

# **SOCI 2300**

## **Social Problems**

### **MayTerm 2017**

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This syllabus is subject to revision in response to class needs or circumstances as the semester progresses. I will notify you of any changes as early as possible.

#### **Course Information**

Course Number / Section/ ID:	SOCI 2300
Time & Location:	M-F 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM TBD
Professor:	Leslie DeArman
Email:	<b>dearman@smu.edu</b>
Office Hours:	M-F 2:00-2:30
Office Phone:	214-768-4937
Office Location:	Hyer Hall Room 306B

#### **Course Description and Objectives**

Course Description: This course is designed to give students an understanding of the way sociologists work, particularly in studying social problems. By the end of the semester, the successful student will have encountered the process of sociological inquiry through study of a few key social problems.

#### Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. be familiar with the major sociological paradigms and concepts that help us to make sense of contemporary social problems.
2. be able to read, write, and think critically about complex social issues.
3. be able to discuss social issues with respect for various viewpoints.
4. be able to identify assumptions that underlie different perspectives, including your own.
5. have an improved awareness and understanding of social problems and their possible solutions.
6. have a greater appreciation for the complexities of social change.

## **UC Student Learning Outcomes**

### ***Pillars: Individuals, Institutions and Cultures Level 2 (IIC 2)***

1. Students will be able to analyze different theoretical or interpretive perspectives in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences.
2. Students will be able to evaluate critically the research outcomes and theoretical applications in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences.

### ***Proficiencies and Experiences: Human Diversity (HD)***

1. With respect to issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, or societies in the developing world, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.

## **Required Course Materials**

1. *Understanding Social Problems* by Mooney, Knox, and Schacht. 2016. ISBN: 9781305576513.
2. In addition to the above required text, you will be assigned required reading from various academic journals from the field of sociology and related fields of sociology to tie into the course curriculum. I will provide you with directions on how to access the journal articles using the university's library.

## **Grading**

### **Course Grade:**

You will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

Mid-Term Exam -	(100 points)	30%
Final Exam –	(100 points)	30%
Current Event Essays	(100 points each)	15%
Pop Quizzes	(100 points each)	20%
Attendance	(100 points)	5%

### **Grading Scale:**

A	95 and up	B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	D+	67 – 69
A-	90 - 94	B	84 - 86	C	74 - 76	D	64 - 66
		B-	80 - 83	C-	70 - 73	D-	60 – 63
F	less than 60						

## **Responsibilities**

My responsibilities as your professor are to be on time and prepared for class and available to you during my office hours or by appointment to address your questions or concerns about the material or the class.

Your responsibilities are to be on time and prepared for class, to intellectually engage the material, and to see me regarding problems or questions about the material. I want to see you be successful in the course and I am willing to help you if needed, but you must take the initiative by making me aware of your need for assistance. If my office hours do not fit your schedule, you are strongly encouraged to make an

appointment with me at a mutually convenient time.

### **Messages**

If I haven't responded to your email or a message within 24 hours, you should assume that I did not get the message and email me again. Please only contact me at my office phone or through the SMU email system at [dearman@smu.edu](mailto:dearman@smu.edu) and please do not email me from a non-SMU email address. I prefer email messages to phone messages. You may schedule an appointment with me using Calendly – please visit my Calendly webpage at [Calendly.com/dearman](https://calendly.com/dearman) to schedule an appointment.

### **Classroom Courtesy**

Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. This means no inappropriate talking during lectures, doing homework during lectures, cell phone use, or laptop use during class unless specifically allowed. **Cell phones are allowed for the purposes of checking the time, but otherwise are NOT to be “used” in any way during class. I do not allow the general use of personal laptop computers as it can be very distracting to other students.** Entering and leaving the classroom is distracting to your instructor and to other students. Therefore, you need to be on time for class and stay until the end of class. If you must leave early, please let me know in advance. **Restroom breaks should be taken before or after class.**

Because this is a college classroom, all discussions must be scholarly.

#### **Scholarly comments are:**

Respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement; related to the class and course material; advance the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs; are delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner.

#### **Examples of Unacceptable behaviors are:**

- (1) Personal attacks. This includes attacks on a person's appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs. (2) Interrupting your instructor or fellow students. Raise your hand and wait to be called on by the discussion leader or myself to prevent this problem. (3) Using the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed as scholarly endeavors. (4) Using raised tones, yelling, engaging in arguments with fellow students, and being physically aggressive. (5) Ignoring your instructor's authority to protect the integrity of the classroom. Anyone who violates these guidelines will be asked to cease and desist and may be asked to leave the classroom.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is absolutely expected. I do take attendance every class and monitor attendance closely. It is important that you attend class on a very consistent basis given that certain material will only be covered in class. **Attendance and note taking are also necessary to be successful in the course.** You are responsible for ANYTHING you miss during an absence. Excessive absences will negatively affect your grade in the course.

### **Make-Up Policy**

I will allow a make-up exam only for an excused absence on the day of an exam. This is on a case by case basis and at my discretion. I require **verifiable** documentation in order to allow a student to make-up an exam. **Any exam not taken at the regularly scheduled day and time will be an alternate essay exam.** Each student will receive and sign a detailed homework policy agreement.

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

I expect all students to conduct themselves with academic integrity. If you do not adhere to university guidelines, I will take the appropriate steps with the Dean of Student Life. **The following activities are obviously UNEXCUSABLE. Any other activities a reasonable person would define as violating the student code of conduct are included as well.**

- Cheating on exams
- Using previous students papers, projects, or ideas as the basis for your own work
- Collaborating with other students in class without the EXPLICIT written permission of the professor
- Using papers from previous classes without the EXPLICIT written permission of the professor

The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor. Please review the academic honesty guidelines at <http://www.smu.edu/honorcouncil>.

### **Religious Observance**

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

### **Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities**

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

### **Finals Exams**

Final course examinations shall be given in all courses where they are appropriate, and some form of final assessment is essential. Final exams or final assessments must be administered as specified in the official examination schedule, and shall not be administered during the last week of classes or during the Reading Period. .

## **University Resources for Students**

### **Disability Accommodations**

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

### **Computer Help and Labs**

Contact Information Technology Services Help Desk at 214-768-4357 (HELP) or <http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/OIT>.

### **Counseling Services**

The counseling and testing center is located in the Health Center and their phone number is 214-768-2211. For 24 hour help contact 214-768-2860.

### **Other Support**

**The Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center** offers study-skill workshops and can help you with learning strategies and test preparation.

[www.smu.edu/alec](http://www.smu.edu/alec) 214-768-3648

**The Writing Center** can help you with the process of writing papers. 214-768-3648

[www.smu.edu/alec/wc.asp](http://www.smu.edu/alec/wc.asp) 214-768-3648

**The Fondren Library Center** has reference librarians happy to help with your research needs.

<http://askalibrarian.smu.edu/> 214-768-2326

**Evelyn Day** is the Department of Sociology's research librarian – [eday@smu.edu](mailto:eday@smu.edu) / 214-768-3743