

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Online Course Syllabus

SOC 1303

Spring 2010

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COURSE INFORMATION: This is an online course. All tests and assignments can be completed from remote sites. The Blackboard software system houses all aspects of the course. The course begins Tuesday, January 19 and ends Friday, May 14, 2009. Please take a look at the course folders. The main ones are Course Information, Course Documents, and Tests and Quizzes. If you have any questions at any time during the course, please feel free to e-mail me.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will provide a general understanding of the world that we live in, and the problems in which humans face on this Earth.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Our objectives in this course include, but are not limited to:

- 1) To communicate the various sociological perspectives on social problems.
- 2) Perfect the skills needed to read, write and think critically and analytically about complex social issues.
- 3) Develop the ability to identify, define, and investigate social problems and to propose ways of dealing with them.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Crone, James, *How Can We Solve our Social Problems?* 2007. Pine Forge Press.

GRADE CRITERIA:

The course grade will be based on the number of points earned out of a possible 1000. The cutoffs for determining a letter grade will follow the traditional standard of 90 %(A), 80% (B), 70% (C), and 60% (D).

You will earn points by taking four tests (400 points), completing three writing assignments (300 points), and by posting valid responses to online discussions (300).

Each test will be available for a seven-day time period, from 8:00 AM on Monday until the next Sunday at midnight.

- 1) **EXAMINATIONS:** There are 4 tests worth 100 points apiece. The tests are composed of multiple-choice questions. Each test will have 50 questions (worth 2 points per question), and you will have 60 minutes to complete it. The test for a given week will be available in the Tests & Quizzes folder, and you can take it as many as THREE times. - The highest score will be retained in the Gradebook. Each time you retake a particular test in a given week, it will have a different set of questions (but with some overlap from the previous version). There is no penalty for retaking an exam.
- 2) **REFLECTION PAPERS:** Throughout the semester, each student will be required to complete three reflection papers worth 100 points apiece. The paper topics will be posted under the assignments tab on Blackboard.

The textbook covers many topics and issues in today's society that would make great subjects. The purpose of these papers are to train students how to use the Library facility, research and analyze data, and compose and organize thoughts and ideas into a

paper. These papers are to be no less than 2 and no more than 3 pages long. The paper should include a reference sheet with their paper. **The paper should be in standard APA format.** Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this paper format. Papers will be graded by content, overall comprehension, and format. The due dates are set, and LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

- 3) **MESSAGE BOARD RESPONSES:** Periodically throughout the semester, the instructor will post relevant discussion topics on our course discussion board. These will be relevant issues to the Environmental Sociology, but will also tie together the subject matter and current events. For 300 points toward your final grade, please reply to every topic that is provided by the instructor. The only criteria for message board posts is that they be 1) relevant to the topic at hand, 2) free of any profanity or vulgar vocabulary, and 3) at least 4 sentences in length. The purpose of this is for the instructor to evaluate your knowledge and personal feelings toward the selected topics. Message topics will be posted randomly, so it is the student's responsibility to monitor the message board at all times. Because this a course conducted entirely online, **this is will also serve as our participation grade, and it is imperative that you pay attention to Blackboard and stay on top of our course.**

CRUCIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING TESTS AND SUBMITTING PAPERS: The tests are delivered with software called Respondus Lockdown Browser (RLB). This software is already loaded in computer labs on campus, but if you want to take tests from other locations, you will need to download the software onto the computer where you take the test. The instructions for downloading RLB can be found at <http://blackboard.angelo.edu/ldb>. To take a test, click on the RLB icon on the desktop and it will take you into Blackboard. Then, click on this course; then click on the Tests & Quizzes folder; then click on the test you are to take. You will be asked if the instructor provided a "Password"; answer "No". If you have entered Blackboard properly by accessing it through the RLB icon, the password for the test will be entered automatically on your behalf and you can start the test. Once you begin a test, you will have 60 minutes to compete it. If you try to take a test without going through the RLB, you will be asked to provide a test password that you don't have, so you cannot take the test.

POLICY ON MAKE-UP WORK

Each of the tests and writing assignments give you seven days to complete the work. That should be an ample amount of time. To protect yourself against unexpected emergencies, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST DAY TO DO YOUR WORK.** In order to qualify for leniency on missed work, your reason will need to cover the entire week in which it could have been done.

HONOR CODE: Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at:

<http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf>

DISABILITIES: Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any accommodations being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE
Dates/Reading/Topic**

(Jan. 19-22)	Chapter 1: Environmental Problems & Society
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(Jan. 25-29)	Chapter 2: Consumption & Materialism
(Feb. 1-5)	Chapter 3: Money & Machines
(Feb. 8-12)	Examination One
(Feb. 15-19)	Chapter 4: Population & Development
(Feb. 22-26)	Reflection Paper 1
(Mar. 1-5)	Chapter 5: Body & Health
(Mar. 8-12)	Chapter 6: The Ideology of Environmental Domination
(Mar. 15-19)	SPRING BREAK No coursework
(Mar. 22-26)	Examination Two
(Mar. 29- Apr. 2)	Chapter 7: The Ideology of Environmental Concern Reflection Paper 2
(Apr. 5-9)	Chapter 8: The Human Nature of Nature
(Apr. 12-16)	Chapter 9: The Rationality of Risk
(Apr. 19-23)	Examination Three
(Apr. 26-30)	Chapter 10: Mobilizing the Ecological Society
(May 3-7)	Chapter 11: Governing the Ecological Society Reflection Paper 3
(May 10-14)	Examination Four

*This schedule is subject to change, and it is the student's responsibility to check Blackboard frequently and be aware of changes or additions to the course itinerary. Important information will be posted on the Announcements page.