



EXTENDED CAMPUS

COLLEGE of PROFESSIONAL
and CONTINUING STUDIES

HR 5013-223: Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Description:

American society is undergoing rapid and significant changes. Some of these produce stressful conditions for individuals, groups, and institutions and set the stage for human relations problems.

This course is designed to expose students to an in-depth, scholarly, objective, and systematic analysis of some of the major human relations problems faced by society. It concentrates on the areas of social justice and inequality (class, race and gender), intra-personal and interpersonal tension (individual stress, personal relations in groups, and violence), and inter-group tension (multicultural and multinational). Major change strategies are identified, analyzed, and assessed relative to past and future effectiveness. Contextual, demographic, and statistical data are integrated throughout to inform the discussion and facilitate understanding.

A wide variety of instructional approaches and student participation will be employed throughout the course, to include readings, writing, lecture, film, web-based reviews, in-class exercises, small-group and large-group discussions, and oral presentations.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: March 24 – 29, 2020
Location: Building 2775, Rooms 10 and 11. Kapaun Air Station on Vogelweh Air Base.
Hours: Tuesday - Friday 6:00-9:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: February 24, 2020

Site Director:

Email: apramstein@ou.edu. Phone: DSN 480-6807, Civilian 06371-47-6807.

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: T.H. Lee Williams, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: University of Oklahoma
Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost
104 Evans Hall,
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 823-0315
Email Address: lwilliams@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via email to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:

Student materials are available at the OU Bookstore Website at <https://ou.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php>. There is no longer a physical bookstore, the store will remain, but textbooks will not be stocked. The website has book selling, renting, buying, returning, and order tracking capabilities. If you need help with an order, or if you have any questions contact the toll-free phone at 1-(855)-790-6637, agents are available from 9a – 5p (EST) Monday – Friday. For more

information or questions about textbooks, feel free to contact apsyllabi@ou.edu. Text prices are available online

1. Kornblum, W., Seccombe, K.T., & Julian, J. (2017). *Social Problems* (15th ed). Old Tappan, NJ:Pearson. ISBN 9780133974584
2. McNamee, S.J (2018). *The Meritocracy Myth* (4th Edition). Rowman & Littlefield, ISBN-10: 1538103400.
3. Materials posted on the OU Canvas learning management system: Access Canvas at <https://oklahoma.instructure.com/>, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Course Objectives:

This course provides students with the means to understand the nature and extent of social problems in American society and the world. By learning the interrelationships between social problems and the organization of society, students will be able to understand the essence of current social problems and therefore effectively deal with the various social issues as informed citizens and change agents. We will consider the topics through the three primary perspectives of sociology – functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism, thereby giving you a framework within which to study social problems.

By completing this course, you should be able to:

- Identify structural conditions and historical contexts that contribute to societal problems
- Critically analyze the major issues, problems, and challenges of society
- Understand how race, class, and gender impact perception of social problems
- Encourage alternative and critical analysis and understanding of human relations problems
- Analyze a problem using a particular conceptualization in terms of social, political, and economic inequalities, inter- and intra-personal problems, and social dynamics and change.

Course Outline:

The course will start with a review of the McNamee text and then follow the organizational framework of the primary Kornblum text, in which the first chapters focus on relatively individual behaviors, the middle chapters focus on inequality and discrimination, and the later chapters focus on problems common to many societies.

The topics covered will include:

- The Meritocracy Myth
- Health and Healthcare;
- Mental Illness and Treatment;
- Alcohol and Other Drugs;
- Crime and Violence;
- Poverty Amid Affluence;
- Racism,
- Prejudice and Discrimination;
- Gender and Sexuality;
- Aging Society;
- Changing Family;
- Education;
- Work and the Economy;
- Population and Immigration;
- Technology and the Environment; and,
- War and Global Security.

For each topic there will be a short review and elaboration of the text (so it is very important that you have read and considered the entire text before the classes start), but the majority of the class will involve large- and small-group discussions of the text and additional information (online, video and textual).

There will be three primary areas of preparation and activity:

- **Prior to the course** you are expected to read the course texts and complete a set of short-essay questions based on the texts. This will prepare you with the content and context for the class sessions where the topics will be reviewed and discussed in greater detail and additional information provided to extend the understanding. Selected (and limited) additional readings taken from current national and world news feeds will be posted to Canvas before class to provide an up-to-date context for class discussions.
- **During the class sessions** you are expected to participate fully in the discussions, large- and small-group activities, and to demonstrate the attributes for a scholarly discourse, i.e. expressing your views clearly and succinctly based on fact not opinion, listening to and considering the input from other class members respectfully, to disagree and challenge ideas but not disparage the person(s) expressing the ideas.
- **Prepare a White Paper** to explore in greater depth a current social problem of your choice. The topic for the paper will be chosen before the end of the class week, and will be completed two weeks after the last class.

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

The assignments and assessment will follow the course outline – pre-class readings and essays, in-class participation, and post-class White Paper addressing a chosen topic.

Essay Questions. Due one week before the first class.

Write a two page, double spaced essay for each of the following topics. The content should be fact, not opinion. You are expected to draw on material from the text as well as outside sources as needed. Use APA style for your references and citation.

1. Explain what is meant by a social problem and describe the three primary perspectives used to study one.
2. What social and cultural factors can be used to explain prejudice and discrimination?
3. Describe how race, ethnicity, social class, and gender affect access to health care in the United States.
4. Discuss the pros and cons of free trade versus protectionism as they impact the US workforce.
5. Discuss differences in educational attainment among black, hispanic, and white students, noting reasons for the differences.
6. Discuss the history of immigration to the United States. What are some of the recent trends?
7. Discuss the relationships between drug use and crime and violence.
8. Describe the dependent poor and identify some of the most pervasive myths that are used to describe them. What do you think can be done to break down these misconceptions?
9. Discuss retirement as a social problem. If the working age limit is extended, how would that affect younger workers?
10. Discuss why schools are difficult to reform.

Participation

Learning is enhanced by active participation in the class discussions and activities. You are expected to participate fully in all course activities, including:

- Preparation for class by reading all course materials beforehand
- Active participation in class discussions and group activities
- No cross-talking
- Punctual and consistent attendance

Social Problem White Paper. Due two weeks after the last class.

Identify a social problem and research its impact on the United States and/or abroad. Prepare a 12 page, double spaced, White Paper following APA guidelines. You must use citations from the literature to support the assertions made in the paper. **20 references minimum.**

1. Identify and describe a current social problem (2 pages)

- a. Incidence and prevalence
 - b. Brief overview of historical trends and key developments
2. Illuminate known factors known to cause or worsen the problem. (Factor Analysis) (3 pages)
 - a. Identify intractable factors that have influenced the development of the social problem
 - i. Social factors (detail 3 factors minimum)
 - ii. Political factors (detail 3 factors minimum)
 - iii. Economic factors (detail 3 factors minimum)
3. Identify and describe who is affected and how. (Systems Analysis) (3 pages)
 - a. Individuals and Families
 - b. Groups and Communities – Overview any special populations impacted by the problem
 - c. Institutions
4. Describe 3 interventions meant to address this social problem. (2 pages)
 - a. Assess their effectiveness: be sure to support your analysis with empirical support
5. Describe 3 social policies that exist to address the problem. (2 pages)
 - a. Assess their effectiveness; be sure to support your analysis with empirical support.

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-70; D=69-60; F= <60

Assignment	Due Dates	Percent of Grade
Essay Questions	March 24, 2020 , (first day of class), submitted in Canvas	40%
Participation	March 29, 2020 (last day of class)	20%
Social Problem White Paper	April, 12, 2020 (two weeks after last class) submitted in Canvas	40%

Grading will be based on the following definitions:

A = Student excels in completing the requirement – has gone substantially above and beyond the basic requirements to show an outstanding level of competence and effort.

B = Student demonstrates very good performance (i.e. satisfactory competence and effort at a graduate level)

C = Student performs just at or below the minimally acceptable level of required competence and effort (less than expected at a graduate level)

D/F = Student performs substantially below minimally acceptable standards of competence and effort, completes unacceptable work, or does not complete the assignment).

Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution's policy regarding "I" (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any "I" (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on "financial aid probation." If the "I" grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student's Financial Aid may be suspended making the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc...in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at <http://studentconduct.ou.edu/>

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html>.

Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at smo@ou.edu or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615 -0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office's website at <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo.html>

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: <http://www.goou.ou.edu/>

INSTRUCTOR VITA

T. H. Lee Williams

Education

- B.Sc (Honors), Mathematics and Physics, University of Bristol, 1972
- PhD, Geography, University of Bristol 1977

Current and Recent Positions

- Graduate Dean Emeritus, University of Oklahoma, 2016 –
- Regents Professor, University of Oklahoma, 1999 –
- Graduate Dean, University of Oklahoma, 1999-2016
- Vice-President for Research, University of Oklahoma, 1999-2009
- Associate Professor and Professor of Geography, University of Oklahoma, 1986-
- Director of Science and Technology Research, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 1993-1999

Advanced Programs Courses

- HR 5013 Current Problems in Human Relations
- HR 5023 Research in Human Relations

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

- Higher Education Administration
- The Diversity of the Graduate Experience
- Interdisciplinarity
- Internationalism in Higher Education

Representative Publications and Presentations

- “Graduate Education in the US – What, Why, When, Where and How”, 2016. Presentations given in 15 locations in Peru and Colombia in collaboration with Education USA (US Department of State) and local universities and English language centers.
- Rodgers, J.L., and Williams, T.H.L, “Delivering an Organizational Leadership PhD Program at a Distance: University of Oklahoma”. In J.P. Pappas and J. Jerman (eds.), *Meeting Adult Learner Needs Through the Nontraditional Doctoral Degree*. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, no. 129. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.