Academic Senate to outline mutual responsibilities in the classroom, and our class will follow these guidelines.

Communication Issues

Email

I can best be reached by e-mail, but my response may not be immediate. Please indicate which course you are in when emailing me for the first time. You also need to always sign your emails at the end (write your name).

Students are expected to check their e-mail for university announcements or information from instructors, though announcements will typically be cross-posted on Blackboard. It is to your benefit to check your e-mail so that you have the most up-to-date information pertaining to this class. If you use an e-mail address other than your YSU account (in other words, it does not end in “@ysu.edu”), I cannot guarantee that I will receive your e-mail.

Emails that address the professor as Miss, Ms., Mrs., or by first name will not receive a response after an initial warning. Please address me as Dr. Fehlbaum, Professor Fehlbaum, or Prof. Fehlbaum.

Phone

I have a phone in my office; however, I cannot always be relied upon to answer it. The number is 330-941-2716. You may call or text my Google Voice number - 330-406-9490. If texting, please identify yourself.

Grading and Grading Scale

Evaluation

A breakdown of the points available in this course is shown below:

Syllabus Quiz	10
Connect Assignments (14, 10 points each, lowest dropped)	130
Weekly Exam (6, 100 points each, lowest dropped)	500
Discussion (6, 10 points each)	60
Papers (1, 50 points each)	<u>50</u>
	750 points total

Grading Scale

Syllabus Quiz, Discussion	Paper	Exams	Total Raw Points	Letter Grade
9 - 10	45 - 50	90 – 100	675 - 750	A
8	40 - 44	80 – 89	600 - 674	B
7	35 - 39	70 – 79	525 - 599	C
6	30 - 34	60 – 69	450 - 524	D
0 - 5	0 - 29	0 - 59	0 - 449	F

Final Grades

Final letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A: 675 - 750

B: 600 - 674

C: 525 - 599

D: 450 - 524

F: 0 – 449

YSU's Grading System can be found [here](#).

Final grades will be based on points, not percentage. **Final grades are non-negotiable.**

Honors Contract Language

The honors contract option is not available for this course.

University Policies

[University policies](#) can be found online and provide you guidance on your rights as a student in this course. The links below take you directly to a specific policy. Should you have any questions about a policy, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information at the top of the syllabus.

- [Statement of Non-Discrimination from the University](#)
- [Student Accessibility](#)
- [Incomplete Grade Policy](#)
- [Classroom Safety and Health Protocols](#)
- [Religious Accommodations of Students](#)

Academic Integrity

As outlined in *The Student Code of Conduct*, all forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited at Youngstown State University. This includes plagiarism, the unauthorized use of tools or notes in taking tests or completing assignments, fabrication of data or information used for an assignment, working with others without permission from the instructor, and more. A student who is believed to have violated the [academic integrity policy](#) will meet with the instructor to discuss the allegations. The student may accept responsibility for the violation and any sanctions selected by the instructor, or they have the right to ask for a hearing before a hearing panel. The full Academic Integrity policy can be found in Article III. 1. of *The Student Code of Conduct*, while further information on University procedures for alleged academic integrity violations can be found in Article V.

Note: Not adequately citing your sources, such as only listing sources at the end and not citing them within the paper, is a violation of academic integrity. If you do this in a paper, you will receive a zero on your assignment and will be reported for academic dishonesty.

If you are retaking this class to receive a higher/passing grade, you may not submit papers you previously submitted in the course.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence, discrimination, and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: Title IX Coordinator (titleix@ysu.edu), Counseling Services (330-941-3737), YSU Police (330-941-3527), and Rape Crisis & Counseling Center (24-hour crisis line: 330-782-3936). More information can be found at <https://ysu.edu/title-ix/>.

Voluntary/Involuntary Medical Leave or Withdrawal

[Medical leave/withdrawal](#) is available for all students with a documented physical or psychological illness of a serious nature that requires them to leave the university after the last day to withdraw with a grade of “W” without completing their coursework.

University Schedule of Operations – Summer 1 2023

Last Day to Add or Change a Grade Option:	May 18, 2023
Last Day for 100% Refund:	May 21, 2023
Last Day for Withdrawing with a Grade of “W”:	May 22, 2023
University Closed (Memorial Day):	May 29, 2023

Course Schedule

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning. For maximum benefit in this course, complete the readings by the assigned date to prepare for class.

Assignments due by 11:59 PM on the last day of each week

SmartBook = *Social Problems and the Quality of Life*

Date	Topic	Tasks
May 15 – May 21	Introduction to Course	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus Sign up for Connect Sign up for Paper Syllabus Quiz
May 22 – May 28	Study of Social Problems	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SmartBook: Chapter 1 Discussion Exam 1

Date	Topic	Tasks
May 29 – June 4	Problems of Behavioral Deviance	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartBook: Chapter 2 • SmartBook: Chapter 3 • SmartBook: Chapter 4 Discussion Exam 2 Problems of Behavioral Deviance Paper Due
June 5 – June 11	Problems of Inequality	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartBook: Chapter 6 • SmartBook: Chapter 7 • SmartBook: Chapter 8 Discussion Exam 3 Problems of Inequality Paper Due
June 12 – June 18	Problems of Social Institutions – Government, Work, and Education	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartBook: Chapter 9 • SmartBook: Chapter 10 • SmartBook: Chapter 11 Discussion Exam 4 Problems of Social Institutions – Government, Work, and Education Paper Due
June 19 – June 25	Problems of Social Institutions – Health & Family	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartBook: Chapter 12 • SmartBook: Chapter 13 Discussion Exam 5 Problems of Social Institutions – Health & Family Paper Due
June 26 – July 2	Global Impact of Inequality	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartBook: Chapter 14 • SmartBook: Chapter 15 Discussion Exam 6 Global Impact of Inequality Paper Due