



WACO, TEXAS

**COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

Social Problems

SOCI - 1306 – O 080

Dr. Bill Lockhart

**Taught completely online during the Fall Semester 2023
August 21-Dec. 8, 2023**

NOTE: This is a 16-week course.

NOTE: This is an Online course.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION Fall Semester 2023

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Course Description:

Application of sociological principles and theoretical perspectives to major social problems in contemporary society such as inequality, crime and violence, substance abuse, environmental issues, deviance, or family problems

Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:

None

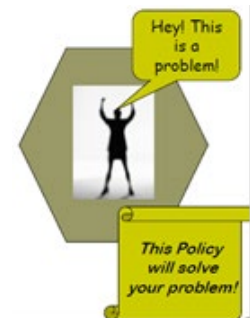
Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:

Looking Sociologically at "Social Problems"

Reports of social problems confront us every day: on the covers of magazines, on talk shows, and on the internet. To the casual observer, some things seem obviously to be "social problems." Of course, we say, domestic abuse, drunk driving, crime, homelessness, religious conflict and so on are social problems that need to be publicly addressed. But from a "social constructionist" framework, particular social conditions are not intrinsically "social problems." They become public problems only because people are successful in defining them as public problems.

This course is designed to teach you how to understand and evaluate the "stories behind the news stories" of social problems. There are four basic "stories" to be found behind any social problem. I sometimes refer to these as "the Four Socials":

- First is the story of the **social conditions** that produce these social problems – conditions such as the economic structure of society, the shape of gender relationships, how deviance is controlled, and the like. This is often considered the "**objective conditions**" part of the problem
- The second set of stories describes how these social conditions are perceived by those affected by them. C. Wright Mills says that many people see these problems as only "**personal troubles.**" (I sometimes call this aspect the "**social situation**" that people find themselves in.) Mills urges us to see the links between these personal troubles to the underlying social conditions, and that doing so used "the sociological imagination".
- How people perceive their situations is the "**subjective concerns**" part of the problem and relates to the idea of "morals" – what is considered right and wrong. As interactions with others, historical investigation and social research demonstrate, perceptions of right and wrong vary among people, cultures, religions and times. Current research (Jon Haidt, 2012) shows that moral thinking may really be based on "feeling" and intuition rather than just rational thoughts. In our diverse society we need to learn how other people feel, intuit and reason if we want to understand them and work together.
- The third story is how these "personal troubles" became publicly discussed as "**social problems**" that demand solutions. This is where we'll bring in the social constructivist perspective and discuss **social movements**.



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- The last story to be told involves the **social policies and programs** developed to combat these social problems. These "solutions" often change social realities, but perhaps not always in the ways intended by their designers.

As we explore a selected group of "social problems" we will seek to understand all four types of stories and how they are interrelated. We will also develop a related "social problems toolkit" that will help us analyze any social problem we find and explore how the problem can be solved.



To do well in this class you need to have the college level abilities to:

1. read and comprehend a textbook
2. do critical thinking in evaluating social problems claims
3. write paragraphs and short papers using a computer's word processor
4. access the internet and Brightspace, post on discussion boards, read and send emails with attachments

The only other quality needed to do well is for you to work steadily and seriously desire to master the course material.

Internet Course: Many students choose to take internet courses for the convenience of not having to commute to a physical classroom during set hours each week. It also feels "freer" with opportunities to take care of other responsibilities and perhaps to even travel. **However because you don't have to "show up" at a set time and place, you really need to be organized and self-disciplined to do well in online courses.** However, if you are disciplined and work hard—and have a good computer and reliable quality internet access -- you will experience a new perspective on life around you and enjoy many new things about our social world, as well as gain successful college credit.



Our classroom: Consider the class Brightspace page to be the "classroom" in which we meet. Brightspace will be an essential element in this course and all online courses. Brightspace will be the prime place for us to interact, via discussion boards, messages, lessons, and instructions. I will also make additional readings and instructional material available via Brightspace. If you do not know how to access Brightspace, contact the instructor or MCC technical staff. To find out more about Brightspace at MCC, go to <http://www.mclennan.edu/brightspace-students/>.

D2L | Brightspace

Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: **Bill Lockhart**

MCC E-mail: wlockhart@mclennan.edu (or use the email link ☒ in Brightspace)

Office Phone Number: **254-299-8930*** ☎

Office Location: **MAC 232** (on the second floor of the Michaelis Academic Center where the MCC Bookstore is located. See the adjacent photo)

Office/Teacher Conference Hours:

- **Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM**



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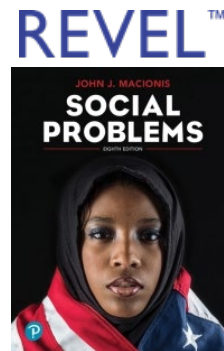
- **Tuesdays from 11 AM to 12 Noon**
- **and by appointment.** (I'm often around MCC other times, so stop by my office and if I'm not there, email me for an appointment.)

Zoom address:  <https://mclennan.zoom.us/my/lockhart2998930> contact me for access instructions

Other Instruction Information: ***Instructor is hearing impaired, so it is best to contact him in person or via email. If you contact him by phone, be sure to speak clearly and slowly and be ready to repeat.**

Required Text & Materials:

1. **Revel:** Our textbook is the latest updated **Revel** version of **Macionis, Social Problems, 8e**. REVEL is an online software that provides an interactive e-textbook with embedded quizzes. **Access to Revel is embedded within Brightspace, so you won't have to go to another website to access it.** I will assign reading, quizzes and other homework activities in Revel - they are worth 15% of your grade -- plus these readings are key for the rest of the course grade.
 - Title: Social Problems (REVEL online access via Brightspace)
 - Edition: Eighth Edition, Digital Update (2021)
 - Author: John J. Macionis
 - Publisher: Pearson Higher Education



MCC Bookstore Website: <http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

While access to Revel is required, **the printed version of this text is optional.** Pearson provides a free limited time period trial access to REVEL and the e-textbook, but **you will need to purchase the online access before the course concludes if for somehow you did not get it with enrollment.**

Beyond the textbook plan on using the following resources:

2. **Use of a word processing software.** (MCC provides Microsoft Office 365 free to all students: <https://www.mclennan.edu/tech-support/software.html>. Since I cannot open Apple ".pages" documents, if you typically use an Apple/Mac/iPhone, be sure to save and/or convert your documents into Rich Text Format (.rtf) or Word format (.doc or .docx).
3. **The Internet.** Beyond accessing our Brightspace page and your MCC email, you will need to a lot time for quality access to the internet, either at home (if available), at MCC or at a public wi-fi facility (such as a library). One of the major transformations in our society during the last two decades has been the invention and growth of the internet. We now have access to much more information than ever imagined before. **The key for us today is to discern the quality of this information.** We'll try to guide you in accessing this information and in learning how to evaluate websites and their claims. You need to have consistent good quality access to the internet for this course. You also should regularly "check the news" so you can be current with the depiction of social problems in the news media during the course.



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4. **The Instructor.** I have been involved in social problems most of my life. Among the highlights of my life are that in college I helped to found a new student group that dealt with social problems; I directed an urban ministry working with the poor, the homeless and at-risk children and youth for ten years in urban Appalachia; and my doctoral dissertation was on how faith-based organizations contrast with secular groups in providing services to the poor. I currently serve on the board of a non-profit organization that seeks to empower the poor in Waco and around the world. I have taught various forms of this college level course in four different institutions since 1999. I want people to be involved in solving social problems, but to do so with wisdom and skill and not just passion. (As some have put it, to move from "Feel Good" events to "Real Good" actions.) I look forward to helping each of you learn and succeed in this course (and through the rest of your life.) I've prepared some unique additional learning materials for you to read and learn which will be posted on Brightspace and which will be helpful for you.
5. **The Other Students.** In an online course it can be easy to forget that there are other people involved than just yourself and the computer screen. However if you do so, you miss out on the great resource of other students who may agree or disagree with you about social problems and their solutions, but above all can bring in different experiences and perspectives to your understanding of social problems. [Every semester I personally learn something from the students in this course!] In addition, groups and networking are important resources for social problems work. To facilitate interaction with other students, I'm using many online discussion forums in this course.



Methods of Teaching and Learning:

As described below under Course Grading Information, this course requires four different types of assignments; failure to complete any one of them will seriously hurt your grade so that you may not be able to pass the course. These four include studying the textbook and completing online learning activities; participating in online class discussions; passing quizzes and exams; analyzing case studies; and writing two "social problem field observation" reports.

Course Objectives and/or Competencies:

Learning Goals: As you take this class you will learn:

1) **What causes social problems?** What are the basic perspectives and concepts that sociologists use to understand the social world and how they are these ideas then applied to social problems? What are the objective conditions that lead to social problems?

2) **Why is this considered a social problem now?** How is the "social problems game" played by claims-makers so that some issues gain public attention over other issues? What are the subjective concerns that make people motivated to do something about a social problem? How do claims-makers push their subjective concerns?

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3) **How real is this social problem?** What analytical skills do I need to evaluate social problems claims – understanding flaws and winning points in the logic and presentation of claims and by seeking truth about the social realities underneath the claims?

4) **What can we do about this social problem?** What solutions will work? Are there insolvable problems? What are the difficulties and joys of dealing with social problems?

As a **transferable course** within the state of Texas, this course introduces sociology and social problems and develops specific information and skills about a social scientific approach to social problems. Students successfully completing this course will be able to meet each of these transfer social problems learning objectives (SLO):

- SLO 1: **Describe how the sociological imagination can be used to explain the emergence and implications of contemporary social problems.**
- SLO 2: **Explain the nature of social problems from at least one sociological perspective**, e.g., critical, functional, interpretive, etc.
- SLO 3: **Identify multidimensional aspects of social problems** including the global, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of social problems.
- SLO 4: **Discuss how “solutions” to social problems are often contentious due to diverse values in society.**
- SLO 5: **Describe how the proposed “solutions” to a social problem, including social policies, may bring rise to other social problems.**



As part of the **MCC Core Curriculum**, this course seeks to develop the following core competencies in our college students:

Core Objectives for Social & Behavioral Sciences:

Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

- **Critical Thinking (CT)** -- to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- **Communications Skill (COM)** -- to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
- **Empirical & Quantitative Skills (EQS)** -- to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- **Social Responsibility (SR)** -- to include intercultural competency, civic knowledge, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities



Course Attendance/Participation Guidelines:

If a student is not in attendance in accordance with the policies/guidelines of the class as outlined in the course syllabus as of the course census date, faculty are required to drop students from their class roster prior to certifying the respective class roster. A student's financial aid will be re-evaluated accordingly and the student will only receive funding for those courses attended as of the course census date.

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Before the 60% point of the semester, a student who is absent for 25% or more of a face-to-face or blended course or who miss 25% or more of assigned work for an online course will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. A student may also request to be withdrawn with a grade of W before the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point of the semester, the student may request to be withdrawn if the student is passing, or be assigned the final grade earned at the end of the semester after grades have been updated to reflect missing work.

Even in online courses, learning involves more than just reading the textbook, writing papers and taking exams. Online class participation is necessary if you hope to achieve a satisfactory grade. This means that you must be checking into our class Brightspace page at least once each week and doing the assignments or discussions for that week.

This means: The instructor can withdraw you from the course after missing 4 weeks in an online 16 week course! **Contact me to be sure that you have been withdrawn with a W grade. If you have not contacted me by the 60% date, you may receive an F instead.** If you should desire to withdraw from the class for any reason, please see me first. The last day for students to initiate course withdrawals is posted on the MCC Calendar

Remember the "Six Drop" Rule: The Texas State Legislature has required a "six drop" rule stating that students can withdraw from no more than six courses during their undergraduate college career. More information about this policy and how it is being implemented at MCC is available in the Highlander Guide and at <https://www.mclennan.edu/records/withdraw.html>. Combined with the attendance policy this means that if you do not participate sufficiently I will give you an F for the class if you have already dropped six other classes. So, make attendance of classes a high priority for your time. This may then impact your academic standing and financial aid possibilities. There are a few exceptions to this policy, such as for health reasons or for those who withdraw from all of their courses for a semester. Contact the MCC registrar's office or the Highlander Guide for more details.

Course Outline or Schedule:

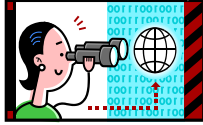
PLAN AHEAD! During the regular long semester terms we cover about a chapter each week and have assignments due on Wednesdays and Sundays, with the "doing sociology" assignments due mostly on Sundays. Because student schedules vary, I am providing a short range of dates for the exams. The exams will all be online, but will have time limits and overtime penalties, so you'll need to study and be ready to take these exams when you start them.

Do try to keep up with the schedule for the sake of your classmates and your education. Due to technical difficulties, current events and other factors, **all topics, dates and assignments are subject to change**. However, this schedule provided below is normally very accurate. The Calendar on our Brightspace class website will have the latest information and you will be informed of changes by looking at the appropriate pages of that website.

If you have any questions about assignments or due dates, check Brightspace first, and then contact me at wlockhart@mclennan.edu.

Below is the course schedule. I suggest you print it off. Then you can check off the little circles as you complete these tasks. The symbols represent the type of assignment it is.

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Unit 1: Sociology and the Study of Social Problems

How do Sociologists View Social Problems?



Week 1: August 21-27, 2023

- **Unless indicated otherwise, do all the following by the end of this week: 11:59 PM on August 27, 2023**

Getting Ready to learn at MCC this semester:

- If you are new to Brightspace (MCC's learning management system), log into Brightspace and review the **Brightspace Orientation**. You can learn more about Brightspace at MCC at <https://www.mclennan.edu/brightspace-students/>
- Do the **course online orientation** found in the "Getting Started" **D2L | Brightspace** folder in the Content area of our class Brightspace page. When you've completed it, follow the instructions so that the instructor knows you've completed the orientation.
- Sign up for your **REVEL etextbook via Brightspace**, as part of the course online orientation and start your two week free access. You will need to purchase continued access to this etextbook via Pearson or with a code purchased at the MCC Bookstore.
- **Discussion Forum 1a:** Introduce yourself to the rest of the class on the first discussion forum #1a "Introductions". Do this no later than 11:59 PM (the standard deadline time) on **Wednesday**. You do NOT need to have the textbook to do this assignment. *[Note: the discussion forums are numbered according to the relevant chapter and with letters, if there are more than one discussion forum for the chapter, as in chapter 1. The complete instructions for each discussion are listed on Brightspace and supersede any description you see in this document.]*

Sociology's Basic Approach (do all of this by Sunday)

- **Read and do the online assignments on REVEL** the first part of chapter 1 of the textbook, "Sociology: Studying Social Problems, pp. 1-16 (to the end of section 1.3, ending right before "Finding the Facts: Sociological Research")
- **Discussion Forum 1b- Eight Assertions:** join the 1b discussion forum on Eight Assertion (found on pp. 9-11, also posted on Brightspace if you haven't yet gotten access via REVEL). *[All discussion board assignments relate to core curriculum values of CT (critical thinking), COM (communications) and SR (Social Responsibility). This discussion also relates to Texas State Social Problems Student Learning Objective (SP-SLO 3): identifying the multidimensional aspects of social problems.]*

Week 2: Aug. 28-Sept 3, 2023

- **Unless indicated otherwise, do all the following by the end of this week.**

- **Finish Reading and do the assignments on REVEL** for the rest of chapter 1 of the textbook, "Sociology: Studying Social Problems (Sections 1.4 and following) by the REVEL deadline (Sunday)
- **Discussion Forum 1c – Personal/Social Problems:** By 11:59 PM on **Wednesday**, join the 1c discussion forum on personal/social problems. Be sure to read other people's posts before you post.

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- o  **Navigating Digital Information** video & worksheet – found in the Brightspace assignments.

Week 3: Sept. 4-10, 2022

Monday Sept. 4 – Labor Day Holiday; MCC closed

Instructor's Materials: Claims-Makers Constructing Social Problems

Do all of the Following by Sunday:




- o  **Read** the instructor's materials on Claims-Making (on Brightspace)
- o  **Take the quizzes** on Brightspace on this material and the nine analytical questions
- o  **Do the "Perspectives" course** as linked in Brightspace and post your results.
- o You can also check out the Pew Political Survey to see how politics in the USA is more than just Red & Blue.
- o  **Review the "Claims-making in Action" hands on research project.** If you haven't already, review the instructions for this first paper. This assignment requires you to attend a social problems event for at least one hour and then analyze the event and the claims-making occurring in it, utilizing the materials from the course. This is NOT an assignment to put off and try to do two hours before it is due! So plan ahead about what sort of event you could attend. For some ideas about potential events, check out the Events and Organizations



area in the Content area or click on the link looking like this:

Week 4: Sept. 11-17, 2023

The Media and Social Problems

- o  **Read on Revel** chapter 10, "Social Media" skipping 10.2 and 10.3 for now, and do the Revel quizzes.
- o  **ZOOM sessions** – talk online with your professor about Claims-making report, etc. Times to be scheduled with various options available during this week and the next.
- o  **Do the "take home" case study** posted in the assignments folder to be completed and submitted to the instructor by 11:59 PM on **Sunday**.
- o **Unit 1 exam** to be taken online at your choice of time between **Wednesday and Sunday of this week**. [This exam focuses on the materials in this unit and to SLO 1 & 2 on the sociological imagination and different sociological perspectives.]




Unit 2: Changing Norms and Social Change

What do you mean that these things haven't always been considered social problems?



Week 5: Sept. 18-24, 2023

Deviance and Social Problems: Crime and Criminal Justice

- o  **Read and do the REVEL assignments** for Chapter 7 Crime, Violence, and Criminal Justice, except we'll skip the section 7.3 on violence and do that later.

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- o ♣ **Do the discussion boards** on this chapter. The first will be due by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, the second at the same time on Sunday.

Week 6: Sept. 25-Oct. 1, 2023

Alcohol and Other Drugs

- o 📖 **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 8: Alcohol and Other Drugs
- o ♣ Post on discussion board twice (see instructions on Brightspace)

Week 7: Oct. 2-8, 2023

Physical and Mental Health

- o 📖 **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 9 Physical and Mental Health
- o ♣ **Post on the discussion boards.** We'll have a couple of discussions on this due to all the controversies about health care.
- o ✂ **"Claims-Making in Action" Field Observation Report due at 11:59 PM on Sunday October 8, 2023**– this report requires students to observe a social problems protest or service event and then analyze its claims-making. Details on Brightspace and elsewhere in this syllabus. [This assignment relates to core curriculum goals of critical thinking, communication skills, and social responsibility – particularly as you seek to discern the values and ethics involved in this expression of social responsibility and service. This discussion also relates to all five of the SLOs.]



Week 8: Oct. 9-15, 2023

Social Media and Health

- o 📖 **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 10.2 and 10.3 on Social Media
- o ♣ **Post on the discussion boards.**
- o **Unit 2 exam (to be taken online between Wednesday and Sunday).** [This exam focuses on the materials in this unit and to SLO 3, 4 & 5 on the multidimensional aspects of social problems, on how the solutions can be contentious and how the chosen solutions can give rise to other problems.]



Unit 3: Social Movements for Equality

*Why do some people get more of the good things of life than others?
How can people seek social justice?*






Week 9: Oct. 16-22, 2023

Social Movements: Seeking Equality (Instructor's Materials)

- o 📖 **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** "The Background for Social Movements" (ch. 11.1-11.3) Pearson Revel. This is only a short part of the chapter, and you can probably skim through a bit of it, depending on how much you learned in government classes. The assignment ends with a discussion of social movements. By the way, John Macionis is more cynical about social movements than I am; I think they have impacted our "Political Economy" for good, just as the Labor Movement improved working conditions and pay for the average American.

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-  **Read on Brightspace:** Instructor's Materials online: Social Movements and the Civil Rights Movement, including the articles in the "Social Movements" folder.
-  **Chapter Activities on Brightspace:** Do the online lesson on Social Movements and take the quiz on Social Movements. By Wednesday post on DB 3a on Insiders & Outsiders about how President Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. worked towards the Civil Rights Bill and/or President Obama's using insider & outsider approaches. By Sunday, Post on DB 3a a second time about social entrepreneurs.
-  **Personal Application Paper** – 1 page paper on identity & group membership submitted to the instructor; worth 10 points






Week 10: Oct. 23-29, 2023

Racial-Ethnic Relations

-  **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 3: Racial and Ethnic Inequality
-  **Chapter Activities on Brightspace:** Review the instructor's PowerPoint on "Solutions" to Race Relations.
-  **Take the Brightspace quiz on Race Relations**
-   **Do at least two** internet activities on "What is Race?" Post as described on the Brightspace discussion board and post on the board
- *Tuesday Oct. 24, 2023 is the 60% day for 16-week courses and the last day students can initiate a course withdrawal.*

Week 11: Oct. 30- Nov. 5, 2023

Social Problems Related to Gender and Sexuality

-  **Read and Do REVEL:** Sections of Chapter 7: Sexuality and Chapter 4: Gender Inequality
-  Do the discussion board.
-  **Do the Muslim American case study** – as found in the Assignments area; worth 30 points
- **Unit 3 exam** taken between Wednesday and Sunday. [This exam focuses on the materials in this unit and to SLO 3, 4 & 5 on the multidimensional aspects of social problems, on how the solutions can be contentious and how the chosen solutions can give rise to other problems.]




Unit 4: Problems with the Social Structure

*How much do we need to care about other people and what they do?
What do we do when society "falls apart" and what used to work,
doesn't?*



Week 12: Nov. 6-12, 2023



Economic Problems: Poverty and Wealth

-  **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 2: Poverty and Wealth
-  Post on discussion board

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Week 13: Nov. 13-19, 2023




Technology and Environmental Crises

-  **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 17: Technology and the Environment
-  Post on discussion board
- View the documentary "COOKED: survival by zip code."
 - "A life and death story about extreme heat, the politics of "disaster" and survival by zip code."




Week 14: Nov. 20-26, 2023 – Thanksgiving Week

"Natural" Disasters; Responding to Crises




-  **Read on Brightspace** the Instructor's Materials on disasters
-  **Take the quizzes on Brightspace**
-  Post on discussion board
- Wednesday to Saturday: **Thanksgiving Break** @ MCC

Week 15: Nov. 27-Dec. 3, 2023 – last week of classes



-  **Report 2: "Getting it Solved" Social Movement Strategy in Action report due 11:59 PM on Tuesday Nov. 29, 2023.** [This assignment relates to core curriculum standards on critical thinking, communication skills, empirical data analysis, and social responsibility – particularly as you seek to discern the values and ethics involved in this expression of social responsibility and service. This report also relates to all five of the SLOs.]



War, Terrorism and Violence

-  **Read and Do the REVEL assignments:** Chapter 7.3: on Violence and Chapter 18: War and Terrorism
-  Post on discussion board
-  **"Take Home" Case Study due:** "In Texas, Toll Roads or Flood Preparedness?"

Finals Week: Dec 4-7, 2023

-  **Closing Discussion Forum** – to say goodbye to one another for this course (not graded).
-  The **Unit 4 and final exam** (to be taken online between **Friday December 1 and Thursday Dec. 7, 2023**) will primarily cover these student chosen topics and the general sociological approach to social problems as described in the first unit of this course.
 - [This exam focuses on the materials in this unit and to SP-SLO 3, 4 & 5 on the multidimensional aspects of social problems, on how the solutions can be contentious and how the chosen solutions can give rise to other problems.]
 - **If you are graduating at the end of the semester**, please let me know to be sure that your grade will be completed by the graduation deadline. ➤ **You will need to take your final exam by Tuesday of Finals week.**

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Course Grading Information:

Each part of the class will provide a certain percentage of your course grade:

10%	Chapter Activities , including case studies and a few quizzes
10%	Chapter Discussion Board participation
15%	REVEL Activities
25%	two Observation Reports (the first 10%, the second 15%) 🚩
40%	Three Mid-Term Unit Exams and a Final Exam 🕒
100%	

Learning and Applying the Material: chapter activities, REVEL work, and exams

This course will teach some general information about the sociological perspective as well as some general sociological approaches to the study of social problems. We will also investigate several social problems and the social conditions that give rise to these problems. This material will be taught to you through the textbook, its website, on-line discussions and some additional readings and activities on Brightspace.

Read each chapter as assigned and study the summary, review and key terms. Each week I will post in "assignments" **chapter activities** for each week, typically the REVEL reading and quizzes and a Brightspace discussion board post or two. Some of these assignments will include activities that you'll need to write up and send to me (such as answers to questions or responses to the boxes in the chapter). Some weeks I will not use REVEL or the textbook but will instead provide my own readings and online quizzes via Brightspace. Some assignments will take more time than others, so plan ahead to review these assignments and to access Brightspace and REVEL regularly.

REVEL™

You will be tested on this material through three **midterm exams, the final exam, chapter activities**, and through your comments on our interactive Brightspace **discussion forums**. The exams will be taken online. There may also be a "take home" part of each exam, which would be a short essay or other project that should be emailed to the instructor.

The exams (including the comprehensive final exam) will total 45% of the course grade. The chapter activities and REVEL will total another 30% of the course grade.

Extending the Learning: hands-on observation reports 🚩

In online classes, students can get so wrapped up with the textbook and the computer that they may fail to see the implications of the class in the real world. The purpose of the two social problems observation papers is to help you enter into the experience of people dealing with a social problem and to analyze their efforts. For these two papers you will participate in or observe either a program seeking to help some people in need OR a rally or other event demanding a solution to a claimed social problem. (For either you must participate for at least an hour. Due to COVID-19 concerns, your "observation" can either be live – if you feel safe enough—or virtual via interviews or online observations.) In each paper you should describe the activity, your reactions to the activity and its setting, and the potential effectiveness of the activity. From informal interviews you should seek to determine the motivations of the participants in the activity. You will be especially graded on how you bring insights from class



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readings and discussions to bear on your interpretations of the activity. The complete instructions for these reports will be made available on Brightspace.

- The first report, on Social Problem “**Claims-Making in Action**”, will focus on the Claims-making occurring at the event in which you observed or participated. It is due after you complete the first unit and learned about “claims-making”. It will be worth 100 points or 10% of your final course grade (the same as one of the exams).
 - The second report, “**Getting it Solved!**” focusing on a Social Problem Strategy and Solution, should be based on a different event with a different organization or site. It is typically due at a few weeks before the end of the course. It will be worth 15% of your final course grade.
- Plan ahead for these projects! **You are responsible to find an event** – rather it be a protest rally (such as political protests), health care and research fundraising event, or a service project (cleaning up Lake Waco, helping the poor, etc.) – to attend or observe virtually and to describe and analyze.

Each report should be completed with a word processor, saved (keeping a copy for yourself in case the one you give to me gets lost in cyberspace), and then submitted in the appropriate



Assignments Link in Brightspace **as an attachment in Word (.doc or .docx) format or in Rich Text Format (.rtf)**. Most word processing software should allow you to save your document in that format. I can **not** (unfortunately) open documents



from google docs or in the Apple pages (.pages) format, so please convert papers from these formats into Word or Rich Text Format. Get these papers in on time, because the late penalties severely hurt! See the late work policy below.



College level writing skills are appropriate for these papers, for I will be taking points off for spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes. Utilize the MCC Tutoring and other assistance, as well as your word processor's spell checker.



Basic Paper, Discussion Post, and Presentation Grading Rubric – details and more specific rubrics are on Brightspace

Criteria	Outstanding “A”	Proficient “B”	Basic “C”	Below Expectations “D” or “F”
Critical Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> Rich in content; <input type="checkbox"/> thoughtful & insightful	<input type="checkbox"/> substantial information; <input type="checkbox"/> thought, insight, and analysis has taken place	<input type="checkbox"/> generally competent; <input type="checkbox"/> information is thin and commonplace	<input type="checkbox"/> rudimentary and superficial; <input type="checkbox"/> no analysis or insight is displayed
Communication & Connections	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear connections to content and to real-life situations <input type="checkbox"/> clear accurate connections to course terms and concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> connections are made; <input type="checkbox"/> not really clear or too obvious	<input type="checkbox"/> limited, if any connections; <input type="checkbox"/> vague generalities	<input type="checkbox"/> no connections are made; <input type="checkbox"/> off topic

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Mechanics	<input type="checkbox"/> Very few grammatical or stylistic errors	<input type="checkbox"/> several grammatical or stylistic errors	<input type="checkbox"/> obvious grammatical or stylistic errors; <input type="checkbox"/> errors interfere with content	<input type="checkbox"/> obvious grammatical or stylistic errors; <input type="checkbox"/> makes understanding impossible
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E. Special Assignments

MCC draws upon a diverse population of students. Upon the Instructor's wisdom, he may determine that some students may benefit from additional assignments or services and will require such assignments with various MCC services.

Grade Scale:

Although I use points in grading many assignments, your course grade will be calculated using percent according to the following scale:

100 - 90% = A

79 - 70% = C

59 - 0% = F

89 - 80% = B

69 - 60% = D

Student Behavioral Expectations and Conduct Policy:

Students are expected to follow the General Conduct Policy in the General Catalogue and Highlander Guide, and to maintain classroom decorum that includes respect for other students and the instructor, prompt and regular attendance, and an attitude that seeks to take full advantage of this opportunity for education.

Respect for all

Every person comes from a different background and each is unique and special. Do respect other people and treat them as you would like to be treated. Some of us have physical or other biologically based differences that society has labeled "disabilities". America today seeks to provide "equality for all" which means sometimes we need to provide special accommodations to some. ***If you think you deserve some sort of accommodation***, consult MCC's Accommodation Services office: <https://www.mclennan.edu/disability/>.

If you feel you are being unfairly treated by anyone at MCC for any reason, please check out our non-discrimination policies: <https://www.mclennan.edu/titleix/non-discrimination.html>

Dr. Lockhart's hearing disability: I've been hearing impaired since early childhood and I've learned to read lips and other clues to help me to understand people. If I ask you to repeat something or if I misinterpret what you say, please don't be embarrassed, for it is my hearing problem, not yours. Please say it again, perhaps a little more slowly and so I can see your lips. Don't shout, for when people shout they exaggerate their lips which makes things worst. In over ten years of teaching, this impairment has not caused any undue problem for me or for any student. I now have a cochlear implant and although it has helped me in some ways I am still adjusting to this device. Therefore, it is best to email me, rather than call. If you do leave a phone message, be sure to speak slowly and clearly and leave a local phone number. (I am not normally able to return long distance phone calls.) If



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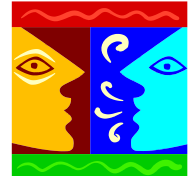
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you need to phone, I can talk on the phone but sometimes I have difficulty understanding people, particularly recorded phone messages. If you have to leave a phone message, please speak slowly and distinctly, particularly when giving names and phone numbers.

Class Discussion Ground Rules

Social and cultural issues are inevitably controversial. To provide full discussion of social problems, the following ground rules will be followed.

- 1) ***It has been said that "it takes a lot of work to get to disagreement."*** To accurately disagree with someone, you need to understand where you agree – including facts, values and feelings -- so that where and how you disagree is clear. The name calling seen on TV and social media does not create clear disagreement; instead there is more smoke and heat than light being generated.
- 2) Students (and the teacher) will behave respectfully toward each other; there will be no insults or put-downs. Although we can strongly disagree with people's ideas or values, people themselves should not be attacked. Let us focus on the facts of the matter and clarify the facts and values involved.
- 3) Each student will be given room to voice her or his own opinion. The teacher may ask each person to contribute at least one thought to each discussion.
- 4) Additional ground rules may be developed and enforced by the instructor.



Instructor's Academic Integrity Statement

Plagiarism and cheating: **Double Danger!**

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas. Whether the original source is public (e.g., a newspaper, book, journal article, the Web) or private (e.g., a classmate's paper), you need to indicate your indebtedness to it. Where you repeat the exact language of your source, you must treat the borrowed material as a quotation and place it within quotation marks. However, by merely changing a few words or the word order or by paraphrasing, you do NOT avoid plagiarism; you should still credit your source.

In the case of plagiarism or cheating, the instructor has the right to give the student a "zero" for the assignment and an additional zero for an equivalent assignment or exam. So, instead of sneaking by, you may get double trouble! He may also report your behavior to the appropriate offices of MCC as a violation of the Student code of conduct.

ChatGPT and other forms of Artificial Intelligence:

"The unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for classwork can be seen as violation of the College's General Student Conduct policy." **The only use of AI that is acceptable in this course is the use of a spell and grammar checker for reviewing your papers before you turn them in. All other uses will be considered plagiarism and dealt with appropriately.** Please use spell and grammar checkers to make your papers more readable and up to college writing standards, but be sure to check the results because these checkers still make many mistakes including confusing "there", "their" and "they're". You can also use human assistance (such as MCC Tutors and others) to help you with your writing mechanics, but the thoughts and analysis should all be yours.

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Late Work and Make Up Work Policies:

Part of the socialization of this course is to teach you to be a punctual worker. Thus **late work will be severely penalized, just as it would at a job.** So, plan ahead. Complete and submit your work on Brightspace before the last minute, just in case the computer crashes, the internet won't work, etc. Work is always accepted early! Be sure to keep track of deadlines by using the calendar on Brightspace. Each paper turned in late will be penalized 5% of its potential value for each business day it is late. Thus if it is worth 100 points and is due on Monday and you submit it on Wednesday (two days late), you will be penalized 10% (2 x 5%) – that is 10 points -- before I even look at it. 10% is a full letter grade lower – from a B+ to a C+. So, get your work in on time!

You are responsible for making sure all assignments get to me. On Brightspace in the Assignments area, you will see a notification in the completion column for each assignment you submit. If it states “not submitted” you need to resubmit it. Grading is not immediate, but in that same place you should see if the assignment has been graded and, if so, you'll see how to access your grade, the grading rubric and any comments I may have made.



Make Up Exams: Make-up tests will be granted only by the instructor's discretion and will be subject to the same late penalty, which means that you will lose 20 points on a 100-point test just for taking it 2 days late. If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to take an exam during the testing period due to an excuse that the instructor accepts, you may be able to make prior arrangements with the instructor to take the exam without the late penalty.

Updated 07/18/2023



ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

Accommodations/ADA Statement:

Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit www.mclennan.edu/disability.

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

disabilities@mclennan.edu 2542998122 Room
319, Student Services Center

Title IX:

We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the acting Title IX Coordinator at titleix@mclennan.edu or by calling, Dr. Claudette Jackson, (Accommodations/Title IX) at (254) 299-8465. MCC employees are mandatory reporters and must report incidents immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Individuals may also contact the MCC Police Department at (254) 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at (254) 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a

confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>. Go to McLennan's Title IX webpage at www.mclennan.edu/titleix/. It contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, or domestic violence.

Student Support/Resources:

MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at <http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/>

Academic Support and Tutoring is here to help students with all their course-related needs. Specializing in one-on-one tutoring, developing study skills, and effectively writing essays. Academic Support and Tutoring can be found in the Library and main floor of the Learning Commons. This service is available to students in person or through Zoom. You can contact the Academic Support and Tutoring team via Zoom or email (ast@mclennan.edu) by going to our website (<https://www.mclennan.edu/academic-support-and-tutoring/>).

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources or want to explore strategies for balancing life and school, we encourage you to contact either MCC CREW – Campus Resources Education Web by calling (254) 299-8561 or by emailing crew@mclennan.edu or a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing SuccessCoach@mclennan.edu. Both are located in the Completion Center located on the second floor of the Student Services Center (SSC) which is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff. To schedule an appointment, go to https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_07byXd7eB8iTqJg. Both the Completion Center and Paulanne's Pantry are located on the second floor of the Student Services Center (SSC).

MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:

Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to

<https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html>

to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found at

https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf.

MCC Academic Integrity Statement:

Go to www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating. The unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) for classwork can be a violation of the College's General Conduct Policy. Whether AI is authorized in a course and the parameters in which AI can be used in a course will be outlined by each instructor.

Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace:

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teachingandlearning/FacultyandStaffCommons/requirements.html> for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

Minimum Technical Skills:

Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

Backup Plan for Technology:

In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be notified via your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

Email Policy:

McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf>) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are

expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails. For more information about your student email account, go to www.mclennan.edu/studentemail.

Instructional Uses of Email:

Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with their students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

Email on Mobile Devices:

The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails. If you need assistance with set-up, you may email Helpdesk@mclennan.edu for help.

You can find help on the McLennan website about connecting your McLennan email account to your mobile device:

- [Email Setup for iPhones and iPads](#)
- [Email Setup for Androids](#)

Forwarding Emails:

You may forward emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may be lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

For more helpful information about technology at MCC, go to [MCC's Tech Support Cheat Sheet](#) or email helpdesk@mclennan.edu.

Disclaimer:

The resources and policies listed above are merely for informational purposes and are subject to change without notice or obligation. The College reserves the right to change policies and other requirements in compliance with State and Federal laws. The provisions of this document do not constitute a contract.