“The sociological problem is not so much why some things ‘go wrong’ from the viewpoint of the authorities and the management of the social scene, but how the whole system works in the first place, what are its presuppositions and by what means is it held together.” - Peter Berger

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Course Description:
Analysis of selected social problems, both domestic and global. Exploration of why social problems occur, how different value premises and theoretical perspectives lead to distinctive ways of addressing social problems. Issues such as poverty, crime, homelessness, intergroup conflicts are examples of the types of issues examined. (LAC, gtP)

Course Information:
This course will provide an introduction to the study of social problems. In this class, we will be examining various societal issues (e.g., racism, crime and deviance, environmental pollution) from a sociological perspective in an attempt to understand the systems that both create and sustain social inequality. Knowledge gained is only as good as knowledge applied. To this end, we will focus a significant amount of class time on solutions to social problems. We will discuss various ways to reduce inequality and injustice based on our understanding of the structural mechanisms that perpetuate these conditions. We will also focus on learning how to communicate our thoughts and ideas about these issues in effective ways.

Class will be a time for discussion, lecture and activity. Your participation will be expected. Sociology is unique because of its ability to integrate information from many different sources. It will be crucial that you become one of those sources during this semester. In other words, you will be expected to synthesize information from your background and experiences with the readings. In this course you will gain both a sociological framework with which to think about the world and the ability to communicate those thoughts.

Learning Objectives:

This course supports the following Learning Goals supported by the Sociology Department:
- Learning Goal 1 Graduating sociology majors are able to define and illustrate core sociological concepts. (knowledge)
- Learning Goal 4 Graduating sociology majors are able to show critical thinking in confronting theoretical arguments, research methodologies, and alternative viewpoints on social problems. (application)
- Learning Goal 6 Graduating sociology majors are able to examine and analyze human behavior and social structure from a sociological perspective. (analysis)
- Learning Goal 8 Graduating sociology majors are able to summarize and critique key classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives. (evaluation)
Course requirements:
- Required Texts


Methods of Evaluation:
Assignments 3x8.3% each Discussion Boards 6x5% each Exams 3x15% each
Course is letter graded: 90-100 (A), 80-89 (B), 70-79 (C), 60-69 (D), 59 and lower (F)

LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED
EMAILED ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED

Course Assignments
Each week you will have something to Read, something to Do and something to Discuss. Three times during the semester, your Do portion will consist of an assignment that you will turn in to me. Details for these assignments will be provided in the Assignments tab. Each week there will be a discussion board. You are required to post at least one original response to the question AND respond to a classmate.

All assignments and discussion board posts are due by NOON on the Monday following the end of the unit. Thus, all assignments and discussion board comments for week 1 are due by noon on Monday, August 25th. You are STRONGLY, STRONGLY, STRONGLY encouraged to not wait until the last minute. I DO NOT accept late work. I urge you to anticipate that your internet will fail, your computer will crash, a family member will die, your dog will throw up, your child will get sick AND you will have a debilitating headache every Monday morning during the semester and thus plan accordingly to get your assignments in well before the deadline.

Three times during the course, you will have exams. These exams are open book and timed. You will have one opportunity to take the exam once it is begun, and it will be open to you for a minimum of three full days.

University Policies
Students with disabilities: Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (www.unco.edu/dss) at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Honor Code. All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community’s academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

www.unco.edu/dos/communityStandards/honor_code

UNC’s Policies. UNC’s policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student’s website, Student Handbook link and current catalog. http://www.unco.edu/
Course Schedule

Monday May 18-Monday May 25th
Week 1: Introduction to the Study of Social Problems-Poverty and Inequality
Read: CV 6, 7, 8, 9; IS 5, 6
Do: Global Food Budgets (see Course Materials); www.GlobalRichList.com
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 1

Monday May 25th-Monday June 1
Week 2: Drugs and Alcohol
Read: CV 30; IS 33, 34
Do: D.A.R.E. Webquest (see Assignment 1)
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 2

Exam I

Monday June 1-Monday June 8
Week 3: Work and Occupations
Read: CV 10, 12; IS 22
Do: McDonaldization Webquest-see Assignment 2
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 3

Monday June 8-Monday June 15
Week 4: Health Care
Read: CV 43, 44, 45 and IS 22, 23
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 4

Exam II

Monday June 15-Monday June 22
Week 5: Minority and Majority Relations
Read: CV 15, 17, 19, 20.

Do: Go To: http://www.pbs.org/race/002_SortingPeople/002_00-home.htm and click on “Begin Sorting.” Try your hand at the exercise. Go To: http://www.pbs.org/race/006_WhereRaceLives/006_00-home.htm and click on “The Downward Spiral.” Familiarize yourself with the various stages of the spiral. Go To: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/selectatest.html and take the Gender-Career IAT and the Sexuality IAT. See Assignment 3 instructions at Assignments tab.
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 5

Monday June 22-Friday June 26
Week 6: Education and Recap/Review
Read: CV 37, 40 and IS 19, 20, 21
Do: TBD
Discuss: See Discussion Board-Module 6

Exam III