

Sociology 218
Introduction to Social Problems
Department of Sociology, University of Hawaii, Manoa
Spring Term 2009

Professor: Dr. Amarjit(Jit) Singh
Office: Saunders Hall
Class schedule: MWF 9:30-10:20 am
Room: HIG 110
E-mail: asingh@mun.ca
Office hours: to be arranged.

Catalog Course Description

Soc 218 Introduction to Social Problems (3) Theoretical and substantive survey of the nature and causes of social problems; selected types: poverty, inequality, deviance, etc. DS

Required Text:

Eitzen, Stanley, Zinn, M.B. and Smith, K.E. (2009) (11th Edition). *Social Problems*. New York: Pearson.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Grading

All the above elements of the teaching and learning organization process are explained in detail the first week of the class. Students are encouraged to talk to the instructor individually to clarify any difficulties they might have in understanding the way learning and teaching, and grading processes are organized in this course. Once you as a student understand what exactly is expected, you will do very well in this course. As an instructor my goal is to expect high achievement from all of you in this course, and to create possibilities and opportunities for everyone to attain this desired outcome by using various pedagogical strategies. Chances are that we will achieve this goal, if all of us work together and expect and encourage everyone to achieve high in this course. We all are capable of doing well in this course, and we can do it!

1. **Group discussions** based on “common sense knowledge”* and “Lay theories”* + “Mini lectures”- 10%
2. **Group discussions** based on “professional”* knowledge and “official/state

/government knowledge” *+ “Mini lectures”*- 15%

3. **Lecture by the instructor** and questions by students - 15%
4. **Weekly reports** – 30%**
5. **Final take-home paper exam*****– 30%
6. **Grading******

* These concepts for **the group discussions** will be discussed and explained in the class.

** **Weekly reports** are explained below, and also discussed in the class:

Students should note that the evaluation in this course is a continuous process. In the end of the course, each student will have her/his “portfolio” for evaluation. For this reason you are required and expected to do many activities: (1) you are encouraged to actively participate in the class. Your participation (as peers) is more likely to contribute to your overall achievement in this course, and to the desired outcomes for the course. (2) As a part of this evaluation process, each student is required to submit a report every week (Weekly Report). It will consist of answering the following questions outlined below:

(A). After reading an assigned chapter on the scheduled date (see outline of daily activities), each student is required to (a) prepare a list of twenty concepts that she/he has found interesting in the chapter read, (b) select one concept he/she found most interesting, (c) briefly describe the selected concept (one to three paragraphs), and (d) describe its significance to her/his (i) personal interaction and relationship, and (ii) professional interaction and development.

(B). What did you (each student separately) learn from your group discussions based on the “commonsense knowledge” and “lay theory”? Write a paragraph or two.

(C). What did you (each student separately) learn from group discussion based on “professional knowledge” and “official/ state/ government knowledge”? Write a paragraph or two.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WEEKLY REPORT FOR THE FIRST WEEK IS DUE ON MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK. THE WEEKLY REPORT FOR THE SECOND WEEK IS DUE ON MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK, AND SO ON.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED, BUT LABELED AS LATE WITH NEGATIVE CONNOTATION.

*** **Final take-home paper/exam.** A good take-home paper is more likely to drastically improve your chances of getting an ‘A’ in this class. We will discuss in the class what would be considered a “good” paper in this class. Everyone in this class is expected to

write a good paper, and everyone in this class can write a good paper. Working together with your peers, and the instructor, you as a student can write a good paper. We can really do it! Let us, each of us, commit ourselves to this task! The question or the topic for the take-home paper will be selected in the last three weeks of the class. THE FINAL TAKE-HOME PAPER MUST BE SUBMITTED ON APRIL 27.

******Grading**

The final marks and the final grades will be available only in the end of the term. However, in the middle of the term, students will be told if they are doing “good” work or not. A feedback that “you are doing a good work” would mean that your work is equivalent to a “B” grade and you can get an “A”, if you improve your work”. It is your responsibility as a student to see the instructor to discuss how your work can be improved. The instructor, however, will frequently give general feedback, as a part of an on-going feedback process to all students in the class as to how their work can be improved in order to achieve an “A” in this course. Each one of you (as a student) can improve your work in this class. You really can!

Other general information

I will be happy to work with you and the KOKUA program at UH. Please feel free to contact me privately, if you need any accommodation.

Plagiarism Material/ the UH-Manoa Student Conduct Code (1992), p. 6

“It is ultimately each student’s responsibility to learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Ignorance of the rules, saying ‘I forgot about that’ or ‘I made a mistake’ are not considered valid excuses when it comes to plagiarism”.

Schedule of Daily Activities

Please see the attached pages.

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Schedule of Daily Activities

WEEK 1

- M Jan. 12** Introduction to the course + three forms of knowledge (common sense, professional, and official/state/or government) + “mini lectures” + making sense perspective + perspective on the organization of teaching and learning (reflective and critical perspectives).
- W Jan. 14** Introduction continues (grading, assignments, interactions with the instructor and peers+ participation in two sets of group discussions – one based on the common sense knowledge and another based on professional and state knowledge + deadlines) + basic concepts in race and ethnic relations.
- F Jan. 16** **PART 1. POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS.** Start reading chapter 1, the sociological approach to social problem + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.
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WEEK 2

- M Jan. 19** Finish reading chapter 1 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.
- W Jan. 21** *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 1, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making
- F Jan. 23** Start reading chapter 2, wealth and power: the bias of the system+ mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.
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WEEK 3

- M Jan. 26** Finish reading chapter 2 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making senses.
- W Jan. 28** *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 2, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making.

F Jan. 30 **PART 2. PROBLEMS OF PEOPLE, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND LOCATION. Start reading chapter 3, world population and global inequality + mini lecture + group discussion based on commonsense knowledge + making sense.**

WEEK 4

M Feb. 2 **Finish reading chapter 3 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.**

W Feb. 4 ***WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 3, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making**

F Feb. 6 **Start reading chapter 4, threats to the environment + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense**

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WEEK 5

M Feb. 6 **Finish reading chapter 4 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.**

W Feb. 8 ***WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 4, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense Making.**

F Feb. 10 **Start reading chapter 5, demographic changes in the United States: the browning and graying of society + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense**

WEEK 6

M Feb. 16 **Finish reading chapter 5 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.**

W Feb. 18 ***WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 5, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense Making**

F Feb. 20 Start reading chapter 6, problems of places: urban, suburban, and rural + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense

WEEK 7

M Feb. 23 Finish reading chapter 6 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W Feb. 25 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 6, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making

F Feb. 27 **PART 3. PROBLEMS OF INEQUALITY.** Start reading chapter 7, poverty + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.

WEEK 8

M March 2 Finish reading chapter 7 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W March 4 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 7, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense Making

F March 6 Start reading chapter 8, racial and ethnic inequality + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense

WEEK 9

M March 9 Finish reading chapter 8 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W March 11 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 8, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense

Making

F March 13 Start reading chapter 9, gender inequality + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense

WEEK 10

M March 16 Finish reading chapter 9 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W March 18 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 9, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense

Making

F March 20 Start reading chapter 10 , sexual orientation + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense

WEEK 11 (Term Break)

M March 23 Finish reading chapter 10 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W March 25 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 10, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making.

F March 27 Start reading chapter 11, disability and ableism + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.

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WEEK 12

M March 30 Finish reading chapter 11 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W April 1 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 11, IS DUE TODAY*+ lecture+ sense making.

F April 3 **PART 4. SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND INDIVIDUAL DEVIENCE.** Start reading chapter 12 , crime and justice, and chapter 13, drugs + mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.

WEEK 13

M April 6 Finish reading chapters 12 and 13 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W April 8 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTERS 12 And 13, ARE DUE TODAY*+ mini lecture + sense making

F April 10 **PART 5. INTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS.** Start reading chapter 14, work, and chapter 15 families+ mini lecture + group discussion based on common sense knowledge + making sense.

WEEK 14

M April 13 Finish reading chapters 14 and 15 + group discussion based on professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W April 15 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 14and 15, IS DUE TODAY*+ + making sense.

F April 17 Start reading chapter 16, education, and chapter 17 health and health care delivery + mini lecture + group discussion based on commonsense knowledge + making sense.

WEEK 15

M April 20 Finish reading chapter 16 and 17 + group discussion based on

professional and state knowledge + mini lecture + making sense.

W April 22 *WEEKLY REPORT ON CHAPTER 16 and 17, IS DUE TODAY* + mini Lecture + making sense.

F April 24 Lecture on Chapter 18, National Security In The Twenty-First Century. **NO WEEKLY REPORT ON THIS CHAPTER IS REQUIRED. STUDENTS SHOULD FOCUS ON WRITING TAKE-HOME PAPER.**

WEEK 16

M April 27 **FINAL TAKE-HOME PAPER IS DUE TODAY** + Read the last chapter 19, progressive plan to solve problems + mini lecture + open class group discussion + keeping the reflective and critical discourse going + making sense.

W April 29 Mini lecture+ peer group interaction /dialogue+ student/teacher dialogue+ sense making of all the readings, and organization of teaching and learning in this course.

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS THE REFLECTIVE AND CRITICAL

PEDAGOGY SESSION, AND SO IS THE MOST IMPORTANT

CLASS FOR STUDENTS AND THE INSTRUCTOR TO

**PARTICIPATE IN DIALAGUE. EVERYONE IS EXPECTED TO
ATTEND THIS CLASS, AND YES WE CAN!**

F May 1 WEEKLY REPORT IS REQUIRED FOR CHAPTER 19.

Making sense + individual consultations.

WEEK 17

May 4 To be announced

May 6 To be announce