

## REQUEST FOR COURSES IN THE CORE CURRICULUM

Originating Department or College: Public Affairs and Social Research

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Course Number and Title: SOCI 1306: Contemporary Social Problems

Please attach in separate documents:

Completed Catalog Add/Change Form

Syllabus

List the student learning outcomes for the course (Statements of what students will know and/or be able to do as a result of taking this course. See appended hints for constructing these statements.)

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Analyze and evaluate sociological concepts and principles.
2. Articulate sociological thinking in their understanding of the objective and subjective realities of social issues and social problems in their community.
3. Identify the different bases of social inequality that link to social issues and social problems in their community.
4. Link numerical indicators of social problems across different social categories.
5. Analyze, deconstruct, and explain social issues and social problems in their community from a *structural functionalist, conflict, feminist, and symbolic interactionist* point of view.
6. Generate a well-written sociological analysis of a particular social issue or social problem in their community.
7. Produce a set of policy recommendations that will lead to the resolution of that particular social issue or social problem.

**Critical Thinking:** includes creating thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information (SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 5, 7).

**Communication Skills:** include effective written, oral, and visual communication. (SLOs: 2, 6 & 7)

**Empirical and Quantitative Skills:** includes the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions (SLO: 4)

**Social Responsibility:** includes intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities (SLOs: 2, 3, 6, & 7).

Component Area for which the course is being proposed (check one):

Communication

Mathematics

Language, Philosophy, & Culture

Creative Arts

Life & Physical Sciences

American History

Government/Political Science

Social & Behavioral Science

Component Area Option

Competency areas addressed by the course (refer to the appended chart for competencies that are required and optional in each component area):

Critical Thinking

Communication Skills

Written Communication

Oral Communication

Visual Communication

Empirical & Quantitative Skills

Teamwork

Personal Responsibility

Social Responsibility

Because we will be assessing student learning outcomes across multiple core courses, assessment assigned in your course must include assessment of core competencies. For each competency checked above, indicate the specific course assignment(s) which, when completed by students, will provide evidence of competency. Provide detailed information, such as copies of the paper or project assignment, copies of individual test items, etc. A single assignment may be used to provide data for multiple competencies.

**Critical Thinking:** Students will use critical thinking skills to apply sociological concepts, principles, and perspectives in describing, analyzing, and explaining the objective and the subjective realities of contemporary social problems through a final term paper. The assignment selected will be assessed using the University rubric on critical thinking.

**Communication Skills:** Students will write a research paper that will assess all four competencies (Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, and Social Responsibility). Students will identify, describe, and analyze a social problem in their community and devise ways to research and recommend possible solutions to that social problem. Students are further expected to use tables, graphs, and charts to analyze and formulate conclusions about the social problem they choose to investigate in their community. The paper should contain 2,500-3,000 words and the following format: *Margins 1"x1"x1"x1"; Font = Arial; Font size = 10/11*. Projects will be scored using a written communications rubric which includes the domains covering grammar, organization, and clarity.

**Empirical and Quantitative Skills:** Students will be required to interpret and analyze a variety of numerical indicators that address a wide variety of social problems across social categories such as age, gender, social class, religion, race and ethnicity. Tables, graphs, and charts that include this type of information will be required in the final term paper. The University rubric on Empirical and Quantitative Skills will be used to assess this objective.

**Social Responsibility:** In the final term paper, students must identify, describe, and analyze a social problem in their community, examine the cross-cultural impact of the problem on the community, and propose a solution that includes a description of the civic responsibility of students as members of their communities. The University rubric on social responsibility will be used to assess this core curriculum objective.

The following assignment will cover all competency areas in an essay: Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical & Quantitative Skills, and Social Responsibility.

**Assessment/Assignment:** Each student will submit a well-written, 3,000 word, double-spaced paper that provides a sociological analysis of a particular social issue or social problem in their community, and produce a set of policy recommendations which will lead to the resolution of a particular social issue or social problem. For example, students could examine obesity rates in Laredo and explain if they think any modifications are needed in the elementary, middle, and/or high school curriculums. They would be expected to include relevant research within the paper, as needed, to support their views.

Will the syllabus vary across multiple sections of the course?     Yes                                     No

We distinguish between the assessment assignment and course assignment. Each section of SOCI is comparable to each other although tests and writing assignments may vary in length and in focus areas of Contemporary Social Problems.

Inclusion in the core is contingent upon the course being offered and taught at least once every other academic year. Courses will be reviewed for renewal every five (5) years.

The department understands that instructors will be expected to provide student work and to participate in university-wide assessments of student work. This could include, but may not be limited to, designing instruments such as rubrics, and scoring work by students in this or other courses. In addition, instructors of core courses may be asked to include brief assessment activities in their courses.

Reviewed and approved by the Core Curriculum Committee on March 22, 2013.