

Professor: Dr. Andrew R. Jones  
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Office: Social Science 221  
Hours: MWF 10 - 11 am, T Th 1-2 pm

### **PREREQUISITES**

- G. E. Foundation, including “C” or better in the English Composition requirement
- Junior-level class standing (60 units completed as of the end of this semester)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines current social problems from a sociological perspective. In particular, we will investigate the interrelatedness of issues such as globalization, the war on terror, the erosion of civil liberties, poverty, consumerism, the politics of fear, and the policies that pertain to them. Analysis of such problems will involve a combination of reading, writing, discussion and debate. This course meets the upper division writing skills requirement for graduation.

The Subcommittee on Writing Competency asks that students be informed of the criteria to be met by any course approved to meet the Upper Division Writing Requirement (UDWR):

1. Students must write a minimum of 5,000 words (translates into approximately 20 double spaced pages with 250 words per page) spread over at least five different papers.
2. One paper must be written in class.
3. Papers are evaluated on content and quality of writing (i.e., grammar).
4. Papers shall be returned with feedback to the student before the next paper is due so the student can benefit from the feedback.
5. The instructor shall hold conferences with individual students and/or small groups of students to discuss their writing with them.
6. To fulfill the UDWR, a student must receive a “C” grade or better in the course.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES AND ASSOCIATED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course provides you, the student, with the opportunity to:

1. develop a unique way of interpreting human behavior (i.e., a sociological perspective) to better understand and examine the world we live in;  
*SLO: Students will be able to make connections between personal, private, troubles and larger, social, issues and describe these connections in writing and through oral communication.*
2. develop/expand your skills of thinking critically, writing, listening, reading, evaluating, speaking, doing library research, and relating to others;  
*SLO: Students will indicate their responses to various social issues through class discussion, report on and critique the assigned readings through research for a written paper.*
2. examine several currently debated social issues (including, but not limited to, crime, social inequality, corporate power, health care,) from a sociological perspective (i.e., to develop the ability to place social problems in a broader social context);

*SLO: Students will summarize in discussion the main points from the readings on approximately 9 social issues and evaluate the arguments and evidence presented.*

4. enjoy a classroom environment that is interesting, supportive, structured, friendly, and cooperative.

## **METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

Each week we will concentrate on a particular grouping of issues. Some class time will be devoted to lecture to introduce the topic for each week and to cover elements of grammar and writing in the initial weeks, but as the course progresses, more class time should be taken up by discussion and debate.

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

This course has two required texts, listed below, and they are available in the Kennel Bookstore.

Hugh Gusterson and Catherine Besteman (2010). *The Insecure American*

James Crone (2011). *How Can We Solve Our Social Problems?* Second Edition

The Sociology Writing Group, UCLA (2008). *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers*

Blackboard (BB) – This class is web-enhanced, which means that all students should have access to a Blackboard account. Other additional required and/or supplemental reading materials, handouts, etc., will be posted on Blackboard and are listed in the Topic and Reading Schedule. This course assumes a working knowledge of Blackboard, the Internet, and computers. Please access the resources on the Blackboard site, if you lack these skills, prior to asking for assistance. “Learn by doing” should be your mantra as a college student.

## **Recommended materials**

*The American Heritage College Dictionary* (Houghton & Mifflin)

*Roget’s Thesaurus* (Harper & Row)

*English Simplified*, by Ellsworth & Higgins (Harper Collins)

*ASA Style Guide, 2nd edition* (American Sociological Association 1997)

<http://www.calstatela.edu/library/bi/rsalina/asa.styleguide.html>

*Hacker Writer’s Reference, 6<sup>th</sup> edition*, by Diana Hacker

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS**

There will be a series of course writings and writing skill exercises throughout the semester. The course is designed so that students are provided with the opportunities to develop writing skills around a variety of course assignments.

**Participation & Attendance:** Students must attend class regularly, be prepared for class participation and discussion (by reading assignments ahead of time), come to class on time and remain the entire class session.

A note on class participation/ discussion: Recognizing that learning takes place through interaction with each other in the classroom, come to class prepared to listen and dialogue on some very interesting and at times, controversial issues. Integrity of the classroom environment must be upheld. We agree to respect each other's views, despite differences in these views.

**Writing Exercises:** Throughout the semester, we will review the basic rules of written English (i.e., grammar). These sets of "English exercises" will cover aspects of written communication. These exercises are posted on Blackboard and are to be printed off, completed and turned in according to the due dates listed in the Lecture and Readings Schedule. There will be additional exercises available on Blackboard for anyone who requires additional improvement in writing skills.

**Qualifying Examination (Research Paper):** You will be required to write a research paper which will include the following: 1) formulation of a thesis, 2) conduct library research (a minimum of five references, of which at least 3 are academic references, not including course readings), 3) submit a two page proposal for your paper, 4) produce an outline of your paper, 5) write a six to 10 page paper – 4-8 pages for the total body of the paper; 1 page for the references; and 1 page reserved for information about a local, state, or federal agency that works with the social problem you address for a total of between 2,000 and 4,000 words. You will use the American Sociological Association (ASA) format for writing. Guidelines can be found at: <http://www.calstatela.edu/library/bi/rsalina/asa.styleguide.html> and in Chapter 3 of *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers*. An example paper and proposal are available on Blackboard for illustration purposes.

**Final – In Class Essay:** The final will consist of you writing an abstract for your research paper. You will have your final draft of the Qualifying Exam paper to use as an aid in helping you write the abstract.

### **Writing assignment guidelines for typed essays:**

1. Always identify by your first and last name, course number and date at the upper right hand corner of the front page for all typed assignments.
2. Use double spacing (Do NOT press "Return" twice between paragraphs - that's quadruple spacing).
3. Make sure you've included a reference list, if required.
4. Do not include a cover sheet or any form of binder for type-written papers.
5. Proofread your document thoroughly. Make sure to read through your document prior to submitting it. Ask yourself for each sentence, "Does this sentence make sense?"
6. For quotations: don't alter the material in direct citations unless you indicate that you have done so with ellipses and brackets. Use appropriate punctuation in the quotation. If you want to augment a quotation use ellipses . . . to cut material out of it and use brackets [ ] to insert material.
7. If you paraphrase you must include an in-text citation, even if you do not directly quote. Students can be accused of plagiarism if they do not cite the original author and/or if they try to pass other peoples' ideas off as their own. Try to get used to using citations and references in your writing as this is a crucial skill for success in college writing.

### **GRADING**

Grades will be based on the typical academic criteria of demonstrating understanding of the material through application and communication. Grades will be based on the standard university scale: 90% and above is an A; 80-89% is a B; etc.

You are responsible for keeping track of your grade progress in the course. Grades will NOT be posted on Blackboard and I will NOT respond to email inquiries regarding grade standing. The way to calculate your grade at any given point in the course is as follows: add up the total points you have received on graded work to date and divide that total by the total number of points possible. IF YOU DO NOT pick up graded papers at the time they are handed back, I will deduct half of the points earned for each class day the assignment is not picked up. This is done to encourage you to keep track of your own work and look over it to help you improve your communications skills and logistically to reduce the amount of paper I have to handle on a weekly basis.

A grade of C must be attained to pass this course.

The grade you receive is the grade you've earned. Contestation of a grade on either an individual assignment or for the course must be presented to your instructor in writing, with an argument explaining why you think the grade should be changed. NOTE: a re-examination of course work may result in further deduction of points, as a rigorous analysis may find flaws or mistakes in the course work that might have been missed in the initial grading. Do not assume that contesting a grade will result in gaining additional points or maintaining the existing grade.

## **CLASS POLICIES**

Since we all will have something to say, but may be saying vastly different, even contradictory things, the following guide-lines will be adhered to while in this course:

- Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on race, class, sex, sexual orientation, age, and physical differences exist.
- Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group, from the mass media and other sources.
- Assume that people in this class are doing the best they can do.
- Never demean, devalue, or in any way “put down” people for their experiences, back-grounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that you do so with respect.
- Don't interrupt. Listen before speaking.

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and intellectual growth. Therefore, the goals of the course will be met, in large part, by giving respect and consideration to all. This means that we will pay full attention to lecture, discussion, or workshop activity during class sessions. Reading and writing irrelevant material, talking about unrelated issues, sleeping, listening to head-sets, making or receiving phone calls, text-messaging on cell phones, web-surfing on a laptop, and any other distracting activities – including eating, gum popping, or chewing tobacco will not be tolerated. **THE USE OF WORD PROCESSING AND/OR TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES IN THIS CLASS IS PROHIBITED.** If you require the use of a laptop to take notes, you must provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to me, and then we will discuss the use of the device. Failure to comply with this policy for any of the above infractions will result in being removed from class for that day and a grade of zero for any assignment due for the week of the infraction.

I encourage you to speak, as class discussion is an effective way of exploring issues in this course, but please direct all your comments to the entire class. To help facilitate a safe and productive learning environment, we will adhere to the following policies:

- University policy on cheating and plagiarism will be observed (see the *Catalog* or the *Schedule of Courses* for description of policy).

- If you have any medical or learning disability that might affect your work in this course, it is your responsibility to inform Professor Jones and to contact the University's Service to Students with Disabilities in the Library at 278-2811 so that reasonable accommodations can be made.
- University policy on incomplete grades will be observed (see the *General Catalog* or the *Schedule of Courses* for description of policy).
- You are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were away. Being absent does not excuse you from anything that was discussed or due in class. When you have a serious and compelling medical condition or when a death or serious illness in the immediate family that prevents attending class, you are responsible for contacting Professor Jones as soon as possible after the missed class. You are also responsible for providing documentation of the reason for the absence upon returning to class.
- All assignments must be turned in on time and in paper copy form. Electronic transmission of papers will not be accepted, unless arrangement is made with Professor Jones. Late assignments will NOT be accepted - no exceptions. You are to have done the assignments well in advance of class time, which means you cannot wait until the last minute to do the work for this class.
- If you need to leave early, please let Professor Jones know at the beginning of class that you will be doing so. Please do not just get up and leave.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

(Refer to University Catalog or Schedule of Courses for more information.)

**Honor Code:** Members of the California State University, Fresno academic community adhere to principles of academic integrity and mutual respect while engaged in university work and related activities. You should:

- understand or seek clarification about expectations for academic integrity in this course
- neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on examinations or other course work that is used by the instructor as the basis of grading.
- take responsibility to monitor academic dishonesty in any form and to report it to the instructor or other appropriate official for action.

**Cheating and Plagiarism.** Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another student to do so. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating that consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of another by misrepresenting the material (i.e., their intellectual property) so used as one's own work? (University Catalog). In other words, do your own writing; when you use another person's ideas or words, reference the material. Possible penalties include but are not limited to failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and/or expulsion from the university. For more information on the University's policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Class Schedule (Policy/Legal Statements) or the University Catalog (University policies).

**Disabilities.** If you have any medical or learning disability that might affect your work in this course, it is your responsibility to inform me and contact the University's Service to Students with Disabilities in the Library at 278-2811 so that reasonable accommodations can be made.

**Computers.** At California State University, Fresno, computers and communications links to remote resources are recognized as being integral to the education and research experience. Every student is required to have his/her own computer or have other personal access to a workstation (including a modem and a printer) with all the recommended software. Computer labs on campus are available (e.g., SS202, PHS107).

**Copyright policy:** Copyright laws and fair use policies protect the rights of those who have produced the material. The copy in this course has been provided for private study, scholarship, or research. Other uses may require permission from the copyright holder. The user of this work is responsible for adhering to copyright law of the U.S. (Title 17, U.S. Code). To help you familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, the University encourages you to visit its copyright web page. Digital Campus course web sites contains material protected by copyrights held by the instructor,

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## **COURSE OUTLINE: TOPIC AND READINGS SCHEDULE**

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic Outline / Readings / Assignment</u>
Week 1		
	Aug. 22	Introduction to the course
	Aug. 24	Generating ideas for thesis statements/paper proposals Readings: <i>A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers</i> , Chs. 1 & 2
Week 2		<u>Writing and communicating ideas</u>
	Aug. 27	Writing skills, fallacies and propaganda Readings: Crone, Chs. 1 & 2
	Aug. 29	
	Aug. 31	
Week 3		<u>Poverty, economics</u>
	Sept. 3	NO CLASS (Labor Day, which is actually May 1 <sup>st</sup> )
	Sept. 5	Readings: Crone, Chs. 3&4; <i>Insecure American</i> , “Neoliberalism, or The Bureaucratization of the World”, “The Age of Wal-Mart”
	Sept. 7	<b>C 1-1 Narrowing a subject, C 2-1 Thesis statements assignments due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 4		<u>Crime, Criminal Justice System, Prison-Industrial Complex</u>
	Sept. 10	Readings: Crone, Ch. 8; <i>Insecure American</i> , “A Nation of Gated Communities”, “Republic of fear: The rise of Punitive Governance in America”
	Sept. 12	
	Sept. 14	<b>Thesis statement due</b>
Week 5		<u>Assault on Labor</u>
	Sept. 17	Readings: <i>Insecure American</i> , “Deindustrializing Chicago: A Daughter's story”; “Wage stagnation,” Tabb (Blackboard); “Self sourcing,” Gimenez (Blackboard); “New economy,” Yates (Blackboard)
	Sept. 19	
	Sept. 21	<b>E 2/4/5-1 Omissions and repetitions assignment due (Blackboard)</b>

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic Outline / Readings / Assignment</u>
Week 6		<u>Corporate Power</u>
	Sept. 24	Readings: “Corporate Welfare,” Bartlett and Steele (Blackboard); <i>Insecure American</i> , “Cultivating Insecurity: How Marketers Are Commercializing Childhood”, “Body and soul: Profits from Poverty”
	Sept. 26	
	Sept. 28	<b>Qualifying exam proposal due</b>
Week 7		<u>Healthcare</u>
	Oct. 1	Readings: Crone, Ch. 10; “Health Inequality,” Deaton (Blackboard); Multinational corporations...health care,” Jasso-Aguilar (Blackboard)
	Oct. 3	
	Oct. 5	
		<b>S1-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 8		<u>Race and racism</u>
	Oct. 8	Readings: Crone, Ch. 5; <i>Insecure American</i> , “Racism, risk, and the new Color of Dirty Jobs”, “Walling out Immigrants”
	Oct. 10	
	Oct. 12	
		<b>S2-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 9		<u>Food, hunger, population</u>
	Oct. 15	Readings: Crone, Ch. 12; “Who is threatening our dinner table,” Yoon (Blackboard)
	Oct. 17	
	Oct. 19	
		<b>W5-4 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 10		<u>Education</u>
	Oct. 22	
	Oct. 24	Readings: Crone, Ch. 7
	Oct. 26	
		<b>Qualifying exam outline due</b>
Week 11		<u>Media</u>
	Oct. 29	Readings: “Journalism, democracy and class struggle,” McChesney (Blackboard)
	Oct. 31	
	Nov. 2	
		<b>S5-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 12		<u>Warfare</u>
	Nov. 5	Readings: <i>Insecure American</i> , “Warmaking as the American Way of life”, “Compounding Insecurity: What the neocon Core reveals about America today”
	Nov. 7	
	Nov. 9	
		<b>S3-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic Outline / Readings / Assignment</u>
Week 13		<u>Environmental impacts</u>
	Nov. 12	NO CLASS (Veteran's Day observed)
	Nov. 14	Readings: Crone, Ch. 13; "Limits of the Earth," Korten (Blackboard); "Environmental change and disease," Wilson (Blackboard)
	Nov. 16	<b>S6-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 14		<u>Environmental impacts</u> (continued)
	Nov. 19	<b>S3-2 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
	Nov. 21	NO CLASS (Thanksgiving recess)
	Nov. 23	NO CLASS (Thanksgiving recess)
Week 15		<u>Convergence</u>
	Nov. 26	Readings: "The challenge of ... substantive equality," Meszaros (Blackboard); "Challenge of environmental justice," Middendorf
	Nov. 28	
	Nov. 30	<b>W2-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 16		<u>Solving our problems</u>
	Dec. 3	Readings: Crone, Ch. 14; "The civil society sector," Salamon (Blackboard)
	Dec. 5	
	Dec. 7	<b>W4-1 assignment due (Blackboard)</b>
Week 17		<u>Active citizenship</u>
	Dec. 10	
	Dec. 12	Last day of instruction
	Dec. 13	Faculty Consultation Day: hours TBA
	Dec. 14	Faculty Consultation Day: hours TBA
Final Exam		Monday, Dec. 17 8:45-10:45am <b>In-class Abstract writing assignment</b> <b>Q Exam Research Paper due</b>

A FINAL NOTE: This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. You are responsible for knowing any minor changes I make in the Lecture and Reading Schedule. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were absent and acquire missed lecture notes from a classmate. Thus, as stated before, class attendance is critical to your successful completion of the course and to your overall understanding of the content of the course.