

# MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY



## SO 212 E01 – SOCIAL PROBLEMS FALL 2018/ONLINE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**Instructor:** Theresa V. Rash    **Office:** Social Sciences Building Q    **Office Phone:** 662.254.3014  
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### **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 Texts:** Mooney, Linda A., David Knox and Caroline Schacht. 2017. *Understanding Social Problems*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition.

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.

### **Catalog Course Description:**

All the material presented in this class will reflect a mainstreaming of race, class and gender in the curriculum. All perspectives will reflect multicultural paradigms and address local and global concerns. Two main types of social problems are examined: (1) acts and conditions that violate the norms and values present in society, and Our main perspective will be conflict or critical, though we will also examine functionalist arguments. A main goal in this course is to engage the imagination and enthusiasm of students. Finally, this class will provide an opportunity for students to engage in a participatory action research project to link the theory to the investigation of a contemporary social problem. Students are encouraged to add as much local content as possible. The social conditions in the Mississippi Delta are a major component of all projects.

**Prerequisites:** 3 hours of Sociology

### **Course Requirements/Attendance:**

The textbook is required. Attendance is required. Quizzes and assignments are due during scheduled time. 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 and may be required to produce this syllabus at any time without notice.

### **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:**

This course is delivered in an online format utilizing Socratic teaching methods and in-depth threaded discussions. Every reasonable effort will be made in this course to help you be successful. Learning through instruction and intellectual challenge are mutual goals for professor and students and the responsibility must be mutually shared. Students must be self-motivated, take charge of their educational goals, and be fully prepared to engage in the process of learning.

### **Participation:**

Students are expected to participate in all online class discussions. Such participation must be based on subject matter and reading materials relevant to class topics. As this course allows for the presentation of diverse opinions and experiences, all discussions and class interactions must be handled professionally.

### **Online Course Decorum:**

All individuals, students and instructors alike, are expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty, common courtesy, and respect for others. Free discussion, inquiry, and expression in class are encouraged. Behavior that interferes with either teaching or learning is not acceptable; i.e. posting about information not pertinent to the subject matter or posting rude, impolite or offensive text. Such behavior will not be tolerated. Students may be barred from online discussions as a result of behavior that *in the opinion of the instructor* negatively affects the learning/work environment.

### **Performance Evaluation:**

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

- Class Attendance and Participation,
- Required activities including, but not limited to: readings of the chapters, quizzes, gathering and analyzing information and keeping all work for future reference, and
- Assignments detailed below.

**Exams:** There will be 10 quizzes given during the course of the semester on the chapters/readings you are required to read. Please refer to the course outline in the back of the syllabus on dates of the quizzes. 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.

**Students' Homepages:** Each of you will be expected to introduce yourself. The instructions are on Blackboard. **The student homepages are due every day, but the assignment will close on Friday, September 7, 2018 before midnight.** In addition to building the student homepages, you will be expected to make changes and additions to it as the semester progresses.

### **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. This assignment must have a title page. A reference page is needed if you use your textbook or other outside sources (articles, books, etc.). This assignment should be written using the APA format. **This assignment must be submitted through Turnitin. This assignment is due Friday, September 21, 2018 before midnight.**

### **Article Critique:**

Each student will summarize and critique an article related to his/her interests regarding a social problem(s).

#### **Selecting an Appropriate Article**

- Articles may be found by searching an article database, e.g., Academic Search Premier or ERIC (Education Resources Information Clearinghouse), at the MVSU Libraries website (select E-Resources, click on “Select from all Databases (by title), then choose Academic Search Premier or ‘ERIC (Ebsco version—1966 - present).
- **Articles must be peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles. Prior to writing your Article Critique, students should clear their article selection with the instructor.**
- Articles should be published in an established journal in sociology/social problems.
- The selected article should be reasonably current--published within the past 5 years.
- Additionally, the article you select must be at least 6 pages of tight text; short articles are not acceptable.

**Chosen Article Due:** Please attach to the discussion link a copy of the bibliographic reference of your selected article including the author(s)' name(s), article title, journal name, volume, issue, year, page numbers, etc. No students can have the same article/topic. This is a first come, first serve basis. **This assignment is due Friday, September 14, 2018.**

#### **What to Write**

An article critique should be more than a summary and requires students to engage with the article and explore its meaning for them. Your review of the selected article should be a concise, thoughtful discussion of the main features of the study described in the article and of important questions that the study raises. Your review should be 3-5 pages in length. All guidelines regarding APA style, paper formatting, and plagiarism described in your syllabus apply to this assignment.

**Turnitin Summary/Article Critique:** Students will present their article critique through Turnitin. The critique should be approximately 3-5 pages in length and must include at least one insight and discussion of implications of the findings for your interests. Present your article critique summary and be sure to provide a bibliographic reference for the article and/or a link to the full text article. **This assignment is due Friday, November 2, 2018.**

#### **Pointers**

1. The following are *not* acceptable sources for your article:
  - trade press articles
  - technical reports
  - non-refereed articles found via the Internet.
  - non-refereed or lightly-refereed conference articles
  - Wikipedia or other online articles
2. In your review, you may reference other articles or textbooks you've read, as appropriate.
3. Do not copy any part of the article into your review. If you want to use a selection of the author's words, then use quotation marks, and use appropriate APA citations and references.
4. Proof-read your review for grammar and clarity as well as spelling. Spell checkers do not fix grammar. You should be sure that you have caught all mistakes and written clearly. Most word processors have a grammar checker – please use it!

## **Evaluation**

Papers will be evaluated on:

- Critical description and analysis
- Integration with course readings and discussions
- Synthesis of lessons learned, potential application or implications
- Appropriate grammar and correct APA format

**Turnitin:** You are required to submit your Personal Definition of Social Problems and Article Critique 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 **18725007** and your enrollment password is **probonline**.

**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 for this class.

**NOTE:** Failure to submit your Personal Definition of Social Problems and Article Critique/Turnitin Summary using Turnitin will result in you getting an “F” on the assignment.

## **CHAPTER QUIZZES:**

There will be 10 chapter quizzes worth 20 points each. Please refer to the course outline in the back of the syllabus on dates of the quizzes.

**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.

### **Grading Scale:**

Assignments	Points	
Students' Homepages	1	50
Chapter Quizzes	10	200
Social Problem Definition	1	20
Article Critique	1	50
Mid-term Exam	1	100
Final Exam	1	100
Attendance/Class Participation	1	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>540</b>

Grading Scale		
<b>A</b>	486-540	90%
<b>B</b>	432-485	80%
<b>C</b>	378-431	70%
<b>D</b>	324-377	60%
<b>F</b>	270-323	50%

### **Attendance Policy:**

Each student is required to participate in using **Blackboard Communication Tools**, taking online exams, and other aspects of **Blackboard**. You are expected to log in regularly (daily, perhaps several times per day, weekends) to submit assignments, check grades, personal messages, and view course materials. Student(s) who fail to participate in the online course during a course week will be deemed absent for that week. The absence will be annotated as absent unexcused (AU), unless the instructor has been informed beforehand and deemed the absence as absent excused (AE). The instructor shall report all absences to the main campus as required. A student who has not participated for 7 consecutive days regardless if the absences were deemed AU or AE shall be recommended for administrative withdrawal to the main campus. In a traditional classroom just because a student contacts the instructor and is excused from a scheduled class meeting does not mean the student is given credit for participation or attendance. The student is still annotated as AU or AE. The online classroom shall be no different in this respect. It is the instructor's sole discretion as to what he/she shall consider AU or AE.

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

### **Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Disabilities Statement:**

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:**

All of my classes are required to practice very high standards of academic integrity. All acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarism, internet papers, paraphrasing internet papers, presenting someone else's work as your own, failing to meet academic and professional requirements, will result in an automatic "F." The University's academic honesty and plagiarism policies are enforced in this course.

### **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.

## **TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the instructor will set course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: quizzes, online activities, assigned readings, and/or individual projects. Students are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. Students are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and quizzes/assignments. Most importantly, students are expected to be active learners and to ask for clarification when they have questions. In order to be successful in the class, it is important that students, read the assigned material, and submit assignments and be prepared to discuss what they have read. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity.

## **SUBMISSION OF WORK:**

Scheduled quizzes/assignments MUST be completed and successfully submitted through the Blackboard Assignment Tool (drop box) by due date and time. Assignments automatically become unavailable after the due date/time expires. No multiple submissions will be allowed.

## **COURSE DROPS/INCOMPLETES:**

Students not completing the course for any reason are required to submit official drop notices to the Registrar's Office prior to the deadline date. **This is your responsibility.** Failure to comply with the procedure WILL result in your receiving a letter grade of "F".

**Technical Problems:** If you experience technical/computer difficulties (*need help downloading browsers or plug-in, logging into your course, using your course web site tools, or experience errors or problems while in your online course*), contact Professor Rash or **PRESIDIUM LEARNING, INC 1-877-654-8333 OR MR. PENDLETON** at 662.254.3114.

Access Blackboard course at <http://mvsu.blackboard.com> or [www.mvsu.edu](http://www.mvsu.edu) click on BLACKBOARD for detailed instructions regarding assignments.

## **ONLINE COMMUNICATION:**

Please use WebCT mail for contact with the instructor and other members of the class.

All your online communications should be composed with fairness, honesty, and tact. What you put into an online course reflects on your level of professionalism.

## TECHNOLOGY INFUSION

HARDWARE		SOFTWARE	
<b>Operating System:</b>	Windows 98, 2000, NT, XP or a Macintosh System 8.1 or higher	<b>Internet Access:</b>	Any Internet Service Provider
<b>Processor:</b>	200 MHz or higher	<b>Browser:</b>	Internet Explorer, Netscape r 4.7 or higher*, AOL 5.0 or higher, Firefox**
<b>Memory:</b>	32 MB of RAM	<b>Application</b>	Recommend Microsoft Word or application file name .doc
<b>H Drive Space:</b>	100 MB free disk space	<b>Audio &amp; Video:</b>	RealPlayer, Quick Time WizIQ
<b>Modem:</b>	28.8 kbps or higher		
<b>Monitor:</b>	800x600 resolution		

### **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.

For this online course each student will spend a minimum of **2250 minutes** on course activities for 3 credit hours.

<b>Month/Date:</b>	<b>Topics/Reading Assignments/Quizzes/Exams:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Week 1: August 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Course Overview, Intro to Social Problems Read Chapter 1: Thinking About Social Problems <b>Student Homepages Due</b>	<b>60 mins.</b>
<b>Week 2: August 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>:</b>	Reach Chapter 2: Physical and Mental Health and Health Care Read Chapter 3: Alcohol and Other Drugs <b>Student Homepages Due</b>	<b>90 mins.</b>
<b>Week 3: September 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 3: Alcohol and Other Drugs Read Chapter 4: Crime and Social Control <b>Monday, Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>: Labor Day/NO CLASS</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>: Student Homepages Due (Student Homepages Assignment Closed)</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 1 Due/Chpts. 1&amp;2</b>	<b>150 mins.</b>
<b>Week 4: September 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 4: Crime and Social Control Read Chapter 5: Family Problems <b>Monday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>: Last Day to Drop/Add Classes</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>: Article Reference Due in Blackboard/Discussion Board Link</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>: Report of Non-Attendance Due</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 2 Due/Chpts. 3&amp;4</b>	<b>180 mins.</b>
<b>Week 5: September 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 5: Family Problems Read Chapter 6: Economic Inequality, Wealth, and Poverty <b>Friday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>: Personal Definition of Social Problems Due in Turnitin</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>: Quiz 3 Due/Chapter 5</b>	<b>240 mins.</b>

<b>Week 6: September 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 6: Economic Inequality, Wealth, and Poverty <b>Review for Mid-term Exam</b> <b>Friday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 4 Due/Chapter 6</b>	<b>180 mins.</b>
<b>Week 7: October 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>MD-TERM EXAMINATIONS</b> <b>Chapters 1 – 6</b> Read Chapter 7: Work and Unemployment	<b>120 mins.</b>
<b>Week 8: October 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 7: Work and Unemployment Read Chapter 8: Problems in Education	<b>180 mins.</b>
<b>Week 9: October 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 8: Problems in Education Read Chapter 9: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration <b>Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 5 Due/Chapter 7</b>	<b>240 mins.</b>
<b>Week 10: October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 9: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Read Chapter 10: Gender Inequality <b>Friday, Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 6 Due/Chapter 8</b>	<b>180 mins.</b>
<b>Week 11: October 29<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 10: Gender Inequality Read Chapter 11: Sexual Orientation and the Struggle for Equality <b>Friday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Quiz 7 Due/Chapter 9</b> <b>Friday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Article Critique Due</b>	<b>180 mins.</b>
<b>Week 12: November 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 11: Sexual Orientation and the Struggle for Equality Read Chapter 12: Population Growth and Aging <b>Friday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 8 Due/Chapter 10</b> <b>Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>: Last Day to Withdraw from the University</b>	<b>240 mins.</b>
<b>Week 13: November 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Read Chapter 12: Population Growth and Aging <b>Friday, Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 9 Due/Chapter 11</b>	<b>90 mins.</b>
<b>Week 14: November 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>:</b>	<b>Fall Break for Faculty and Students</b> <b>Thanksgiving Holidays</b>	<b>0 mins</b>
<b>Week 15: November 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>Friday, Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>: Quiz 10 Due/Chapter 12</b> <b>Review for FINAL EXAM</b>	<b>60 mins.</b>
<b>Week 16: December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>FINAL EXAMS</b> <b>CHAPTERS 7 - 12</b>	<b>60 mins.</b>

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