**SYG 2010: Social Problems**

Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies - Spring Semester 2023

Monday 1:00-3:40 PC 331

# Instructor: James Gerardo Lamb

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# Please message me using Canvas Inbox. This is the best way to get ahold of me for any questions.

# Phone: (773) 255-2889

For time sensitive/urgent issues (i.e. course deadlines). Please use Canvas/email first if possible.

# Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom. Message me to arrange a time.

# **Course Description and Purpose**

This course examines “social problems” in a critical and global perspective. Social problems examined concern issues such as economic inequalities, race and racism, gender, sexuality, the environment, crime and the justice system, family, education, health care systems and inequities and war and terrorism.

Together we’ll use sociological principles to explore issues of social inequality—from global to local and personal. Working together, we’ll try to make sense of our lives in a complicated world: to gain insight into how our social worlds are created and how we can endeavor to make the world a better place.

**Course Objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

CO 1 Identify, define, and evaluate major social problems in the United States and globally

CO 2 Suggest possible solutions for social problems and defend these suggestions

CO 3 Critically examine social problems through the use of sociological theories, methods, and empirical techniques

CO 4 Communicate an understanding about the social problems discussed in the course utilizing the sociological imagination and analytical rigor through the use of academic research and writing

Skills practiced in this course:

1. Team building and maintenance
2. Critical Reading
3. Academic research
4. Professional writing

**Course Communication**

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox and Announcements. Check out the Canvas Conversations Tutorial or [Canvas Guide](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10574-4212710325) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

To contact me please attempt to use the course website, then email, then phone/text only if necessary.

**Course Website**

The first order of business in this class will be making sure you have access to the course website   
on Canvas. Class information, announcements, readings, assignments, grades, materials from   
class lectures and feedback for your work will all appear on the Canvas website. The website   
is where you will submit your work. Let me know right away if you have trouble accessing it.

**Textbook**

The main textbook for the class is **Social Problems: Community, Policy, and Social Action** 7th **edition** by Anna Y. Leon-Guerrero from Sage Publishing Company (Copyright 2021 - **ISBN 9781071813584**).

**Office Hours**

Office Hours are an important resource for the course. They will be particularly helpful in writing your research papers. You can sign up individually or with a group if all students agree to a group meeting.

**Course Organization, Policies, Assignments and Grading**

Each week will be a mix of going over a selection of readings, which will also serve as preparation for the quizzes, academic research and writing modules to learn about the steps in researching and writing your papers and workshop sessions to work in your groups on the papers and assignments leading up to them.

Your grades for the course will be determined by the following criteria and weights:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Attendance at class lectures | 15% |
| Weekly content quizzes | 15% |
| Preparatory assignments for research paper 1 | 5% |
| Preparatory assignments for research paper 2 | 5% |
| Research Paper 1 | 30% |
| Research Paper 2 | 30% |

Overall final class grades will be assigned on the following scale:

A = 93+ A- = 90-92 B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86 B- = 80-83 C+ = 77-79

C = 70-76 D = 60-69 F < 60

**Attendance**

Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and will constitute your attendance grade. Attendance will be taken using the FIU Check-In system and App.

[FIU Check-In Student Guide](https://attendance.fiu.edu/docs/Student%20Guide.pdf)

If for any reason your FIU Check-In App is not working or you cannot check in, please message me.

For cases of illness or emergency, or for authorized university events or activities, such as athletic team travel, absences can be marked as excused with proper documentation.

**Weekly Quizzes**

At the end of each class week there will be a short content quiz, generally 5-10 multiple choice, true-false or fill in the blank questions. The quizzes will be based on the readings but incorporate lecture. Quizzes will be available after the lecture on Monday and throughout the week and will be timed. All of the quizzes will be taken through the Canvas course website, so make sure to check there each week. The quizzes are worth a total of 15% of your grade. They are due on the Friday of the week assigned.

**Preparatory Assignments for Research Papers**

Leading up to each research paper there will be five short “scaffolding” or preparatory assignments due at the end of each of the five class weeks leading up to the weeks that the research papers are due. The assignments are always due on Thursday of the week assigned and are graded only on a check/no check basis (that is, if they are turned in, complete and demonstrate some effort, full credit will be given).

These are an opportunity to receive feedback on key aspects as you develop your research papers. Since the research papers will be done in randomly assigned groups, only one assignment per group is turned in. The five assignments are exactly the same for the two research papers, and worth 1% of your final grade.

The due dates for each of the assignments are listed in the course calendar below and will appear with instructions under the assignments tab on the course website in Canvas.

**Research Papers**

Your main products in this course, together accounting for the majority of your grade, will be two original sociological research papers. These papers will be group projects, written in randomly assigned groups of three students each. The basic requirements for the papers are that they are 1,000 words and include three sources: one from class readings, one from news media and one from a social science academic research journal. The papers must include a formal thesis and sociological argument that structures the paper and which links together your three sources in the service of substantiating your thesis/argument. The papers must address a specific social problem from the textbook and include ASA citations and a bibliography.

There will be lecture time devoted to going over the skills needed to produce a formal academic sociology research paper, such as finding scholarly research articles, constructing and supporting a valid thesis, how to properly cite sources and research paper organization. In addition, there will be lecture time set aside to work in your groups. Groups are also strongly encouraged to attend office hours. Finally, your groups will probably need to meet on your own time, either in person or via zoom. You should also make use of the group discussion tab on Canvas to work together asynchronously on assignments and the final product.

Papers will be graded according to a detailed rubric that will be available on the class website on Canvas.

**Plagiarism Detection through Turnitin.com**

All papers submitted for this course will be automatically analyzed by Turnitin. Turnitin is a plagiarism detection tool which creates an originality report of the assignments that students upload to the site. It also helps with improving students’ research techniques and citation methods. [Here are some resources to use](https://fiuhelp.force.com/canvas/s/article/Academic-Integrity-Resources-Students).

Plagiarism is defined as: i. The deliberate use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. ii. Assisting another Student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Plagiarism is considered serious academic misconduct.

**Academic Misconduct Statement**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the [Student Conduct and Honor Code](https://regulations.fiu.edu/docs=257) procedures and sanctions as outlined in the [FIU Regulation 2501](https://regulations.fiu.edu/regulation=FIU-2501) and the [Student Handbook](https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-handbook/).

**Panthers Care and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you, for the classmate’s wellbeing or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU’s Panthers Care website: [http://PanthersCare.fiu.edu/](http://pantherscare.fiu.edu/).

Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/counseling-and-psychological-services/)) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress and other concerns life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don’t wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to talk or [visit the online self-help portal](https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/counseling-and-psychological-services/).

**Accessibility and Accommodations**

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190. If you need additional information or assistance visit FIU's [Disability Resource Center page](https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/disability-resource-center/). For more information on [Canvas visit the accessibility page](https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-Canvas-accessibility-standards/ta-p/1564).

**Key Dates**

Monday, January 9 First Day of Lecture

Friday, March 3 Research Paper 1 Due

Monday, March 20 Last Day to Drop with DR Grade

Friday, April 28 Research Paper 2 Due

Saturday, April 29 End of Course

Wednesday, May 4 Grades Posted on my.fiu.edu

# **Course Introduction**

# **Week 1: Sociology and the Study of Social Problems**

**Reading:**

Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 1

**Monday, January 9:**

- Review syllabus

- Introduce research paper 1

Review prompt/instructions

Basic Essay Structure – library tutorial module 6 slide 8 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Review research paper grading rubric

- Review reading

**Friday, January 13: QUIZ 1 DUE**

# **Part I: The Bases of Inequality**

**Week 2: Social Class**

**Reading:**

Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 2

**Monday, January 23:**

- Assign groups for research paper 1

- Introduce resources for research papers

library research guide - <https://library.fiu.edu/gss>

library tutorials - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

research librarian - <https://library.fiu.edu/prf.php?account_id=4266>

Center for Excellence in Writing - <https://case.fiu.edu/writingcenter/student-services/index.html>

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 1: Choose a Topic

The Research Journey <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/research>

The Research Process – where can I get help finding a topic? <https://library.fiu.edu/gettingstarted>

Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

Background Research - library tutorial module 1 slide 8 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

- Workshop for group project

- Review reading

- Videos: Income and Wealth Inequality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xMCWr0O3Hs>

Social Class & Poverty in the US <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8PEv5SV4sU>

Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?173561-1/flat-broke-children-women-age-welfare-reform>

**Thursday, January 26: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSINGMENT 1 DUE**

**Friday, January 27: QUIZ 2 DUE**

**Week 3: Race and Ethnicity**

**Reading:**

Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 3

**Monday, January 30: \*\*\* First Half of Class in Green Library (GL) 280 \*\*\***

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography

Review prompt and instructions

Annotated Bibliographies <https://library.fiu.edu/citation/annotbibs>

Creating and Formatting Annotated Bibliography

<https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=173027&p=1142943>

Annotated Bibliography Videos

<https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=1029765&p=7672614>

Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

The Research Process – <https://library.fiu.edu/c.php?g=159967&p=1048703>

Identify Scholarly & Popular Sources <https://library.fiu.edu/gss/peer-review#s-lg-box-10880499>

Library Website Research: Start video <https://youtu.be/QiNY_TOFwm4>

- Workshop for group project

- Review reading

**Thursday, February 2: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSINGMENT 2 DUE**

**Friday, February 3: QUIZ 3 DUE**

**Week 4: Gender**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 4

**Monday, February 6:**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 3: Thesis Statement

Review prompt and instructions

Thesis Statement video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

How to Narrow Your Topic video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

Framing a Problem video - library tutorial module 3 slide 3 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Library Website Discovery video – library tutorial module 3 slide 11 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 57-61 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

- Workshop for group project

- Review reading

**Thursday, February 9: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**Friday, February 10: QUIZ 4 DUE**

**Week 5: Sexual Orientation**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 5

**Monday, February 13:**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 4: Outline - Body Paragraph Topic Sentences

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

Synthesizing Information for Academic Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 4

Steps to Synthesis Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 5 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

- Workshop for group project

- Review reading

- Video: Sex & Sexuality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kqt-_ILgv5c>

**Thursday, February 16: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE**

**Friday, February 17: QUIZ 5 DUE**

# **Part II: Our Social Institutions**

**Week 6: Families**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 7

**Monday, February 20:**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 5: Outline – Transition/Linking Sentences

Anatomy of a Research Paper Video – library tutorial Module 6 slide 7

Review Anatomy of a Research Paper – **Concluding Sentence = Return to Thesis (“Linking”)**

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

- Workshop for group project

- Review reading

- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJ18whKduFo>

**Thursday, February 23: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE**

**Friday, February 24: QUIZ 6 DUE**

**Midterm Week**

**No Lecture/ No Reading / No Quiz**

**Resources for Research Papers**

- Citations and bibliography

Why Citations Matter – library tutorial module 5 slide 3 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Why Citations Matter video & tutorial - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

Library Citations Guide - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

- ASA citation formatting and citation management programs

Library Citation Guide step 2: Citation Information and Generators

<https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

Undergraduate Sociology Writing Guide – Pp. 68-78

<https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

When to Use Citations

<https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/When%20to%20Use%20Citations.pdf>

How to Use Quotations

<https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/How%20to%20Use%20Quotations.pdf>

Formatting Citations <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Formatting%20Citations.pdf>

Sample Bibliography Formats

<https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Sample%20Bibliography%20Formats.pdf>

- Research paper grading rubric

- Optional Research Paper Draft Review Meetings via Zoom

**Friday, March 3: \*\*\* RESEARCH PAPER 1 DUE \*\*\***

**Week 7: Education**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 8

**Monday, March 6**

- Editing and Reviewing Papers

- Group Workshop editing meetings

- Review reading

- Video: Education in Society <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S294zRodS_4>

- Video: Schools & Social Inequality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYMk3Bk08NA>

**Thursday, March 9: Edited and Revised Research Paper 1 Due**

**Friday, March 10: QUIZ 7 DUE**

**Week 8: Work and the Economy**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 9

**Monday, March 13**

- Assign groups for research paper 2

- Introduce resources for research papers

library research guide - <https://library.fiu.edu/gss>

library tutorials - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

research librarian - <https://library.fiu.edu/prf.php?account_id=4266>

Center for Excellence in Writing - <https://case.fiu.edu/writingcenter/student-services/index.html>

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 1: Choose a Topic

The Research Journey <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/research>

The Research Process – where can I get help finding a topic? <https://library.fiu.edu/gettingstarted>

Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

Background Research - library tutorial module 1 slide 8 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

- Workshop for group projects

- Review reading

**Thursday, March 16: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE**

**Friday, March 17: QUIZ 8 DUE**

**Week 9: Health and Medicine**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 10

**Monday, March 27**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography

Review prompt and instructions

Annotated Bibliographies <https://library.fiu.edu/citation/annotbibs>

Creating and Formatting Annotated Bibliography

<https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=173027&p=1142943>

Annotated Bibliography Videos

<https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=1029765&p=7672614>

Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

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Identify Scholarly & Popular Sources <https://library.fiu.edu/gss/peer-review#s-lg-box-10880499>

Library Website Research: Start video <https://youtu.be/QiNY_TOFwm4>

- Workshop for group projects

- Review reading

- Videos: Health & Medicine <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NGlENS1qgo>

Population Health <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9SWRByzDSo>

The Structure & Cost of US Health Care <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KriEIJ0ubh0>

**Thursday, March 30: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**

**Friday, March 31: QUIZ 9 DUE**

# **Part III: Our Social and Physical Worlds**

**Week 10: Crime and Criminal Justice**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 13

**Monday, April 3**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 3: Thesis Statement

Review prompt and instructions

Thesis Statement video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

How to Narrow Your Topic video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>

Framing a Problem video - library tutorial module 3 slide 3 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Library Website Discovery video – library tutorial module 3 slide 11 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 57-61 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

- Workshop for group projects

- Review reading

- Video Criminal Justice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfie5bHG1OA>

**Thursday, April 6: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**Friday, April 7: QUIZ 10 DUE**

**Week 11: The Environment**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 14

**Monday, April 10**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 4: Outline - Body Paragraph Topic Sentences

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

Synthesizing Information for Academic Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 4

Steps to Synthesis Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 5 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

- Workshop for group projects

- Review reading

- Video: Environmental Economics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlAfFgKQ5r8&list=PLfw-x8itmgecHL-Q5AVEykBRLiQVRDNZF>

**Thursday, April 13: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE**

**Friday, April 14: QUIZ 11 DUE**

**Week 12: War and Terrorism**

**Reading:**

- Leon-Guerrero, Social Problems, Chapter 15

**Monday, April 17**

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 5: Outline – Transition/Linking Sentences

Anatomy of a Research Paper Video – library tutorial Module 6 slide 7

Review Anatomy of a Research Paper – **Concluding Sentence = Return to Thesis (“Linking”)**

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33 <https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf>

- Workshop for group projects

- Review reading

- Video: Terrorism, War, and Bush 43 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlsnnhn3VWE>

**Thursday, April 20: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE**

**Friday, April 21: QUIZ 12 DUE**

**Final Exam Week**

- Optional Research Paper Draft Review Meetings via Zoom

**Friday, April 28: \*\*\* RESEARCH PAPER 2 DUE \*\*\***