

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE

SOCI 201 Contemporary Social Problems

I. Basic Course Information

A. Course Number and Title: SOCI 201 Contemporary Social Problems

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring Year: 2020

D. Effective term: Fall 2020

E. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences, Social Work & Education

F. Semester Credit Hours: 3

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 3 Lecture: 3
 Laboratory: none

Out of class student work per week: 6 hours

H. Prerequisite: SOCI 101 Introduction to Sociology

I. Laboratory Fees: none

J. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair:
 Brandyn Heppard, brandyn.heppard@raritanval.edu

Divisional Dean at time of approval:

 Patrice Marks, Patrice.marks@raritanval.edu

II. Catalog Description

Prerequisite: SOCI 101 Introduction to Sociology

The goal of this course is twofold: to familiarize students with a broad array of social problems currently afflicting people locally and globally, and to provide an opportunity for students to evaluate and create strategies for improving social problems. Attention is given to topics such as: family-related problems, domestic violence, healthcare challenges in the U.S., discrimination against transgender people and various racial groups, mass incarceration, drug and alcohol abuse, human trafficking, poverty, climate change, and others.

III. Statement of Course Need

- A. Contemporary Social Problems allows students to evaluate current issues affecting people across the globe with sociological theories. The course uses critical thinking, information literacy, and ethical reasoning and action to examine current issues and create solutions. This course is an elective in the RVCC Social Sciences A.A. degree and Human Services / Pre-Social Work A.S. degree. This course transfers to the vast majority of NJ colleges.
- B. No lab component
- C. This course generally transfers as an elective in Sociology programs.
- D. This course generally transfers as an elective in Social Science programs.
- E. This course generally transfers as a free elective.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. It is a preferred elective in the Human Services / Pre-Social Work A.S. degree. It is an elective for the Social Sciences A.A. degree.
- C. To see course transferability for New Jersey colleges and universities, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; for other colleges and universities, go to the individual college website.

V. Outline of Course Content

- A. The Sociology of Social Problems
 - 1. What is a Social Problem?
 - 2. Using sociological theories to explain the presence of social problems
 - 3. Using sociological methods to study social problems
- B. The Bases of Inequality
 - 1. Macro-level and micro-level factors associated with inequality
 - 2. Age, social class, gender, race, and ethnicity
 - 3. Agents of socialization
 - 4. Systemic inequality
- C. Responses and Solutions
 - 1. Community Organizing
 - 2. Governmental Policy
 - 3. Individual Action

VI. General Educational and Course Learning Outcomes

A. General Educational Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- 1. Evaluate the causes and outcomes of current issues affecting people by using sociological theories and critical thinking. (GE- 5, 7, 8, ER, IL).
- 2. Analyze the impact of historical and systemic trends on contemporary society based on evidence (GE- 5, 7, 8, ER).

3. Determine the social and global contexts that link individual experiences to macro-level conditions (GE- 5, 8, ER).
4. Create evidence-based solutions to social and global problems (GE- 1, 5, 8, ER, IL)
5. Explain issues affecting people today through effective oral and written communication (GE – 1, 5)

B. Course Learning Outcomes

1. Discuss current social problems at local, national, and global levels.
2. Evaluate the causes and outcomes of current issues affecting people by using sociological theories and critical thinking
3. Create evidence-based solutions to social and global problems
4. Explain issues affecting people today through effective oral and written communication
5. Develop one's own sense of social responsibility by conducting a study that address a social problem of interest and/or completing and reflecting on a service learning assignment
6. Evaluate arguments from experts in the field (including guest speakers)

C. Assessment Instruments

- A. Research projects (LO- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- B. Presentations (LO- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- C. Essays (LO- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- D. Journals (LO- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- E. Exams (LO – 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)
- F. Service learning completion and reflection (LO – 5)

VII. Grade Determinants

- A. Research projects
- B. Presentations
- C. Essays
- D. Journals
- E. Exams
- F. Service learning completion and reflection

Given the goals and outcomes described above, the primary modes of teaching and learning may be used in the course:

- A. Lecture/discussion
- B. Small-group work
- C. Guest speakers
- D. Student oral presentations
- E. Simulation/role playing

- F. Student collaboration
- G. Instructional media platforms
- H. Service learning

VIII. Texts and Materials

Thomas J. Sullivan. 2016. *Introduction to Social Problems* 10th Edition. Pearson Education Inc. ISBN- 13: 9780205896462.

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

IX. Resources

- A. Library with research tools
- B. Photocopy machine
- C. Wi Fi
- D. Computer lab