HR 5013-495: Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Description:
Over the course of the semester, we will review and discuss numerous current problems relevant to human relations (including both a domestic as well as an international focus). We will examine each topic in order to illuminate the complexity and contradictions inherent in each issue. In addition, we will jointly review a book, Nickel & Dimed, which is intended to provide you with applied insight into some of the topics that we will be covering.

Course Dates:
- May 1 – August 31, 2019
- Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: April 2, 2019

Site Director:
This is a three-credit hour online course. Please see your local Site Director or email our online site coordinator at aponline@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
- Course Professor: Shannon Bert, Ph.D.
- Mailing Address: Department of Human Relations
  601 Elm Ave
  PHSC 706
  Norman, OK 73019
- Fax Number: (405) 209-2555
- E-mail Address: bert@ou.edu
- Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 – 12:30 PM CST
- Professor availability: The professor will be available via email to students during the above listed Virtual Office Hours and other methods by arrangement.

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.

4. Materials posted on the Canvas system: Access Canvas at https://canvas.ou.edu, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. If you require assistance with Canvas, please click on the Help icon. You can search the Canvas guides, chat with Canvas support, or contact OU IT.

You can find an excellent resource on APA style and general academic writing at Purdue University’s Owl website located at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

OU Email:
All official correspondence from instructors will be sent only to students’ ou.edu address.

Online Orientation:
The College of Arts and Sciences offers an online orientation for students who are enrolled in online or blended courses. The purpose of the orientation is to ensure that students are well prepared both technically and practically to take online courses. The orientation can be found on their website at: http://www.ou.edu/content/cas/online/student-online-orientation.html

The College of Arts and Sciences Online and Academic Technology Services office is here to assist you with any questions, problems, or concerns you may have. For assistance visit their website at http://www.ou.edu/content/cas/online/student-information.html or contact them by telephone at: (405) 325-5854 or email: casonline@ou.edu

Course Objectives:
The goal of this course will be to familiarize you with some of the complex social issues that impact the human experience and that have implications for human relations. We will be examining the ways in which the larger social context impacts individuals’ experiences, and vice versa. Finally, we will be analyzing the multiple dimensions that are of significance to individuals’ and communities’ experiences of these current problems. These include the importance of factors such as race, gender, class, culture, nation of origin, popular culture, etc. It is expected that by the end of the course you will not only be familiar with some of the issues impacting individual and social health and wellbeing, but that you will also be able to provide a thoughtful analysis of these issues.

Course Outline:
Over the course of the semester you will be expected to complete all assigned reading in a timely fashion. You will additionally be expected to participate in class discussions using the discussion forum on Canvas, and you will complete reflection papers, a book review, and a final paper. The course will be divided into modules, each with its own participation assignments. In addition, you will be expected to complete two major assignments – a two-part book review and a final paper.

Checking Canvas:
Regular updates and relevant information regarding the course will be posted to the “Announcements” page on Canvas. This will include module-specific information and updates. In order to ensure that you do not miss any new information of relevance to the course, you will be responsible for checking the “Announcements” page at least once each week. Additional information, links, and documentation will be posted on the “Modules” tab. Finally, all assignments are due in the relevant submission folders.

Assignments, Grading, and Due Dates:
All communication for this course will take place via Canvas.

Participation assignments:
Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to complete numerous participation assignments. These assignments will ensure that you are staying up-to-date on your reading and will allow you interact with the material. Given that this is an online course, these participation assignments are an essential aspect of the class and will provide you with an opportunity to communicate both with the instructor as
Participation assignments will consist of discussion forum posts and reflection papers.

During weeks that discussion forum posts are due, you will be expected to make a posting to the relevant forum on Canvas. A framing question related to the material to be covered will be posted. You will be expected to respond to this question as well as to at least one of your classmates. Thus, your first post should be a response to the posed question, while your second post should be a respectful and insightful response to one of your classmates. The discussion forum will remain open for one week. Please see below for the relevant due dates. You will receive a grade out of 10 for each discussion post you make. You will receive a 0 for any unmade postings, and all late postings will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

During weeks that reaction papers are due, you will be expected to prepare a brief paper in response to the assigned material. Your reaction papers should be typed using 12-pt font and standard margins and should be two to three pages long. Your paper should be written as you would any other academic paper and should be proofread and spell and grammar checked. You should consider the goal of the chapter author(s) and your reactions to their statements (do you agree or disagree and why?). You should also consider whether the author(s) changed the way you think about the topic, whether you learned something new from the article, how it fits with the rest of what we are learning, etc. The more thorough and thoughtful your paper is, the higher your grade will be. Reaction papers will receive a grade out of 10. Late papers will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

At the end of the semester, your two lowest participation grades will be dropped.

Book review:

In addition to the weekly readings, you are expected to complete a book review of Nickel and Dimed. This review will have two components. First, you are expected to participate in a class discussion regarding the book. The relevant discussion forum on Canvas will remain open for one week. During this time, you will be responsible for posting your reactions to the assigned text (in response to a provided framing question). In addition, you are expected to respond to at least two postings made by your classmates. Accordingly, you are expected to make a minimum of three postings. Please see below for the relevant due dates.

Your first posting should reflect your reactions to the assigned text. You should comment on the text, including your thoughts on how it fits in with what we are learning in class. You should also provide your own reactions to the author’s experiences and comments. Finally, your responses to your classmates should include respectful agreement or disagreement with them or comments on their reflections. You will receive a score out of 10 for each posting you make, giving you a total final score out of 30 for each discussion topic. Thoughtful postings that reflect independent and critical thought will receive the highest scores. You will receive a 0 for any unmade postings, and all late postings will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

You will additionally be expected to complete a written review of the text. Your book review should be at least five double-spaced pages in length, should conform to conventional formatting instructions, and should follow correct APA formatting guidelines. You are not required to use outside sources in your review. Rather, I am interested in your perspective. However, if you do include outside sources, these should be cited appropriately.

In preparing your review I would like for you to provide a critical analysis of the assigned text. I would like you to evaluate the ways in which it relates to the concepts that we have covered in class while providing your personal reflections on the author and her experiences. This will be your opportunity to respond to the author. Your book review papers will receive a grade out of 100, with the most thorough and thoughtful reviews receiving the highest grades. Late reviews will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day that the paper is late.

Additional instructions will be posted on Canvas closer to the time that the review is due.

Final papers:

You will need to submit a final paper discussing a current problem of your choice (you are responsible for identifying an issue that you consider to be a current problem for human relations). You may select an
issue we covered in class or you may select an entirely new topic (e.g., teenage drug use, urban homelessness, women’s mental health, the school experience of immigrant children, etc.). It is highly recommended that you select an aspect of a problem to discuss; this will make your paper more manageable (e.g., rather than looking just at drug use in general, look at teenage drug use or discuss urban homelessness, etc.) You will need to submit your topic to me for approval by the designated date and time. **If you do not submit a topic on time, 10 points will automatically be deducted from your final paper grade.**

Your paper should include an overview of the problem that you have selected. You should explain the various dimensions of the problem (e.g., the ways that race, class, gender, culture, etc. interact when considering this problem) and the reasons why you have selected it as a current problem for human relations. In addition, you should provide an analysis of some of the ways in which the problem can be addressed (what has already been done, why has this worked or not worked, what do you think should be done to address the problem and why, etc.). You need to use at least **seven** sources for your paper, of which no more than **two** may be reports published by governmental, non-governmental, and/or non-profit organizations. The remainder of your sources needs to be scholarly books and/or journal articles. Only **one** of these may be a chapter we covered in class. Your paper should be approximately seven to ten pages long and should be typed, double-spaced, and should use conventional margins. Finally, your paper needs to conform to APA formatting guidelines.

Your paper will receive a grade out of 100. **Late papers will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day the paper is late.** Final grades will be assessed in the following manner: 10 points for stylistic considerations (correct use of APA format, font, margins, page length, etc.); 60 points for content (the thoroughness of your discussion of the problem you selected, the completeness of your analysis of potential solutions to the problem, etc.); 30 points for critical thinking (the degree to which you provide a thoughtful analysis of the dimensions of the problem, the thoughtfulness of your discussion of potential solutions to the problem, etc.)

More details regarding your final papers will be posted to Canvas closer to the due date.

**Grading:**

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 60%+. Grades will be weighted in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Course Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review discussion</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**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.

**Policy for Late Work:**

Please contact the professor regarding his/her policy for late work

**Attendance Policy:**

In addition to interaction via Canvas and email contact, students are required to contact the instructor via email or telephone **before** the beginning of the course term for an initial briefing. Although physical class meetings are not part of this course, participation in all interactive, learning activities is required.

Student assignments and student/instructor communications will be conducted via Canvas, although students may contact the instructor via telephone, postal mail, email, or fax as needed.
Incomplete Grade Policy:

A grade of “I” is not automatically assigned, but rather must be requested by the student by submitting to the instructor a “Petition for and Work to Remove an Incompleted Grade” form. An “I” can never be used in lieu of an “F” nor can an “I” be assigned because of excessive failure to participate in class activities.

Technical Support Information:

If you experience technical problems, contact Information Technology by visiting their website at: [http://webapps.ou.edu/it/](http://webapps.ou.edu/it/) or contacting them by telephone at: (405) 325-HELP (4357).
Attendance/Grade Policy

Note: Attendance/absences do not apply to online courses. However, participation in all course activities is extremely important to student success in online courses.

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 make 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/eeo.html](http://www.ou.edu/content/eeo.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.

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/](http://www.goou.ou.edu/)
Specific instructions for each participation assignment, including formatting instructions, can be found under the “Modules” tab of Canvas. **Please note that all deadlines are 11:59PM CST.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 1 – 5</td>
<td>Course Overview &amp; Getting to Know One Another</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Course Begins – Familiarize yourself with the D2L site for the course Introduction Post</td>
<td>Sunday, May 5 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 6 – 12</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. Chapters 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 13 – 19</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. Chapters 11, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, and 24</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #1 (over any chapter(s) assigned thus far)</td>
<td>Sunday, May 19 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 20 – 26</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. Chapters 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 38, and 41</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Race and Gender Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, May 22 by 11:59 PM CST Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Sunday, May 26 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 27 – June 2</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>CQ Researcher Chapter 3</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #2</td>
<td>Sunday, June 2 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<td><strong>Week 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;June 3 – 9</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>Begin Reading Ehrenreich ~ pages 1 - 78</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Women’s Rights Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, June 5 by 11:59 PM CST Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Sunday, June 9 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<td><strong>Week 7</strong>&lt;br&gt;June 10 – 16</td>
<td>Living Wage</td>
<td>Read Ehrenreich ~ pages 79 - 157</td>
<td>Discussion Forum – Book Review: <em>Nickel and Dimed</em> Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, June 12 by 11:59 PM CST Post #2 and #3 (Response to 2 classmates): Sunday, June 16 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8</strong>&lt;br&gt;June 17 – 23</td>
<td>Living Wage</td>
<td>Finish Reading Ehrenreich ~ pages 158 - 235</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9</strong>&lt;br&gt;June 24 – 30</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>Zinn et al. Chapters 12 and 14</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #3</td>
<td>Sunday, June 30 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 10</strong>&lt;br&gt;July 1 – 7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Enjoy time with family and friends</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assigned Reading</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Due Date</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>CQ Researcher Chapters 1, 2, 7 and 8</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Terror</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, July 10 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<td>Research Final Paper Topics</td>
<td>Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Sunday, July 14 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<td>Final Paper Topic: Sunday, July 14 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>CQ Researcher Chapter 9</td>
<td>Reaction Paper # 4</td>
<td>Sunday, July 21 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Work on Book Review Paper: Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Book Review Paper: Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>Sunday, Aug. 4 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Disaster as a Current Problem</td>
<td>Zinn et al. Chapter 13; CQ Researcher Chapter 4</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #5</td>
<td>Sunday, Aug. 11 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Disaster as a Current Problem</td>
<td>CQ Researcher Chapter 6, 10, and 11</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Disaster Preparedness</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, Aug. 17 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<td>Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Sunday, Aug. 21 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 17</td>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Work on Final Paper</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 18</td>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Final Paper Due</td>
<td>Saturday, Aug. 31 by 11:59 PM CST</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Shannon S.C. Bert, Ph.D.

Education

- 2001 BA in Psychology, University of Oklahoma
- 2004 MA in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
- 2006 Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
  Minor: Quantitative Research
- 2005 – 2007 Doctoral Fellowship, Georgetown University

Current Positions

- 2007 – Present Associate Professor, Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.
- 2008 – Present Graduate Program Instructor, Advanced Programs – Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.
- 2008 – Present Associate Professor, Women’s and Gender Studies Program, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.
- 2010 – Present Adjunct Associate Professor, Liberal Studies Program, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.
- 2012 – Present Associate Professor, African and African American Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- HR 5403 Psycho-Social Development
- HR 5023 Research in Human Relations
- HR 5743 Violence Against Women and Children
- HR 5013 Current Problems in Human Relations
- HR 5110 Family Assessment and Intervention
- HR 5970 Special Topics/Seminar: The Prevention /Intervention of Critical Social Issues

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

- Developmental Theory
- Applied Research Methods and Advanced Research Methods
- Research for Human Relations
- Protective Factors and Resilience
- Biracial/Multiracial Identity Development
- Prevention and Intervention Programs for Disadvantaged Populations
- Emergent Adulthood
- Current Problems
- Violence Against Women and Children
- Women, Work, and the Family

Representative Publications and Presentations

Refereed Publications


**Book Publications**


**Chapter Publications**


Presentations


Symposia Presentations