Sociology 180: Social Problems  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Spring 2022  
Instructor: Meagan Kunitzer, M.A. | mkunitzer@huskers.unl.edu  
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30 pm, Wednesday 10:00-11:00 pm, Or by appointment  
Zoom Information | Meeting ID: 940 3596 4490|  
Link: https://unl.zoom.us/j/94035964490

“There is no such thing as doing nothing. There is no such thing as neutral or uninvolved. At every moment, social life involves all of us.” — Allan G. Johnson

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, and intergroup conflicts are examples of the types of issues examined.

Objectives & Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Knowledge: Define and illustrate core sociological concepts related to social problems. Demonstrate a global perspective of key social problems within the U.S. as well as the world.
2. Application: Show critical thinking in confronting theoretical arguments, research methodologies, and alternative viewpoints on social problems.
3. Analysis: Examine and analyze human behavior and social structure from a sociological perspective.
4. Evaluation: Summarize and critique key classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives of social problems and solutions to social problems.

Required Reading

Social Problems: Sociology in Action Interactive eBook  
By: Maxine P. Atkinson; Kathleen Odell Korgen; Mary Nell Trautner  
Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc  
Print ISBN: 9781071811115, 1071811118
Achievement-Centered Education (ACE)
The University of Nebraska—Lincoln seeks to provide quality education to all its students. To that end, it has designated certain classes as ACE certified. These classes provide and assess specific learning outcomes. As an ACE class, Social Problems will facilitate Learning Outcomes #6 (using knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior) and #9 (exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue). This class will:

• Provide opportunities to increase your knowledge of contemporary social problems, sociological perspectives on social problems, and prevalent patterns of inequality that affect and are affected by social problems.
• Examine social problems in Nebraska, the United States, and around the world.
• Focus on the relationship between social problems and gender, race, social class, religion, and family status.
• Facilitate these goals through lecture, readings, class discussion, in-class activities, and research on crime or drugs in the United States.

ACE learning outcomes in this class will be assessed by:
• Quizzes, weekly discussion posts, and doing sociology activities.

Course Etiquette, Grading, & Expectations

Zoom Office Hours
Office hours will be held only through zoom (unl.zoom.us) where you can log-in, and I will be available to answer questions. If these times do not work for your schedule, please email me to setup a different time to meet. Please refer to the top of the syllabus for the zoom link for the instructor.

Classroom Guidelines
This class will introduce you to a wide range of topics that many of you are not already familiar with. These topics will directly inform your performance on assignments and
quizzes, which make up most of your gradable material. As such, it is important to follow these guidelines whenever possible.

- Ask questions when you are curious or uncertain.
- Read the assigned materials and take notes for each module.
- Watch any videos associated with a module and take notes.
- Plan ahead for assignments and quizzes.
- Let me know if you have any issues or needs in a timely manner.
- Be respectful and courteous of others’ points of view.

Communication
The best way to reach me is through email. I am attentive to email and will try to respond to any emails within 24-48 hours. Emails that are sent on the weekend may not receive a response until Monday morning. When sending emails please be sure to include “SOC 180” in the subject line, describe any attachments in the body of the email, and sign-off with the name you use on discussion boards. If you do not hear from me within 48 hours, please follow-up with another email.

General Policies

Accessibility: The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 117 Louise Pound Hall; 402-472-3787

Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty as defined by the UNL Student Code of Conduct is a serious academic offense. Students caught cheating on an exam will receive a “0” on the assignment. The incident will be reported to UNL’s Student Affairs and to Dr. Jolene Smyth, the Chair of the Sociology Department. If you plagiarize a written assignment, I will first attempt to discuss the issue with you. If necessary, plagiarized assignments will receive a grade of “0”. A second offense will result in automatic failure of the entire course and will be reported to Student Affairs, which may choose to take additional disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to be familiar with UNL policies regarding academic dishonesty. An overview of what constitutes academic dishonesty can be found here: https://studentconduct.unl.edu/academic-integrity.

Non-Threatening Environment: At times, discussion boards may become controversial. While you may not agree with a topic, please respect the expressed opinions or beliefs. I expect you to show respect for others. This means thoughtfully listening to, or reading, the ideas/questions/experiences of others without judging them. Keeping an open
mind is the key! This creates a positive learning environment for everyone. Thoughtful debate is welcomed and encouraged. Use these times to learn about a new topic and broaden your understanding. This is my challenge to you, and it is my place to guide these discussions in a healthy direction to promote a positive learning environment. Harassment and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. Harassment of any kind is against university and classroom policy. The online environment does not excuse you from following these guidelines as you write and respond to discussion board posts. All faculty, staff and students are responsible for understanding and complying with harassment policies.

**Personal Emergencies:** In the event of a personal emergency please contact me and make the necessary arrangements. You remain responsible for your coursework. However, I am willing to make accommodations to allow for completion of the course, so long as it is within a reasonable time frame.

**Grading:** All assignments are due through Canvas. Should I make a mistake that is not related to content (e.g. incorrect grade entered in Canvas etc.) please let me know immediately. If you disagree with a grade in relation to the content of an assignment (e.g. you disagree with why you got a certain grade) you may submit a written argument which states your case for a different grade. You can expect all assignments to be graded no later than two weeks from their original due date. If assignments are not graded within that timeframe, I will communicate with the class accordingly.

**Late Assignments:** Late work will be docked by 10 percentage points each day the assignment is late (including weekends and holidays). Day is defined as a 24-hour period which begins when the assignment is due.

**Recording of Class Related Activity:** I invite all of you to join me in actively creating and contributing to a positive, productive, and respectful classroom culture. Each student contributes to an environment that shapes the learning process. Any work and/or communication that you are privy to as a member of this course should be treated as the intellectual property of the speaker/creator and is not to be shared outside the context of this course.

Students may not make or distribute screen captures, audio/video recordings of, or livestream, any class-related activity, including lectures and presentations, without express prior written consent from me or an approved accommodation from Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have (or think you may have) a disability such that you need to record or tape class-related activities, you should contact Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Failure to follow this policy on recording or
distributing class-related activities may subject you to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

**Final Grades**
There are 800 possible points available during this course. The assignments are not weighted. Approximately 20% of the available points come from your introductory post, weekly discussion board posts, and final reflection. The remaining 80% comes from quizzes and doing sociology activities, approximately 35% for quizzes and 45% for activities. Grades are determined by dividing the points earned by the points possible, converting to a percentage, and rounding to the nearest whole number. Numbers are rounded up when achieving .5-.9, and down for .1-.4. Letter grades are then assigned using the following table. I do not inflate grades, so do not ask.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro Post</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Weekly Quizzes</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doing Sociology Activities</td>
<td>225</td>
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<td>Final Reflection</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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An F is assigned for any grade less than 60
Assignment Formatting
All written assignments must be typed in Times New Roman, using 12-point font, use 1” margins, and should be double spaced unless specified otherwise. Written assignments over 1 page in length should include page numbers. When possible, please submit your assignments as a .doc or .docx file which includes your last name in the file name. All references and in-text citations should be in the American Psychological Association (APA) format. A guide to using the APA style can be found in Canvas.

Introductory Assignment (25 Points)
Although this class is solely online, I aim to construct an interactive and engaging community of students. Therefore, completing the introductory assignment that asks you for some information about yourself including name, major, year in school, and some fun facts to help the class get to know you better. The assignment is available in Canvas under Module 0. Due by the end of the day (11:59pm) on Sunday 1/20.

Discussion Boards (10 points per assigned week, 150 points total)
Each week students are required to participate in weekly discussions. Discussion boards are due Sunday’s at 11:59 pm. A question will be posed every week (starting in Week 1) and can be found in the Discussion Board section of our Canvas page. These items may relate to current events, materials from the class textbook, or a wide variety of thoughts/ideas/questions. DO NOT COPY posts – any plagiarized posts will receive a zero grade. Likewise, you will be required to submit a post before you can see other students’ replies. If you submit a blank post or a “.” to enter the discussion board, that post will be graded and receive a 0. Some discussion board assignments may require an additional activity prior to making your original post. Responses are encouraged, but not required.

Students should use full sentences, proper punctuation, correct spelling, and correct grammar. Proofread all posts. As this is an online course, this activity is meant to take the place of the typical classroom discussion. This is an opportunity to share your opinions, experiences, and understanding of the course material as well as academically engage with your classmates. Please cite page numbers from the text when discussing concepts from the class. This activity will be as interesting and engaging as we make it. Only respectful and appropriate dialogue should be used when contributing to the discussion boards - please refer to the section on creating a ‘non-threatening environment’ in this syllabus for more information about this expectation. A complete description of the requirements for each Discussion Board and the grading rubric are available on Canvas.

Weekly Quizzes (25 points each, 375 points total)
Each week you will take a quiz on the assigned materials for the week (the readings plus any supplemental materials introduced in the lectures). Each quiz will consist of 5 (1 point each) True/False questions, 10 (2 points each) multiple choice questions. You will have 15
minutes to complete the quiz. You may only take it once. You can use your notes and textbook. The weekly quizzes are due **Sundays by 11:59 p.m.**

**Doing Sociology Activities (75 points per activity, 225 points total)**
You will complete 3 hands-on activities designed to engage you in the learning process. More details can be found on Canvas and the course schedule. These assignments are worth 42% of your final grade (225 Points).

- **Activity 1: Exploring Social Class, Mobility, and Inequality**
  Due Week 5 – February 20th (Sunday) at 11:59 pm.

- **Activity 2: TBD**
  Due Week 11 – April 3rd (Sunday) at 11:59 pm.

- **Activity 3: TBD**
  Due Week 16 – May 13th (Friday) at 11:59 pm.

**Final Reflection (25 points total)**
During the last week of class, you will submit a final reflection. You will respond to questions where you reflect on your learning over the entire course. The final reflection is due **Friday May 13th at the end of the day (11:59 PM central).**

**University Policies & Resources**

**Students with Disability**
Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me for a confidential discussion of your individual needs for academic accommodation. It is UNL policy to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities (including mental health disabilities such as depression and anxiety) that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 117 Louise Pound Hall, (402) 472-3787 voice or TTY. More information on SSD can be found here: [http://www.unl.edu/ssd/](http://www.unl.edu/ssd/)

**Preferred Names**
Students whose legal name does not match their preferred name can use the “Profiles” section on MyRED to indicate their preferred name. Once changed on MyRED your preferred name will appear automatically on class rosters and Canvas. After changing your name on MyRED you may have a new NCard printed (at the NCard office in the Nebraska Union) for $15.

Your legal name will remain on your transcripts, tax documentation, scholarship/financial aid paperwork, and student consolidated bills. However, your preferred name may appear on the envelope of official paperwork. If someone other than yourself (like a parent)
receives official paperwork, changing your name on MyRED may alert them to your preferred name.

**The Writing Center**
Students who want to improve their writing are encouraged to consult with the UNL Writing Center. The Writing Center works with students at all levels, in all disciplines, at all stages of the writing process from brainstorming to final drafts. You can find more information about the Writing Center and schedule an appointment here: [https://www.unl.edu/writing/home](https://www.unl.edu/writing/home)

**The English as a Second Language (ESL) Support Lab**
Students who are learning English as a second language are encouraged to consult with the ESL Support Lab. The ESL Support Lab is a free service offered by Programs in English as a Second Language to all international students who need language-related assistance. At the lab, students can get help with understanding assigned projects, interpreting difficult reading passages, brainstorming ideas for projects or essays, revising assignments, incorporating sources and properly citing them in assignments, and improving grammar and vocabulary. You can find more information about the ESL Support Lab and schedule an appointment here: [https://www.unl.edu/piesl/esl-support-lab](https://www.unl.edu/piesl/esl-support-lab)

**Instructional Continuity Guidance**
As this is an online asynchronous class, this class will continue as planned even when in-person classes are canceled unless specified otherwise.

**Sociology Major or Minor**
If you are thinking of majoring or minoring in Sociology, Sarah Feit is the Sociology Academic Advisor. Telephone number 402-472-6893. Email address sfeit2@unl.edu.

**Student Wellness Resources**
UNL offers a variety of options to students to aid them in dealing with stress and adversity.

*Counseling and Psychological & Services (CAPS)* is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental, psychological, and emotional well-being when issues arise. CAPS can be reached 24/7 by calling 402-472-7450.

*Big Red Resilience & Well-Being (BRRWB)* provides one-on-one well-being coaching to any student who wants to enhance their well-being. Trained well-being coaches help students create and be grateful for positive experiences, practice resilience and self-compassion, and find support as they need it. BRRWB can be reached by calling 402-472-8770.
The Center for Advocacy, Response & Education (CARE) provides support for individuals who have experienced relationship violence or sexual assault. CARE Advocates are a confidential resource who can provide information about services and support decision-making. CARE can be reached by calling 402-472-3553. For after hours and weekend support, you can call Voices of Hope at 402-437-9302.

Husker Pantry provides one-stop locations to assist UNL students with free food and hygiene items, and to connect with university and community resources related to food and shelter insecurity. Any current student in need can utilize the Pantry's services. 
https://pantry.unl.edu/
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Lectures</th>
<th>Discussion Boards</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1/18-1/23 Understanding &amp; Solving Social Problems (Ch.1)</td>
<td>DB #1 Post (1/23)</td>
<td><strong>Intro Post (5/19)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Week 1 Quiz (5/23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1/24-1/30 Analyzing Economic Inequalities (Ch.2)</td>
<td>DB #2 Post (1/30)</td>
<td>Week 2 Quiz (5/30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1/31-2/6 Recognizing Racism &amp; Racial Inequalities (Ch.3)</td>
<td>DB #3 Post (2/6)</td>
<td>Week 3 Quiz (2/6)</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>2/7-2/13 Examining Gender Inequalities (Ch. 4)</td>
<td>DB #4 Post (2/13)</td>
<td>Week 4 Quiz (2/13)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>2/14-2/20 Focusing on Sex and Sexualities (Ch.5)</td>
<td>DB #5 Post (2/20)</td>
<td><strong>Week 5 Quiz (2/20)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Activity #1 2/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>2/21-2/27 Preparing for Aging Societies (Ch.6)</td>
<td>DB #6 (2/27)</td>
<td>Week 6 Quiz (2/27)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>2/28-3/6 Making Sense of Migration &amp; Immigration (Ch.7)</td>
<td>DB #7 Post (3/6)</td>
<td>Week 7 Quiz (3/6)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>3/7-3/13 Researching Environmental Problems (Ch.8)</td>
<td>DB #8 (3/13)</td>
<td>Week 8 Quiz (3/13)</td>
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<td>3/14-3/20</td>
<td>Spring Break!!</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>3/21-3/27</td>
<td>Contesting Crime (Ch.9)</td>
<td>DB #9 (3/27)</td>
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<td>3/28-4/3</td>
<td>Understanding War &amp; Terrorism (Ch.10)</td>
<td>DB #10 (4/3)</td>
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<td>4/4-4/10</td>
<td>Identifying Problems in the Criminal Justice System (Ch.11)</td>
<td>DB #11 (4/10)</td>
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<td>4/11-4/17</td>
<td>Discovering Problems in the Family (Ch. 12)</td>
<td>DB # 12 (4/17)</td>
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<td>4/18-4/24</td>
<td>Pursuing Equity Education (Ch.13)</td>
<td>DB # 13 (4/24)</td>
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<td>4/25-5/1</td>
<td>Prioritizing Health &amp; Health Care Inequalities (Ch.14)</td>
<td>DB # 14 (5/1)</td>
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<td><strong>16.</strong></td>
<td>5/2-5/8</td>
<td>Realizing the Power- &amp; Vulnerability – of Institutions (Ch. 15)</td>
<td>DB #15 (5/8)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>17.</strong></td>
<td>5/9-5/13</td>
<td>FINALS WEEK</td>
<td>None</td>
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