FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL
Undergraduate Programs

Department Sociology

College Arts & Letters

*(To obtain a course number, contact **erudolph@fau.edu**)*

UUPC Approval 9-14-2026
UFS Approval _____
SCNS Submittal _____
Confirmed _____
Banner Posted _____
Catalog _____

Prefix SYA	*(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate)*	**Type of Course**	**Course Title**
Number 3331	**Lab Code**	Lecture	Contemporary Social Problems

Credits *(See Definition of a Credit Hour)*: 3

Effective Date *(TERM & YEAR)*: Spring 2027

Grading *(Select One Option)*: Regular ◉ Sat/UnSat ○

Course Description *(Syllabus must be attached; see Template and Guidelines)*

This course focuses on how social problems emerge, how social scientists study social problems, and how social problems are affected by public opinion and government policies. Topics addressed in this course may include contemporary social problems related to the economy, poverty, urbanization, crime and deviance, work and the workplace, health and health care, as well as various challenges faced by the elderly, women, and racial/ethnic minorities. While the focus of this course is social problems in the U.S., some issues will be analyzed from a global comparative perspective.

Prerequisites, with minimum grade* N/A

Corequisites N/A

Registration Controls *(Major, College, Level)* None

***Default minimum passing grade is D-.** **Prereqs., Coreqs. & Reg. Controls are enforced for all sections of course**

WAC/Gordon Rule Course

☐ **Yes** ☑ **No**

WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to proposal. See WAC Guidelines.

Intellectual Foundations Program (General Education) Requirement *(Select One Option)*

None

General Education criteria must be indicated in the syllabus and approval attached to the proposal. See Intellectual Foundations Guidelines.

Minimum qualifications to teach course

PhD in Sociology or related area

Faculty Contact/Email/Phone

W McConnell/wmcconnell@fau.edu/216 990 4398

List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course

N/A

Approved by	***Date***
Department Chair	8/26/26
College Curriculum Chair	08/30/2026
College Dean	08/31/2026
UUPC Chair Korey Sorge	9-14-2026
Undergraduate Studies Dean Dan Mecroff	9-14-2026
UFS President	
Provost	

Email this form and syllabus to mjenning@fau.edu seven business days before the UUPC meeting.



Instructor:
Office Location:
Office Hours (via Zoom):
Phone Number:
Email:
Video Conferencing Tool: Zoom (for office hours only)

Course Prerequisites:

None

Course Description:

This course focuses on how social problems emerge, how social scientists study social problems, and how social problems are affected by public opinion and government policies. Topics addressed in this course may include social problems related to the economy, poverty, urbanization, crime and deviance, work and the workplace, health and health care, as well as various challenges faced by the elderly, women, and racial/ethnic minorities. While the focus of this course is social problems in the U.S., select issues will be analyzed from a global comparative perspective.

Course Objectives:

After you have taken this course, you will be able to:
1. Describe various social problems, their extent, and human costs.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of how different social problems emerge, continue, and decline.
3. Assess and analyze (through discussion as well as through writing) various problems from a sociological perspective using theories discussed in class.
4. Conduct research regarding selected social problems using library databases and other resources.

Disclaimer

One of the objectives of this course is to facilitate critical thinking and debate around topics, theories, and concepts where disagreement is not only anticipated, but encouraged. The ability to think critically, express your ideas clearly, and respond to the professor and other students civilly are the keystones of academic experience. In this course, the professor will provide instruction in an objective manner and will remain open to a wide variety of viewpoints, so long as those viewpoints are evidence-based and presented in a respectful way. During class, the professor may take positions and make statements for the sole purpose of accomplishing an academic objective or enhancing the learning environment. Additionally, the adoption of class materials for this course does not imply an endorsement of the full content of those materials or the positions of the authors of those materials. Often the professor will provide materials as a point of departure for critical thinking and debate. Students should keep in mind that the ideas presented or discussed during class may not necessarily reflect the professor's personal beliefs or opinions on the subject matter.

My philosophy of teaching: "It is not my job to tell you what to think. It is my job to give you things to think about."

Instructional Method

This class is designated "Fully online." This means that there are no face-to-face meetings and all course materials, including assignments, recorded lectures, DB questions, paper guidelines, exam study guides, and exams are located on **Canvas**.

Sometimes my lectures will cover material not discussed in the textbook, but you are still responsible for this material.

University Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations, or participation in university-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a university-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

For fully online courses, the policy applies to missed coursework only since attendance is not part of the online courses.

Required Materials:

Textbook: Macionis, John, J. 2025. Social Problems. 9th Edition. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

Additional short readings may be required. They will be posted on **Canvas** and/or emailed to students directly.

Revel. The textbook comes with a learning software called Revel that will be used by students to complete graded section and chapter quizzes (see Course Requirements section below for details). The textbook (paper or electronic version) with **Revel access code** can be purchased from the FAU bookstore or directly from Pearson (see below).

IMPORTANT: The Revel Access Code comes with the electronic version of the textbook, so **the Access Code is really the only thing you need to purchase**. You can purchase the code via the **Access Pearson** hyperlink on Canvas (see directions below).

Directions for purchasing Revel access code and the textbook and creating Revel account:

#1 Go to **Canvas** and click on **Access Pearson** to purchase your Revel access code and textbook.

#2 If you HAVE had a Pearson account before, enter your old Username & Password, and Click "Sign In". If you have never had a Pearson account, click "Create an Account" and fill out all of the required information; Then Click "Create an Account" at the bottom of the page.

#4 You will now see your course listed in your REVEL account. Click on the picture of your course.

#5 Purchase a 12-month subscription from REVEL and if you want the loose-leaf text sent to you it is an additional $19.99 (the price may vary)

After completing the above, you'll have access into your REVEL eTextbook!

Helpful information:

Pearson recommends using the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, or Safari with this digital product.

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH REVEL? PLEASE USE THE WEB ADDRESS BELOW TO RECEIVE TECH SUPPORT

https://support.pearson.com/getsupport/s/contactsupport

1) Fill out all required fields, including which Pearson product they are using, type of issue encountered, and brief description
2) Fill out personal details and contact information

3) Once steps 1 and 2 are completed, students will be given a case number to reference, support phone number, and chat feature
4) Call support number and reference their case number, or use chat feature for virtual assistance

For other issues with your Pearson products **(lost username and password, refunds, extension of temporary access, speaking to someone at customer support, etc.)** click on the **Student Support Document** located on **Canvas.**

Evaluation Method:

1) **STUDENT INTRODUCTION AND SYLLABUS QUIZ (4% of course grade).** Students will be asked to post a short 2-5 minute long video introduction telling something about themselves (3 things that I like and anything else they want to share with the class) and take a short quiz on the content of the syllabus. **Four percent** of the course grade comes from a short student introduction and the syllabus quiz.

2) **EXAMS (51%).** There will be **three** exams in this course, each worth **17 percent** of your final grade. All exams are based on material discussed during online lectures, as well as the videos and readings from your textbooks and other sources. None of the exams is cumulative.

3) **WRITING ASSIGNMENT (12%).** A single writing assignment (4-5 page-long, double space). You will have **a choice** of writing a paper that will be due in the first half of the semester **or** writing a paper on a different topic that will be due in the second half of the semester (the guidelines for both papers are located on Canvas in the "Paper Assignment Guidelines" module. You are welcome to write both papers. If you complete both paper assignments, the paper with the higher grade will count towards the course grade. You must submit the paper assignment through the Assignments link in Canvas on or before the due date. The deadline for paper submission may be extended for students who provide documentation that they were unable to submit the assignment due to extraordinary circumstances (hospitalization, death in the family, etc.). **A 10 points penalty will be applied for each day the submission is past due.** Students who submit **AI-written work** will receive a score of **zero** and will not be allowed to make it up.

4) **DISCUSSION BOARD. (12%).** As part of the course assignments, you will be asked to post an original submission to the discussion board and reply to at least **two** other students' posts with a substantive response. There will be five DB this semester to choose from, however, only **Four** DB will count towards your grade. If you complete five DBs, the DB with the lowest grade will be dropped, and if you complete six DBs, the two DB with the lowest grades will be dropped. A substantive post adds value to the discussion by bringing new ideas, research, evidence, etc. to the conversation. You are required to consult at least one **external source** (a newspaper article, a journal article, a documentary, etc.) and list that source at the end of your post as reference in an ASA format. Full sentences, proper spelling, source citations in the body of the post, etc., are expected. Ensure that postings contain detailed response(s) to the question(s). Avoid unnecessary and/or lengthy quotations; do not plagiarize. The **minimal length** for the original post is **300 words and 100 words** for each response. Students who submit **AI-written work** will receive a score of zero and will not be allowed to make it up. All original posts for each module discussion board must be **submitted by 11:59pm, EST, on Friday. Responses to peers are due at 11:59pm, EST, on Sunday. Late discussion posts** will be accepted only under extraordinary circumstances (for example, prolonged and **documented** illness/hospitalization).

5) **REVEL QUIZZES. (10%)** Your textbook in this course comes with a software package called **Revel** that contains **sections and chapter quizzes**. You will have approximately one to two weeks to read each chapter assigned for this course and complete the quizzes associated with the chapter. You must complete the reading and the quizzes by the **deadline listed online**. Students who fail to complete any of the chapter quizzes due to extenuating and documented circumstances (hospitalization, death of a family member) will be given extension upon request. The due dates for revel quizzes are listed in **Canvas** (click on **Revel** link to access the **due dates** for each quiz)

6) **Research Proposal (8%).** Students will submit a brief 1-2-page (single space) proposal for a future research project that would have the rationale for pursuing the topic (scientific and/or social significance), a research question, two hypotheses with clearly identified independent and dependent variables, a preliminary literature review, and a proposed research method. Students should also include a rationale for using a specific sociological theory in their paper.

   Students whose proposals received low grades (7 or lower out of 10) will be required to submit a **Revised Research Proposal**. If the revised proposal's grade is higher than the grade for the original proposal, that grade will replace the grade of the original proposal.

   Detail guidelines of how to write a research proposal will be posted on Canvas.

7) **FREEBIE. (3%)** You will be automatically awarded **3 percent** of your grade for taking the course. You do not need to do anything to receive the "Freebie."

Missed Exams

If you know you must miss a test, you may take the exam at a pre-arranged time. Any student who fails to complete an exam will receive a grade of zero. Make-up exams are only given for **valid reasons** (documentation is required). Make-up exams must be taken within one week after the scheduled exam date (some exceptions may apply). Students who missed an exam will still be able to take a make-up exam, however, **20 points** penalty will be applied to the exam score.

Policy on Makeup Tests, Late Work, and Incompletes (if applicable)

Make up assignments (tests, quizzes, discussion board posts, papers) are allowed only for students who miss the deadline for any of these assignments due to valid reasons (hospitalization, university sponsored events, death in the family, etc.). Students must provide documentation to be allowed to make up an assignment. Students will not be penalized for absences due to participation in university-approved activities, including athletic or scholastics teams, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. Instructors will allow these students to make up missed work without any reduction in the student's final course grade. Reasonable accommodation will be made for students participating in religious observance. Grades of Incomplete ("I") are reserved for students who are passing a course but have not completed all the required work because of exceptional circumstances.

Special Course Requirements

None

Classroom Etiquette Policy (if applicable)

Use of electronic equipment by students during lectures is disruptive and distracting to other students. Therefore, the use of cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during lectures is strictly prohibited. If a student must make a phone call, the student must leave the classroom quietly. Use of laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices is prohibited except for typing lecture notes. Students registered with the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) may use electronic devices they need in the classroom upon submission of the SAS accommodation form.

Policy on the Recording of Lectures

Because of a new Florida Statute in 2021, the following model language is suggested for inclusion in course syllabi, at the discretion of individual faculty:
Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

Late Work Policy:

Some scheduled activity (in a category formally recognized by the University) may be a reason why you should be permitted to make up any work that you missed. This includes activities like jury duty, University-sponsored activities (athletics, Model UN, etc.), or religious observations. You know about this kind of activity in advance, so you must contact me in advance to ask for extensions on deadlines. You will need to document the activity, except for religious observance. You also will need to explain why you can't do the activity earlier or later in the week. You may also qualify for an extension of a deadline if some unexpected event makes it impossible for you to meet the deadline. The most common such event is a serious illness; the next most common is a death in the family or in your friendship group. (Please keep in mind that I may request documentation for any request for late submission of work without penalty.)

I will NOT offer extra credit work

Grading:

93% - 100% = A	77 – 79 = C+	60 – 62 = D-
90 – 92 = A-	73 – 76 = C	Below 60% = F
87 – 89 = B+	70 – 72 = C-	
83 – 86 = B	67 – 69 = D+	
80 – 82 = B-	63 – 66 = D	

Office Hours and Assistance:

I encourage you to come to my virtual office hours to discuss any problems, questions, or suggestions related to the class or to your performance. You must schedule an appointment via **Zoom** to meet with me. If you prefer to meet me in my office, please make an appointment. If you cannot make my office hours, please let me know and we can make an appointment at a different time. If you need to email me, in your email you must make sure you **include your name, the name of the class, and the class time** in order to receive a response. I will generally respond to emails within 24 hours during the week. Email responses will generally take longer during the weekends.

GTA Information

If a GTA is assigned to this course, the GTA's information (name, office hrs, etc.) will be posted on Canvas in the first week of the semester in the GTA INFORMATION folder.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally, and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. Caps provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau.edu/counseling/

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 203 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8585) —and follow all SAS procedures.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The University's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers resources that students may find helpful in improving their study skills and facilitating academic success. Their website is http://www.fau.edu/ctl I encourage you to visit this website and to make use of its many valuable resources, including especially "Tips for Success and Academic Resources" http://www.fau.edu/ctl/TipsForSuccessAndAcademicResourcesStudentResources.php

Code of Academic Integrity:

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university's mission to provide a high-quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other student. Academic integrity is also destructive of university community, which is grounded in the system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.

I expect all students to complete their work honestly and independently. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. Any failure to comply with the honor code may be the basis for a grade of F

in the course. For more information see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations available at http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf.

The FAU Code of Academic Integrity describes the expectations for students' ethical academic conduct and the procedures for charging a student with a violation of the Code. It also outlines the procedures for students to appeal such charges.

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:
(A) Cheating
i. The unauthorized use of notes, books, electronic devices or other study aids while taking an examination or working on an assignment.
ii. Providing unauthorized assistance to or receiving assistance from another student during an examination or while working on an assignment.
iii. Having someone take an exam or complete an assignment in one's place.
iv. Securing an exam, receiving an unauthorized copy of an exam or sharing a copy of an exam.
(B) Plagiarism
i. The presentation of words from any other source or another person as one's own without proper quotation and citation.
ii. Putting someone else's ideas or facts into your own words (paraphrasing) without proper citation.
iii. Turning in someone else's work as one's own, including the buying and selling of term papers or assignments.
(C) Other Forms of Dishonesty
i. Falsifying or inventing information, data or citations.
ii. Failing to comply with examination regulations or failing to obey the instructions of an examination proctor.
iii. Submitting the same paper or assignment, or part thereof, in more than one class without the written consent of both instructors.
iv. Any other form of academic cheating, plagiarism or dishonesty.

AI Language Specific to This Course:

AI - generated papers are prohibited. First noncompliance will result in a penalty of zero on the assignment. More than one violation of this policy will result in zero grade on the assignment and the student being reported to the department's chair.

Course Outline:

DB = Discussion Board Posts

Week	Dates	Topic
1	Jan.12 – Jan.18	Introduction or what will happen in this course? ☺ Ch.1 Studying Social Problems: Methods **Syllabus Quiz due Jan.18, Student Introduction due Jan.18**
2	Jan.19 – Jan.25	Ch.1 Studying Social Problems: Theory **DB 1 due Jan.25**

3	Jan.26 – Feb.1	Ch.2 Economic Inequality
4	Feb.2 – Feb.8	Ch.2 Economic Inequality **DB 2 due Feb.8**
5	Feb.9 – Feb.15	Ch.3 Problems Affecting Racial and Ethnic Minorities **Research Proposal due Feb.15**
6	Feb.16 – Feb.22	Ch.4 Problems Affecting Women **DB 3 due Feb.22**

Exam 1, Monday, Feb.29 (ch.1-3)

7	Feb.23 – Mar.1	Ch.5 Sexuality **Paper 1 Due Mar.1**
8	Mar.2 – Mar.6	Ch.6 Issues Associated with Aging Society **Revised Proposal due Mar.6**
9	**Mar.7 – Mar.13**	**Spring Break**
10	Mar.16 – Mar.22	Ch.7 Crime, Violence, and Criminal Justice **DB 4 due Mar.22**
11	Mar.23 – Mar.29	Ch.7 Crime, Violence, and Criminal Justice **DB 5 due Mar.29**
12	Mar.30 – Apr.5	Ch.11 Economy and Politics

Exam 2, Monday, Apr.6 (ch.4-7)

13	Apr.6 – Apr.12	Ch.12 Problems in Work and the Workplace **DB 6 Apr.12**
14	Apr.13 – Apr.19	Ch.14 Problems in Urban Life **Paper 2 due Apr.19**
15-16.	Apr.20 – Apr.27	Understanding Social Policy Issues

Final Exam May 4, Monday, (Ch.11, 12, 14)

Exams will be conducted online via the **Quizzes** link on Canvas. Students must complete a **Practice Test** prior to taking exams to test their computers/laptops' compatibility and connectivity.

Once you register for Revel, you will see the Due Dates for the Revel Chapter and Section Quizzes. (Click on the **Access Pearson** link in Canvas to register)

Important: you must complete each Revel assignment **before the due date** to receive full credit. The Revel software automatically applies **50% penalty** to assignments completed after the due date. Extension of the due date will be provided only for students with valid and documented reasons for missing the deadline (unexpected events such as death in the family or hospitalization). No extension will be granted for students participating in scheduled events (FAU sponsored athletic competition, military service) since students can plan accordingly and complete the assignments ahead of time.

* * *

The instructor reserves the right to adjust this syllabus as necessary. Students will be informed of any changes via email and Canvas announcements.