



### **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 and 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, feminist) 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
- Review surveys to analyze attitudes or opinions regarding social issues
- 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

## II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE (Continued):

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, feminist) 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

### **III. TOPICS (continued):**

#### 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

### III. TOPICS (continued):

#### 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:* Society The Basics (Canadian Edition) by Macionis, J. J.; Beniot, C. M.; Janson, S. M.; Prentice Hall Canada (1999)

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

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Texts   | 60%         |
| 2. Written Assignments   |             |
| Social Analysis Paper  | 30%         |
| 3. Oral presentation of research of a contemporary Canadian social problem | 10%         |
| 4. <b>Total</b>  | <b>100%</b> |

Note: Failure to complete any graded component of the course will result in an "R" grade.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (GRADING METHOD)**

| <u>Grade</u>  | <u>Definition</u> | <u>Grade Point Equivalent</u> |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| A+ Consistently outstanding   | (90% - 100%)      | 4.00                          |
| A Outstanding achievement   | (80% - 89%)       | 3.75                          |
| B Consistently above average achievement  | (70% - 79%)       | 3.00                          |
| C Satisfactory or acceptable achievement in all areas subject to assessment   | (60% - 69%)       | 2.00                          |
| R Repeat - The student has not achieved the objectives of the course, and the course must be repeated                                       | (less than 60%)   | 0.00                          |
| CR Credit exemption   |                   |                               |
| X A temporary grade, limited to situations with extenuating circumstances, giving a student additional time to complete course requirements |                   |                               |

**NOTE:** Students may be assigned an "R" grade early in the course for unsatisfactory performance.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES**

Lecture, class discussions, group activities, and videotape presentations 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 group research and oral presentation of an issue.

**TIME FRAME**

Contemporary Social Problems PFP203 meets three periods per week for the semester. Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class activities and class discussion.

**VI. SPECIAL NOTES:**Special Needs

Students with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning disabilities) are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with the professor and/or contact the Special Needs Office.

Complementary Activities

To meet course objectives, students should expect to match each scheduled class hour with independent study.

Plagiarism

To plagiarise is to “take and use as one’s own (thoughts [ideas], writings, inventions, etc. of another); especially to take and use a passage, plot, etc. from the work of another writer” (Gage Canadian Dictionary, 1983, p. 861).

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in the “Statement of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities” (on-line Intranet for Sault College). Also, in order to collaborate on an assignment, students need prior permission from the professor.

Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or other such penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course.

In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Advanced Standing

Students who have completed an equivalent post-secondary course must bring relevant documents to the Coordinator, Language and Communication Department:

- A copy of course outline
- A copy of the transcript verifying successful completion of the equivalent course

Retention of Course Outlines

Students are responsible for retaining all course outlines for possible future use in gaining advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

Substitute course information is available at the Registrar’s office.

**VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

Students who have related employment-centered experience should see the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Coordinator.

