

**SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY  
SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO**



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Course Title:** Contemporary Canadian Social Problems

**Code No.:** OEL824

**Semester:** Winter, Spring, Fall

**Program:** Police Foundations, Law and Security Administration

**Author:** Social Sciences Department

**Date:** April 2006 **Previous Outline Dated:** January 2001

**Approved:**

**Total Credits:** 3

**Prerequisite(s):** SOC120, PFP103, Introductory Sociology

**Length of Course:** 14 weeks **Total Credit Hours:** 48

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*School of Continuing Education, Contract Training and Hospitality (705) 759-2554, Ext, 2405.*

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, current social science paradigms and theories will be used as a framework for analysis of contemporary social issues relevant to students' future vocations in police services. Topics such as crime, violence, abuse, social stratification, ageism, and racism will be included. The course focus will be on how individual behaviours collectively create social problems.

## **II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

### **A. Learning Outcomes:**

1. Develop informed understanding of social trends, social change, and social problems and of implications for social personal responses.
2. Examine the relationship between the perception of a problem and the social responses given to it.
3. Explain how social issues are the result of the inter-relationship of many social forces like family dynamics, economics recession, and urban decay.
4. Analyze social issues such as suicide or pollution from the orientation of each of the major theoretical perspectives (structural-functionalist, social conflict, symbolic-interactionist) common to sociology.

### **B. Learning Outcomes and Elements of the Performance:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Develop informed understanding of social trends, social change, and social problems and of implications for social and personal responses.

#### **Potential Elements of the Performance:**

- Define what a social problem is.
  - Explain what is an analytical approach to a social problem.
  - Select a social issue to examine by adopting a sociological perspective.
2. Examine the relationship between the perception of a problem and the social responses given to it.

#### **Potential Elements of the Performance:**

- Describe the evolution of a social problem.
- Describe the influence of social stratification (class, gender, age, ethnicity) on social policies.
- Assess how social values influence the identification of social problems and societal responses.

3. Explain that social issues are the result of the inter-relationship of many social forces like family dynamics, economic recession, and urban decay.

#### **Potential Elements of the Performance:**

- Research and describe the historical and causal factors of current social problems, which affect Canadian society.
  - Define social institutions and explain the relationship of social institutions to social problems.
4. Analyze social issues such as suicide or pollution from the orientation of each of the major theoretical perspectives (structural-functional, social conflict, symbolic-interaction) common to sociology.

#### **Potential Elements of the Performance:**

- Define and differentiate the sociological theoretical perspectives.
- Prepare an analysis of a social problem using one or more theoretical perspectives.
- Evaluate how each sociological theoretical paradigm changes the research focus of social problems and the organization of social responses.

### **III. TOPICS:**

**Note:** These topics sometimes overlap several areas of skill development and are not necessarily intended to be explored in isolated learning units or in the order below:

1. Review of sociological theoretical paradigms.
2. Definition of a social problem.
3. Detailed exploration of social issues using the theoretical paradigms.

List of Topic Selections:

*(For Police Foundations and Law and Security Administration: Topics that are relevant to policing will be selected for in-class analysis. Students will be given an opportunity to research a topic of their choice.)*

Poverty:

- The urban poor.
- The working poor.
- Poverty and one-parent families.
- The homeless.
- The poor in the criminal justice system.
- Unemployment in one-industry community.

- Runaways

### Aging:

- Ageism as an ideology.
- Mandatory retirement and economic problems of the aged.
- Health problems faced by the aged.
- Increasing proportion of population is aged.
- Over-medication of the elderly.

### Deviance:

- Society's treatment of the mentally ill.
- Human rights of the mentally ill.
- De-institutionalization of the mentally ill.
- Medicare - who is treated?
- Illicit drug use (street drugs).
- Health maintenance programs for illicit drug abusers - an option for Canada.
- Suicide

### Gender and Family Issues:

- Gender roles in the mass media.
- Discrimination in the workplace.
- Stereotypes (impact on children).
- Social discrimination against homemakers.
- Working mother.
- Effects of feminist movement on the family.
- Changing family structures.

### Violence Against Women:

- Marital rape.
- Wife battery.

### Violence Against Children:

- Incest/sexual abuse.
- Child battery/abuse.
- Runaways
- Impact of Young Offenders Act.
- Abduction of children.

- Adoption/abortion.

### Minorities:

- Racial/ethnic minorities in education.
- Minority representation in politics.
- Native rights to self government.
- Attitudes/stereotypes toward natives.
- Law and racism.

### Global Issues:

- Impact of advanced technology on social life.
- Impact of Third World poverty on Canadian society.
- Environmental degradation.
- Threat of nuclear war.
- Depletion of primary resources.
- Population imbalance/urbanization
- A.I.D.S.

## **IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES / TEXTS / MATERIALS:**

1. Contemporary Canadian Social Issues, Niessen, Carmen. Montgomery, Edmund: Canada (1999) - *for Police Foundations and LASA only. There is no mandatory text for General Arts and Science.*
2. Additional Resource: Any introductory sociology text book.

## **V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM: MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTING**

Test 1	10% (end of Chapter 1)
Test 2	10% (Chapter 3 of textbook)
Final Test	25% (end of course, proctored)
Discussions	15%

- Participation in 75% or more of the discussions (6 marks)
- Quality of initial contribution (6 marks)
- Quality of secondary contribution (3 marks)

Initial contributions are your own postings, while secondary contributions are your thoughtful and insightful responses to other's postings.

Research Paper 40%

Minimum passing grade at Sault College is 60%. Your final grade will be assigned as a percentage. Your home college will determine the letter grade.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES**

Online content and discussions will be the foundation of the course. Information about sociological theories and concepts will be delivered, and a descriptive overview of many social issues will be presented. Students will be taught theoretical analysis of social issues. Each student will be required to prepare a sociological analysis of a social problem. Each student is also responsible for contributing to research and discussions on various issues.

### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

1. If you are a student with a disability please identify your needs to the tutor and/or the Centre for Students with Disabilities at your registering college.
  2. Students, it is your responsibility to retain course outlines for possible future use to support applications for transfer of credit to other educational institutions.
  3. Course outline amendments: The Professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.
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