Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Natalie Boero
Office Location: DMH 211
Telephone: (408) (924-5345)
Email: natalie.boero@sjsu.edu or via Canvas message
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30-11:30am and 4:15-6:00pm or by appointment
Class Days/Time: Monday/Wednesday 12:00-1:15pm
Classroom: Boccardo Business Center 004
GE/SJSU Studies Category: Core GE Area D3

Canvas and Messaging

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on the course Canvas page. You are responsible for regularly checking the course Canvas page as well as your email for notifications relevant to the course.

Course Description

Sociological analysis of selected contemporary social problems such as housing and homelessness, economy and employment, environment and consumerism, family and divorce, crime and drugs, politics and media, race and gender, wealth and poverty, war and peace.

Writing: This course requires a minimum writing assignment of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Framework for Social Problems {Goals and Learning Objectives}

Goals:
This course will explore the major social problems facing American society today. Students will define and analyze the causes and consequences of social problems and examine possible solutions. Students will develop critical thinking skills, apply basic concepts of sociology and sociological theory to specific social problems.
This course will increase the student’s understanding of human behavior, social interaction and social location of social problems. This will be approached in the context of using value systems, economic structures, political institutions, social groups and natural environments as a paradigm for understanding social problems.

Learning Objectives and How They Will Be Met:
Linkage between Specific Learning Objectives and Student Activities/Experience:
Learning Objective 1: Students shall be able to identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation.

Small group discussions and written assignments will be used to help identify and analyze the social dimension of society, social change, and social forces behind social cohesion and fragmentation.

Learning Objective 2: Students will be able to place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.

Group discussions, written assignments, film clips, artifacts (articles, pop culture items, movies, etc.) and sociological autobiography will be used to discuss social problems in cultural, historical, environmental and spatial contexts.

Learning Objective 3: Students will be able to identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.

Small group discussions and written assignments on artifacts will be used to help students identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional and national identities and recognize the similarities and differences between them. Students will be expected to write a paper (a minimum of 1000 words) seeing their own lives in a sociological context. In the paper they will be asked to locate their own lives and experience with one or two of the social problems we have identified and studied over the semester. Students will receive feedback on the paper from the professor to aid them in making revisions.

Learning Objective 4: Students will be able to evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

Written assignments on artifacts and autobiography will be used to help students to analyze social problems from a variety of sociological perspectives.

Learning Objective 5: Students will be able to apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

The use of small group discussions and news analyses will assist students in evaluating social issues and analyzing possible social action resolutions.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook:


Other Readings

I will post additional readings on the course Canvas page in PDF format. They will always be posted at least a week before they are due. In the course schedule below, these readings are designated with a (PDF).

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class,
participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf.

Grading Policy and Assignments

Your grade is composed of four elements:

1. Paper

You will be asked to write one paper for the semester on a topic I will discuss at length as the class progresses. The paper will be approximately 4-6 pages long and you will have the opportunity to revise the paper. The paper is worth 200 points or 40% of your semester grade.

All papers must be turned in through the Canvas website drop box during the specified time window. It is your responsibility to make sure I receive all of your work so be sure you keep an electronic copy of all of your work.

LATE PAPERS (READ CAREFULLY)

Late papers will be penalized one third of a grade for each day late (for example, a “B” paper turned in one day late would be given a “B-”). No assignments will be accepted if they are more than one week late and the Canvas site will stop accepting papers one week after the due date.

I will further detail my expectations on your assignment sheets, but in general I require that all assignments (with the exception of in-class exercises) be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, with standard 1” margins, with page numbers.

2. Weekly News Article Analyses

Keeping up on current events is central to the study of social problems; thus, over the course of the semester you will be required to submit five short (1-2 pages) analyses of a current news article addressing a contemporary social problem. The guidelines will be further detailed in a separate assignment posted on Canvas during the second week of class but, generally you will be asked to select a news article from a list of approved sources, provide a link to the article, briefly summarize the article, and say something about its relevance to the sociological study of social problems. All article analyses are to be submitted through Canvas. You may choose which weeks you submit an analysis but you may only submit one analysis per week (due by 12pm each Monday). Plan well to avoid having to do five consecutive weekly analyses at the end of the semester! Each article analysis will be worth 20 points and collectively, the five analyses will make up 100 points, or 20% of your final grade.

3. Midterm exam

There will be one midterm exam composed of multiple choice and short answer questions each worth 100 points or 20% of your final grade.

4. Final exam
There will be a comprehensive final exam on the scheduled final exam date. The exam will be made up of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam is worth 100 points, or 20% of your semester grade.

Final letter grades for the exams will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A   = 93 – 100 points
- A-  = 90 – 92 points
- B+  = 87 – 89 points
- B   = 83 – 86 points
- B-  = 80 – 82 points
- C+  = 77 – 79 points
- C   = 73 – 76 points
- C-  = 70 – 72 points
- D+  = 67 – 69 points
- D   = 63 – 68 points
- D-  = 60 – 62 points
- F   = 59 points or less

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A  = 500–465 points
- A- = 464–450 points
- B+ = 449–435 points
- B  = 434–415 points
- B- = 414–400 points
- C+ = 399–385 points
- C  = 384–365 points
- C- = 364–350 points
- D+ = 349–335 points
- D  = 334–315 points
- D- = 314–300 points
- F  = 299 points or less

Your grade for the class will be broken down as follows:

- Paper: 200 Points
- Article Analyses: 100 Points (20 pts. each)
- Midterm exam: 100 Points
- Final exam: 100 Points

Total possible points: 500

**Classroom Protocol**

I expect that you will have each week’s readings completed by class on Monday of each week. I have tried to make the reading interesting and manageable so that we can all participate in active discussions. Please bring your readings to class each day so that we can refer to them in discussions.

Participation is important and it helps make discussions livelier as well as to clarify materials. Coming to class is important as I will be lecturing on materials not included in the readings.

If you cannot come to class, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your peers. If you miss any handouts or are not in class the day I return an assignment or an exam, I will have them available for you to pick up during my office hours. When you are in class, I expect all cell phones and electronic devices to be turned off and put away. Students may use laptops in class, but, to avoid distracting other students I ask that students using laptops please sit in the back rows of the classroom.

**Office Hours, email and Canvas**

I encourage all of you to come by my office hours (listed above). Even if you don’t have a specific question, office hours are a great chance for me to get to know you better and for you to give me feedback on the course. If you are having any problems that could impact your success in the course, come see me as soon as possible. It is much easier to deal with problems early on. Please note that I do not give incompletes except in the most extreme situations, and even then only if a student has already completed a majority of the work for the course.
I am also available by email at the address above or through the Canvas site. However, given the large number of students in my classes, I may take a day or two to respond to emails. It is also important that you check your email as well as the “news” section of Canvas for any course updates. I will email the class of any changes in the schedule. If you do email me, please include your name and the course number and section in the subject line.

Classroom Protocol

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See University Policy S90–5 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the SJSU catalog, at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
  - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor’s process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
  - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”
Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at http://www.sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center at http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/ located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at
Soci 80 / Social Problems, Fall 2015, Course Schedule

* You will be notified in advance through Canvas of any changes made to the schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/24 &amp; 8/26</td>
<td>Social Problems and the Sociological Imagination</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/31 &amp; 9/2</td>
<td>Social Problems and the Sociological Imagination continued, Social Class and Poverty</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9/7 &amp; 9/9</td>
<td>No Class Monday 9/7- Labor Day</td>
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<td>Social Class and Poverty continued/Work and the Economy</td>
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<td>Reading: Reading: Ehrenreich “Nickle and Dimed” (PDF) Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 9</td>
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<td>Film: “Waging a Living”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/14 &amp; 9/16</td>
<td>Social Class and Poverty continued/Work and the Economy</td>
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<td>Film: “Waging a Living”</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9/21 &amp; 9/23</td>
<td>Race and Ethnicity</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 3, McIntosh, “White Privilege” (PDF)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9/28 &amp; 9/30</td>
<td>Race and Ethnicity Continued</td>
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<td>Bonilla-Silva, “New Racism” (PDF) Newsweek, “See Baby Discriminate” (Link on Canvas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/5 &amp; 10/7</td>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 4</td>
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<td>Film: “Killing Us Softly, 4”</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>10/12 &amp; 10/14</td>
<td>Gender Continued</td>
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<td>Reading, Maxwell “Rape Culture”, TBA</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10/19 &amp; 10/21</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS MONDAY 10/19</td>
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<td>Health and Healthcare</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Ch. 10</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10/26 &amp; 10/28</td>
<td>Health and Healthcare, Continued</td>
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<td>Film: “Unnatural Causes</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/2 &amp; 11/4</td>
<td>Crime and Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Ch. 13</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/9 &amp; 11/11</td>
<td>No Class Wednesday 11/11- Veteran’s Day</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Ch. 8</td>
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<td>PAPER DUE VIA CANVAS BY 10PM, FRIDAY 11/13</td>
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<td>11/16 &amp; 11/18</td>
<td>Education con’t</td>
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<td>Reading: Kozol, “Still Separate, Still Unequal”</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11/23 &amp; 11/25</td>
<td>The Media</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 11</td>
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<td>Sternheimer “It’s Not the Media” (PDF)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>11/30 &amp; 12/2</td>
<td>Social Movements</td>
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<td>Reading: Leon-Guerrero Chapt. 17, (PDF), Johnson, “What Can We Do?”</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>Last Day of Class</td>
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<td>Review for final</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>FINAL EXAM: Thursday December 10th at 9:45am</td>
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<td>You must be present at the designated start time for the final exam</td>
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