

Course Description

SYG2010 | Social Problems | 3.00 credits

This course is an analysis of the major contemporary and recurring social problems, emphasizing scientific search for variables involved and exploring alternative solutions.

Course Competencies

Competency 1: The student will explore the nature of social problems by:

1. Identifying how a social issue comes to be defined as a social problem
2. Contrasting the sociological perspectives on social problems: functionalism, conflict theory, and interactionism
3. Explaining how social policy is formulated
4. Describing the impact of sociological research on social policy

Competency 2: The student will examine health-related social problems and healthcare systems by:

1. Identifying the relationship between socioeconomic status and availability of medical care
2. Discussing specific social problems faced by minority groups
3. Analyzing issues surrounding HIV/AIDS crisis in the United States
4. Discussing problems relative to the treatment of mental illnesses in the United States
5. Assessing arguments regarding the efficacy of universal health insurance

Competency 3: The student will explore social problems resulting from substance abuse by:

1. Identifying the demographic and socioeconomic variables linked to alcohol abuse and addiction
2. Assessing the link between substance abuse and other high-risk behaviors
3. Describing the relationship between substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases
4. Analyzing the link between substance abuse and crime
5. Explaining social-policy implications of substance abuse issues

Competency 4: The student will examine crime and violence by:

1. Identifying and defining various types of crimes and violence, such as homicide, hate crimes, white-collar crimes, assault and robbery, rape, and family violence
2. Discussing the relationship between gender, age, "race," ethnicity, class, and crime
3. Assessing sociological explanations of crime and law-making
4. Describing social policy approaches in response to crimes and their effects on mass incarceration
5. Discussing social policy in regard to gun control, media violence, rehabilitation versus punishment

Competency 5: The student will be able to assess social problems of social stratification by:

1. Discussing the relationship between poverty and gender, age, and "race" and ethnicity
2. Describing historic and contemporary social policy approaches to address poverty
3. Analyzing the socioeconomic consequences of prejudice and discrimination
4. Evaluating policy approaches to institutional prejudice and discrimination in housing and occupation within the context of "race," ethnicity, gender, and social class in the U.S

Competency 6: The student will examine social problems issuing from gender and age inequality by:

1. Discussing traditional sex roles, gender identity, and changing expectations on families and individuals
2. Defining sexism in the workplace
3. Explaining issues associated with longevity including demographics, health care, and elder abuse etc.
4. Evaluating social-policy issues of gender and age, including housing, health care, retirement, Social Security, and the future of Medicare

Competency 7: The student will explore social problems related to the family by:

1. Discussing traditional sex roles, gender identity, and changing expectations on families and individuals
2. Defining sexism in the workplace
3. Explaining issues associated with longevity, including demographic shifts, health care, elder abuse, etc.
4. Evaluating social-policy issues of gender and age, including housing, health care, retirement, Social Security, and Medicare

Competency 8: The student will examine problems of education by:

1. Identifying criticisms of public education
2. Discussing the relationship between SES, "race," ethnicity, gender, and educational attainment
3. Identifying segregation's historical and contemporary consequences in U.S. public education
4. Explaining the social policy implications of the "back to basics" movement

Learning Outcomes:

- Solve problems using critical and creative thinking and scientific reasoning
- Demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures including global and historical perspectives
- Create strategies that can be used to fulfill personal, civic, and social responsibilities
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical thinking and its application to issues in society