



School of Liberal Arts

SOCI 104 SOCIAL PROBLEMS

WINTER 2025

3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Dr. Shawkat Shareef	OFFICE HOURS	THURSDAYS 11 am-1 PM or Zoom by appointment
OFFICE	A 2017	CLASSROOM	MOODLE, ONLINE
E-MAIL	sshareef@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	SELF-PACED
TELEPHONE	867 456 8604	CRN	20106
		DATES	JAN. 6- APRIL 14, 2025
Liberal Arts office: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, liberalarts@yukonu.ca, 867-668-8770			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Using a wide range of sociological theories, students will explore factors that lead to the construction and continuation of social problems. The course employs a multi-dimensional analytical framework, emphasizing the socio-cultural, economic, and historical forces that perpetuate poverty, class, ethnic and gender inequality, racism, crime, addiction and the sex trades. There will be a specific focus on mainstream Canadian society, and northern First Nation and other indigenous communities. Students will also reflect on policy options for the remediation of social problems.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites: NONE

Online access to Moodle required.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

Find course transfer at <https://www.bctransferguide.ca/>

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

YUKON FIRST NATIONS CORE COMPETENCY

Students who successfully complete this course will have achieved core competency in knowledge of Yukon First Nations. By the end of this course, students will have greater understanding and awareness of Yukon First Nations history, culture and journey towards self-determination. For details, please see www.yukonu.ca/yfnccr

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- a) analyse and compare research on social problems in Canada and abroad
- b) explain of social problems in Canada focusing on northern First Nations and indigenous socio-cultural, historical, and political contexts
- c) critically analyze their own views about different aspects of social problems in the postmodern Canadian society engulfed by various globalization factors
- d) objectively apply sociological perspectives and theoretical approaches to their knowledge of the linkages between Northern indigenous, Canadian national, and global societies in the creation and perpetuation of social problems

COURSE FORMAT**Delivery format**

There are no in-person meetings scheduled for this course and you will work on your own schedule. While there may be no set meetings times, video- or audio-conferencing may be used for office hour tutorials, teaching sessions, seminars and class meetings. Although this is a self-paced course, the class will proceed on a timetable with predetermined assignments and due dates.

STUDYING & LEARNING STRATEGY

Textbook aside, the on-line course environment containing several tools that would help you to get used to using the course material and enhance your learning experience. Please practice the following as your everyday guide to studying and learning.

The Beginning

At the very beginning, you should be able to familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, the Moodle course website, and the course textbook. Also, you should start reading the Week 1 readings and begin to address the concept of Reflexive Commentary based on the readings. Reflexive Commentary will be a big part of your learning throughout the course and it will certainly help you to do well in that.

Weekly Reading Strategy

As part of weekly readings, you should start by reading through Chapter Power Point slides and Learning Objectives on the Moodle for each chapter. You can follow your own individual reading habit in order to address those sections mentioned above but please do note that if you go through the

Power Point slides and Learning Objectives first before you start with the actual textbook chapter, it will only help you to understand what to expect in the textbook chapter itself and how to focus on different topics. Upon finishing reading the chapter, you can address the Questions for Critical Thinking and try to answer them in rudimentary fashion (this will help you to do reflexive commentary later on. Do not forget to mention the question that you are addressing in reflexive commentary exercise).

Problem solving

It is very natural that you may run into difficulties to understand the textbook material. Do not worry when it happens because there are several tools to solve these problems: Discussion Forum and Email. Besides the textbook chapter summary and key terms that will direct you to many broader online materials to understand the relevant topics at hand, Discussion Forum is to support you to clarify confusions regarding course materials. Don't understand a topic? Simply start a thread with your question to your classmates and try to generate a very cooperative and congenial discussion. However, do this only after you have really invested some time and energy to understand the material because your classmates will not give you full answers to any topic/issue in question and if anybody attempts to do that, it will be considered unethical. As said before, Discussion Forum is an online-substitute for in-class lecture and discussions here should be regarded as discussions, not answers to questions (but definitely discussions will most likely lead you to the correct answers). Post your general course questions on the Forum. I will monitor the Discussion Forum and if necessary, will post comments to your inquiries/comments. If you are still struggling, send an Email to me through Moodle emailing environment and please be very specific topic/issue based in your emails. Personal problem related emails will be automatically ignored.

Reflexive Commentary

You have done your homework so far (reading textbook chapter, critical thinking questions and learning objectives for each chapter) and now it is time for you to proceed with Reflexive Commentary. Reflexive Commentary is a proof that you understand the course material and that you can engage with it through your critical reflection skills. It's basically your self-assessment tool to understand your own comprehension capacity of the course materials to develop your own reflective questions (other than the ones mentioned in the Questions for Critical Thought section at the end of every chapter). Reflexive Commentary will strengthen your skill and capacity that you need to write exams.

Practice Reflexive commentaries are written reflections of weekly readings. These practice reflexive commentaries will lead to **TWO** commentaries in total throughout the span of the course which are regarded as formal assignments (see Reading List for the due dates). The commentaries will be submitted to the Discussion Forum when asked by me to do so using Moodle course website and in Word or PDF files. Submission of the commentaries are time sensitive and no late submissions will be accepted. There will be no make-up commentaries for missed opportunity. However, under extenuating circumstances (for which documentations are required), you can arrange for early submissions of the commentaries.

The purpose of the reflexive commentary is to enable you to develop critical analytical thought process. Therefore, the commentaries should not be just descriptive, rather they will be your own thoughts about different theories and concepts in textbook readings. Also, another aspect of the commentaries will focus on the Critical Thinking Questions at the end of the chapters where you will choose one question from each chapter to specifically critically analyze and explain. In other words, the latter aspect of commentaries (critical thinking questions) are to enable you to think about the issue in more in-depth fashion. If your analysis and/or explanations can generate some debate/discussion among your peers, then you know that you have done a good job.

Exam preparations

On exam days, reviewing all study notes and Reflexive Commentaries will get you ready for the exam. When the exam is available online, first, read the question thoroughly to know what has been specifically asked in the question to address. It is up to you in which order you will answer the questions as long as the numbers of the questions are clearly specified. Always try to answer the questions that are easier and more familiar to you and save the challenging ones for the last. Exam time is limited and so, you have to do all the preparations beforehand so that you are not struggling for time. Topics will be provided before each exam for your preparations. You will not be allowed to hand in the exam after the deadline: you fail to submit the exam on time, you miss the exam altogether.

EVALUATION

Discussion participation	5%
1st Midterm Exam	30% (February 12 , 1-3 pm, Moodle)
2nd Midterm Exam	25% (March 12 , 1-3 pm, Moodle)
Final Exam	30% (April 9 , 1-3.30 pm, Moodle)
Assignments: (Reflexive Commentaries), 2 in total	10%, (5% for each assignment): due February 19 and March 26 (Moodle submission)
Total	100%

Discussion and Participation: 5 %

Participation in class is essential to the development of class unity and the learning process for everyone. Discussion forums offer students a forum in which to express ideas and be educated through the ideas of others. We will create together a respectful environment where everyone will feel safe and encouraged to speak. This means that students and instructor must monitor their speech so as not to give more than their fair share. Discussion and participation worth 5% of final grade and is graded based on the number and frequency of a student's participation in the class and Moodle discussion. However given the nature of sociological theories and other topics that will be covered in the lectures and in the discussion forum, a student's performance in participation will be judged by:

1. QUALITY OF THE DISCUSSION (to ensure quality, student's attendance in class lectures and following of reading materials are pivotal)

2. FREQUENCY OF THE DISCUSSION (responding to discussion forum question by posting one's own post is not enough to ensure high participation points, rather reading others' posts and responding to them is very important)

3. CONSISTENCY IN CONTRIBUTION (regular contributions in the discussion forums by chapters are important, sporadic contributions will fetch low participation scores).

Students will also write a number of short assignments through practicing reflexive commentaries, demonstrating their understanding of theories about different aspects of human society. There are no points assigned to these practice reflexive commentaries, but performance on these short practice assignments (both completion and quality) will be added to the overall participation grade as a percentage. Also, practice reflexive commentaries will help stimulate the discussions the forums. For more details, see below.

Midterm Exams: 55%

There are two midterm exams total worth of which is 55% of the final grade (1st midterm weighs 30% and the 2nd midterm weighs 25%). The midterms will be based on multiple choice questions, true/false questions and long and short essay topics from the course text book. Students will have 120 minutes (2 hours) to work on and submit the responses on the Moodle. The second midterm will not use the materials that were covered in the first midterm.

Final Exam: 30%

Final exam is worth 30% of the total weight of the final grade. Final exam is based on the course materials that are covered in the course (including URL link-based information, extra articles posted on the Moodle, text book) and will use multiple choice questions and/or long and short essays. The final exam will be non-cumulative and can be either all multiple choice questions or combinations of MCQ and long/short essays.

NOTE: All exams submission are strictly time sensitive and late submissions will not be granted except for extenuating circumstances for which the student has to provide proof.

Assignments: 10%

There will be **TWO** reflexive commentary assignments and they worth 10% of the final grade. The topics for the assignments are chosen by the professor based on the text, and/or discussion forum issues. See below for details about assignments. More to follow in the Discussion Forum.

The **length of each assignment** should not exceed three pages of typed text, using 1.5 line spacing and 12 point Times New Roman font. No need to use a cover page for commentaries. Simply put student's name and Id on the top left corner of the submission. The assignments are submitted on the Moodle.

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS:

Kendall, D., Nygaard, V. L., & Thompson, E. G. (2016). Social problems in a diverse society (4th Canadian Ed.). Canada: Pearson.

Click below for the electronic version of the text:

E-Text: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/social-problems-in-a-diverse-society-fourth-diana-kendall-edward-g-v9780134477954>

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact Accessibility Services for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Week 1	<p><i>COURSE INTRODUCTION AND KNOW-YOUR-SYLLABUS</i></p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1: Summary and Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 1: Studying Social Problems in Twenty-First Century</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 2	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2: Summary and Learning objectives and Critical Thinking 	

	<p>Questions</p> <p>Chapter 2: Wealth and Poverty: Canadian and Global Economic Inequities</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 3	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions Chapter 3: Racism and Ethnic Inequality 	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 4	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions Chapter 4: Gender Inequality 	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 5	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 5: Inequality Based on Age</p>	In class participation Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 6	FIRST MIDTERM , FEBRUARY 12	MIDTERM IN CLASs 30% of the total weight
Week 7 Feb. 17-20 Feb. 21	<p>Reading week, no class</p> <p>Heritage day, no class</p>	
Week 8	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 7: Pornography and Sex Trade in Canada</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)

Week 9	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 8: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 8: Addictions</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 10	Second Midterm, March 12	In class, 25% of the total weight
Week 11	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 10: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 10: Health, Illness, and Health Care</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 12	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 11: Summary, Learning Objectives and Critical Thinking Questions <p>Chapter 11: The Changing Family</p>	Assignment 2: Reflexive Commentary due: March 26 (5% of the total weight)
Week 13/Week 14	<p>Reading</p> <p>Chapter 15: Population, Urbanization, and the Environmental Crisis</p>	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 15	Final exam, April 9 (class time)	Moodle exam 30% of the total weight