

**SOCIOLOGY 2031-003: SOCIAL PROBLEMS**  
**Syllabus: Spring 2016**  
**MWF 12:00-12:50 (HUMN 135)**

**Instructor:** Sherri Sasnett-Martichuski  
**Office:** Muenzinger D251-E  
**Office Hours:** M (1:00-2:00) and W (11:00-12:00)  
**E-mail:** [sherri.sasnett@colorado.edu](mailto:sherri.sasnett@colorado.edu)

**Required Text:** *Understanding Social Problems* 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (2014) by Linda A. Mooney, David Knox and Caroline Schacht. Cengage Learning. ISBN-10: 1285746503 /ISBN-13: 978-1285746500.

**Course Description:**

There are a variety of ways to study social problems. Since this is a sociology course, we will study how certain social phenomena become social problems and why others do not (the social construction of social problems). We will discuss how social problems are constructed, evaluated, and addressed. In order to do this, we are going to rely on a few different theoretical perspectives and sociological concepts to help us explore and understand the structural causes and consequences of social problems (at both the societal and individual levels). My goal is to provide you with an increased ability to think critically about the world around you, and to enable you to understand and question the social context of the issues that communities around the world are facing on a daily basis.

**Class Environment:** This course covers a number of controversial topics that may make you uncomfortable. Please review the syllabus and the readings and see/contact me if you have any concerns. The material in this class should challenge some of your beliefs/opinions, but never in a threatening or unhealthy manner. While it is OK to disagree, and even challenge another classmate's statement or opinion, all classroom discussions will be conducted in a respectful manner or you will be asked to leave the room. Remember, none of us agrees on everything, and this is usually a good thing! (See "Classroom Behavior" below for more information)

**Attendance:** I will not "take" attendance. But, be aware that the quizzes and exams will contain questions from lecture (and assigned videos/material) as well as the weekly reading material. Also, if you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the lecture notes and class announcements from another student. I will not post/share class slides or "re-lecture" during office hours. I will answer lecture related questions, after you have read the material and reviewed the class notes (that you got from another student).

**Communication:** Check D2L and your CU email account regularly for videos, links, and announcements relevant to the class. I will read and respond to email sent from this class Monday through Thursday, 9-5, and Friday 9-12. Please include "SOCY 2031" in the subject line of all email correspondence. In the attempt to prioritize my email, this will ensure that your email gets top priority!

**Grading:** There will be 12 quizzes (approx. weekly) and 3 exams during the semester. I will drop your 2 lowest *quiz* scores. Your grade will be determined on a “points” basis.

Quizzes = 10 pts. each for a total of 100 pts. (12 quizzes; 2 are dropped)

Exams = 100 pts. each for a total of 300 pts.

Total Class Points = 400

**\*\*Notice that the quizzes combine to equal the same weight as an exam! Missing quizzes will hurt your grade!**

**\*\*There are no extra credit opportunities in this class.**

**All quizzes and exams are delivered online (D2L). As a result, you need to become familiar with the Desire2Learn (D2L) website immediately. If there are technical problems, please call ITS at 303-735-4357. To access D2L, go to <https://learn.colorado.edu> ; Login with your identikey. Your courses can be accessed from the "My Courses" section on "My Home."**

**Note on the timing and structure of quizzes and exams:**

There will be 12 quizzes (approx. weekly), each worth 10 points (two will be dropped – see above). The quizzes will be delivered online (D2L). There will be 10 randomized, multiple-choice questions on each quiz. No two quizzes will have the same order of questions. You will have 15 minutes to take the quiz. You will have a 48 hr. window of availability to take the quiz, BUT you will only have 15 minutes to complete the quiz once you have started the quiz. You will see two questions at a time, and you must answer the questions before you move forward to the next page (you cannot go backwards).

There will be three multiple-choice exams, each worth 100 points (see above). Each exam will be delivered online (D2L), and you will not be required to attend class on the day of the exam. You DO need a reliable Internet connection. Each exam will consist of 25 randomized, multiple-choice questions. No two exams (two students) will have the same questions or the same order of questions. You will have 45 minutes to take the exam. You will have a 48 hr. window of availability to take the exam, BUT you only have 45 minutes to complete the exam once you have started the exam. You will see two questions at a time, and you must answer the questions before you move forward to the next page (you cannot go backwards).

While this may seem like “open note” testing, you must study and know the material well – you will not have time to look up many questions during the quizzes and exams. It is also up to you to keep up with the time (there is a running clock on D2L as you take the test that says how much time you have left). You will be locked out of the quizzes and exams when your time runs out.

And, once again, YOU NEED TO BE SOMEWHERE WITH A RELIABLE INTERNET CONNECTION! You can only access the exam once, and if your Internet drops you, you will be locked out of the test. If your home Internet is not reliable, you need to go somewhere else to take the exam (e.g., the library).

**\*\*Because of the structure of the quizzes and exams, I do not offer “make-up” quizzes or exams – so, please plan your time wisely and become familiar with the quiz/exam schedule (below).**

**Topics and Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Read (textbook)</b>	<b>Assignments (D2L)</b>
M 1/11	Introduction/Syllabus/Ch. 1	Ch. 1	
W 1/13	Ch. 1 - Thinking About Social Problems		NPR Article
F 1/15	Ch. 1 - Thinking About SPs		Quiz 1
M 1/18	MLK Jr. Holiday (No Class)	Ch. 2	
W 1/20	Ch. 2 - Health Care		Hans Rosling
F 1/22	Ch. 2 - Health Care		Quiz 2
M 1/25	Ch. 3 - Alcohol and Other Drugs	Ch. 3	
W 1/27	Ch. 3 - Alcohol and Other Drugs		Cause of Addiction
F 1/29	Ch. 3 - Alcohol and Other Drugs		Quiz 3
M 2/1	Ch. 4 - Crime and Social Control	Ch. 4	
W 2/3	Ch. 4 - Crime and Social Control		Serial Killer
F 2/5	Ch. 4 - Crime and Social Control		Quiz 4
M 2/8	Ch. 5 - Family Problems	Ch. 5	
W 2/10	Ch. 5 - Family Problems		TBD
F 2/12	No Class *****		Exam 1
M 2/15	Ch. 6 - Economic Inequality	Ch. 6	
W 2/17	Ch. 6 - Economic Inequality		TBD
F 2/19	Ch. 6 - Economic Inequality		Quiz 5
M 2/22	Ch. 7 - Work and Unemployment	Ch. 7	
W 2/24	Ch. 7 - Work and Unemployment		TBD
F 2/26	Ch. 7 - Work and Unemployment		Quiz 6
M 2/29	Ch. 8 - Problems in Education	Ch. 8	
W 3/2	Ch. 8 - Problems in Education		TBD
F 3/4	Ch. 8 - Problems in Education		Quiz 7
M 3/7	Ch. 9 - Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration	Ch. 9	
W 3/9	Ch. 9 - Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration		One Story Video
F 3/11	Ch. 9 - Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration		Quiz 8
M 3/14	Ch. 10 - Gender Inequality	Ch. 10	

W 3/16	Ch. 10 - Gender Inequality		TBD
F 3/18	Ch. 10 - Gender Inequality		Quiz 9
M 3/21	Spring Break		
W 3/23	Spring Break		
F 3/25	Spring Break		
M 3/28	Ch. 11 - Sexual Orientation	Ch. 11	
W 3/30	Ch. 11 - Sexual Orientation		TBD
F 4/1	No Class *****		Exam 2
M 4/4	Ch. 12 - Population Growth and Aging	Ch. 12	
W 4/6	Ch. 12 - Population Growth and Aging		TBD
F 4/8	Ch. 12 - Population Growth and Aging		Quiz 10
M 4/11	Ch. 13 - Environmental Problems	Ch. 13	
W 4/13	Ch. 13 - Environmental Problems		TBD
F 4/15	Ch. 13 - Environmental Problems		Quiz 11
M 4/18	Ch. 14 - Science and Technology	Ch. 14	
W 4/20	Ch. 14 - Science and Technology		TBD
F 4/22	Ch. 14 - Science and Technology		Quiz 12
M 4/25	Ch. 15 - Conflict, War, and Terrorism	Ch. 15	
W 4/27	Ch. 15 - Conflict, War, and Terrorism		TBD
F 4/29	Ch. 15 - Conflict, War, and Terrorism		
T 12/15	<b>Final Exam (D2L-Online)</b>		<b>Final Exam</b>

\* D2L videos and articles (assignments) are posted within 24 hours of the class because I try to use material that is timely, and I usually pull articles that are printed/posted online within the same week as the subject we are discussing – thus, I have used “TBD” as a placemaker for readings that will posted. Please check D2L on a regular (daily) basis.

### Relevant CU Policies:

**Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter from **Disability Services** within the **first two weeks of class** so that I can address your needs. Disability Services determines accommodations based on *documented* disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671; e-mail at [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu).

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students and faculty have a responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat all students with

understanding, dignity, and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with students' legal names. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference within **the first two weeks** of the semester so that I may adjust my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code)

### **Academic Integrity**

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarizing, aiding academic dishonesty, fabricating, lying, bribing, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students found in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). For other information on the Honor Code, see: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode>

### **Religious Observances**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please notify me within **the first two weeks** of the semester if religious observance will cause you to miss a class, test, or assignment. See [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU-Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).