"Most of the readers of this book are among the world's privileged people – those who have enough to eat, a comfortable place to sleep, and who have the special opportunity to study the human condition." -- John J. Macionis, *Social Problems*

**INSTRUCTOR:**  Wanlu Shi  
Office: 3333 Turlington Hall  
Email:  [wlshi@ufl.edu](mailto:wlshi@ufl.edu) (Please write “SYG2010” in subject line.)

**OFFICE HOURS:**  Mondays 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or by appointment

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**  Email is the best way to contact me. I usually respond within 48 hours unless otherwise indicated.

*The 2nd edition (ISBN: 020512562X) could be used instead, but is more expensive.*


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**  Other readings are available on the Canvas site.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**  This course is about the development, analysis and treatment of social problems. This class not only focuses on issues within the United States, but also discusses social problems outside the country and their influences to the world. During this class we will discuss current social problems, what attributes to those problems, what methods are used to study these problems and how sociology can help you discover ways to understand, explore and make a difference in the world around you. Class combines videos and online activities. Course assignments include: quizzes, online discussions, historical analysis papers (HAPs), and a final exam. *(S)*

*(S) = Social and Behavioral Sciences*

**PURPOSE OF COURSE:**  To reach understandings of current social problems in the United States as well as all over the world.
**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify essential elements and learn descriptive information about social problems.
- Examine how macro and micro level structures influence social issues from a sociological perspective.
- Identify and interpret the different approaches to studying social problems.
- Apply different sociological perspectives and use empirical data to construct the research evidence of the social problems.
- Be able to analyze social problems from a global perspective.
- Evaluate the credibility of the evidence supporting claims of social problems and the fit of a social policy intended to resolve a social problem.
- Evaluate the quality of institutions and NGOs based on their efficiency of problem solving.
- Effectively communicate in writing through discussions and assignments.

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** My philosophy of the teaching and learning experience is also an interactive one. This is your class rather than mine. I expect each of you to contribute to this learning experience through online activities. I will not be feeding you facts that you will then regurgitate. Instead, ideas will be presented and we will all challenge ourselves to think critically about these ideas by analyzing real-life examples. The format of this class includes videos and online discussions. I expect everyone to contribute to the teaching and learning experience in the next few months, so if you come across something outside of class that you think is relevant to what we have been discussing, please bring it to discussion forums and share with the rest of us or discuss it in your assignments. You are strongly recommended to participate in campus & community events related to the issues we discuss in class; I challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone as you think critically and innovatively to solve problems locally and around the world.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:** This course is divided into modules on particular themes.

You will need to review several online videos, complete the assigned reading (1-2 chapters) and review the associated ppt slides. When you have mastered the material for the module, you will be best able to complete the quiz and participate actively in the discussion forums.
COURSE POLICIES

READING QUIZZES: You need to take a brief quiz on the readings for that module. Normally this will consist of ten questions. The quizzes will focus on the main points of each reading rather than minor details. Quizzes must be completed within 15 minutes. You will only have one attempt to each quiz. Quizzes must be completed by Thursday evening (11:59 pm) of the week in which they are due. Make-up quizzes will not be given.

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS: You will find 1-2 questions (in each module) that should be answered and discussed. The discussion involves writing at minimum 200 words for your own post to the board (see discussion rubric for details). Discussion forums must be completed any time during the week but must be completed by Thursday evening (11:59 pm).

You are also required to provide peer reviews to three other students’ posts (will be assigned automatically on Friday 12:00 am). Peer reviews should be completed by Sunday evening (11:59 pm) of the week in which they are due. Incompletion of peer reviews will lead to at least two points off.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS PAPERS: You are required to submit 3 historical analysis papers (HAPs) throughout the semester. Each of the 3 HAPs has a deadline and need to be submitted on Canvas no later than the due, or you will receive a 0 (zero) for each analysis paper that is missed.

FINAL EXAM: There is a cumulative final exam. You are required to complete a 50 question final exam on Canvas. The final exam must be completed within 60 minutes. The exam will be available during the last module and must be completed between April 18-20.

SPECIFIC DATES FOR TERM PROJECT AND EXAMS APPEAR BELOW.

UF POLICIES

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php.
GETTING HELP

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints to submit a complaint.

GRADING POLICIES

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<th>Points or percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Historical Analysis Papers</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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GRADING SCALE:

Letter grades will be determined by the following:
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<th>A</th>
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<th>B+</th>
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<th>C+</th>
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For more information, see: [http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html](http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html)

### COURSE SCHEDULE

#### SOCIAL PROBLEMS

**MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION & COURSE OVERVIEW**

01/05-01/10 C. Wright Mills - "The Promise" The Sociological Imagination

**MODULE 2: THEORY & METHODS**

01/11-01/17 Chapter 1 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**MODULE 3: SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND POVERTY**

01/19-01/24 Chapter 2 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**MODULE 4: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND IMMIGRATION**

01/25-01/31 Chapter 3 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**MODULE 5: GENDER AND SEXUALITY**

02/01-02/07 Chapter 4 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**MODULE 6: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

02/08-02/14 Chapter 15 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**HAP 1 due on 02/14 (before 11:59 pm)**

**MODULE 7: EDUCATION**

02/15-02/21 Chapter 8 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**MODULE 8: HEALTH, AGING, AND DISABILITIES**

02/22-02/26 Chapter 9 (Physical Health Part) - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

Chapter 5 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems

**Spring Break: No Quiz or Discussion between 02/27-03/06**

**MODULE 9: ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND MENTAL HEALTH**

03/07-03/13 Chapter 10 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 9 (Mental Health Part)</strong> - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MODULE 10: MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY</strong></td>
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| 03/14-03/20 | Chapter 6 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems  
**HAP 2 due on 03/20 (before 11:59 pm)** |
| **MODULE 11: ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCE, AND ENERGY** |
| 03/21-03/27 | Chapter 19 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems |
| **MODULE 12: POPULATION** |
| 03/28-04/03 | Chapter 18 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems |
| **MODULE 13: ECONOMY AND POLITY** |
| 04/04-04/10 | Chapter 7 - Carl. 2011. Think: Social Problems |
| **MODULE 14: GLOBALIZATION AND WAR** |
**HAP 3 due on 04/17 (before 11:59 pm)** |
| **MODULE 15: FINAL EXAM** |
| 04/18-04/20 | **To be completed between April 18-20** |

**Disclaimer:** I reserve the right for me to make changes to this syllabus, so long as they are announced in advance on Canvas or by email.