SOC 220  
Fall 2010  

Social Problems  

**Instructor:** Mark C. Ellis  

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**Office Hours:** Mondays - Thursdays: 8.30-9.30am & 10.20-11am.  
Please make an appointment if this is not convenient.  

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<th>What Students Can Expect of Isothermal</th>
<th>What Isothermal Expects of Students</th>
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<td>In their commitment to learning and to the achievement of a true learning-centered community, Isothermal personnel will:</td>
<td>In their commitment to learning, students will:</td>
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<td>- Meet student needs by demonstrating professional, friendly, and courteous service in all aspects of student life.</td>
<td>- Accept responsibility for learning.</td>
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<td>- Maintain high professional and academic standards.</td>
<td>- Attend and participate in all classes.</td>
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<td>- Serve as role models in the development of leadership skills.</td>
<td>- Complete required exercises and assignments as directed.</td>
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<td>- Respect diversity and treat all students fairly.</td>
<td>- Develop a time management plan that includes adequate time for study.</td>
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<td>- Be available to students and helpful with student problems.</td>
<td>- Maintain an open-minded attitude toward learning.</td>
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<td>- Communicate clear learning objectives and expected outcomes.</td>
<td>- Strive to become independent critical thinkers.</td>
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<td>- Provide timely feedback in the assessment of learning outcomes.</td>
<td>- Seek help as needed from appropriate sources.</td>
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<td>- Stay current in subject manner.</td>
<td>- Be respectful and considerate of others.</td>
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<td>- Practice effective teaching/learning strategies that promote critical thinking.</td>
<td>- Assume responsibility for knowing and adhering to all college policies.</td>
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<td>- Acknowledge that learning how to learn is the ultimate objective of education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Recognize that struggle and discomfort often precede the rewards that accompany goal completion and success.</td>
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Note: From Isothermal Distinction – Community of Learners; Statement of Expectations: Isothermal Community College, (Revised 2004).  

**Academic Integrity Statement:** You are expected to rely on your own knowledge when taking tests and completing independent assignments. Cheating in any form, including plagiarism (the use of an author’s words or ideas without providing proper documentation), will not be tolerated and may result in charges leading to loss of academic credit or grade. See the Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Judicial Procedures Manual, Section III-A, IV-C, and V-5.
Descriptive Course Information

Course Description
This course provides an in-depth study of current social problems. Emphasis is placed on causes, consequences, and possible solutions to problems associated with families, schools, workplaces, communities, and the environment. Upon completion, students should be able to recognize, define, analyze, and propose solutions to these problems. This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement general education core requirement in social/behavioral sciences.

Prerequisites: RED 090 or satisfactory placement test scores
Corequisites: None
Credit Hours: 3

Course Content and Procedures

Learning Objectives

- Introduce basic social science concepts and research methods.
- Review several persistent and widespread social problems, their causes, consequences, and significance.
- Apply novel/divergent perspectives to social phenomena.
- Present the viewpoints of people involved in social problems.

You will also enhance skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, critical thinking, research, and computer skills while completing the requirements of the course outlined below.

Attendance policy
Since we only meet for fifty minutes, once a week, you are strongly advised to attend class during such time. This will give us an opportunity to cover new topics and any questions that might arise. I would ask you not to miss more than two classes during the semester. Please note class participation and attendance are included in your final grade.

A significant portion of the class is done online through Moodle (available at http://tlc.isothermal.edu/), an online distance-learning program. Roughly two-thirds of the class is held online, available to you at anytime during the week. Every week new reading assignments, discussions, and writing assignments are posted online. Based on individual chapters, each week you will write and submit an essay on a prescribed question (listed at the end of this syllabus). If you are not comfortable with this format, please see me immediately for your options.

General Education Competencies
Your achievement of competency in general education skills is incorporated into all the courses you take at Isothermal. This course will focus on the skills listed below each of the following assignment headings. For information on how they will be evaluated, review the
criteria that have been established by the college. These are available on the college website and in the student handbook under Academic Information.

Students are expected to achieve the following general competencies:
- Communicate effectively through writing, reading, speaking, listening, & through demonstration of information literacy
- Analyze problems and make logical conclusions
- Demonstrate positive interpersonal skills through cooperative learning & group interaction
- Demonstrate quantitative competencies
- Demonstrate basic computer skills
- Understand diverse historical & cultural perspectives

Course Assignments & Requirements

Chapter Essays
Once you have finished reading and outlining the chapter, you should turn your attention to the essay question for the week. You should write complete essays, which answer all parts of the questions. You should submit your essays on the Moodle website for our course by at 11am every Wednesday. You should receive a confirmation when your essay is graded. For information on late essays, please read the FAQ available on the Moodle course page. Essays will receive up to six points, depending on quality, toward your final grade. Grades for each essay will be returned by email.

Book Report
As this is an introductory course, many topics that may be of particular interest to you may not be adequately covered in the textbook. In order to provide an opportunity for independent research and scholarship, you will be required to read at least one book related to the topics covered in the course. You should choose a book that interests you and present this book to the instructor for approval by the deadline (see schedule). After reading this book, you will be expected to write a four-five page book report summarizing the book and providing a critical analysis of the content based on your readings in the textbook. You should end this book report by briefly writing why you choose the book. It is your responsibility to submit this essay online before the deadline (see schedule). A rubric can be found on our class website to clarify further.

Exams
Two tests will be given in this course, a mid-term as well as a non-comprehensive final examination. Please note the time for the exams, included on the schedule, as no make-up tests will be given. You should study your notes for each chapter in order to do well on this test. A study guide will be provided two weeks before each exam.

Interviews & Summary
To explore the dialogue throughout the semester, we must get outside of our own perspectives from time to time. During the semester, each student should develop a set of five-seven questions that are designed to elicit responses from other points-of-view, whether it is friends, family, church members, etc. Essentially, I want you to talk about the
sociological perspectives with your social contacts. A two-three page summation should be turned in with the questions and the responses acquired.

**Evaluation**

Grading Summary:  
- Mid-term exam 30 points  
- Final exam 30 points  
- Chapter essays 84 points  
- Book report 30 points  
- Interview summary 10 points  
- Attendance 16 points  

200 points possible  
Then I will divide the total by two.

Grading Scale:  
(Seven Point Scale)  
- 93-100 = A  
- 85-92 = B  
- 77-84 = C  
- 70-76 = D  
- 0-69 = F

**Portfolio**

Many of the requirements for this course lend themselves to inclusion in student portfolios. In particular, book reports and weekly essays could be saved as artifacts if you feel them to be representative of your best work while attending Isothermal Community College.

- If you have a documented disability, it is your responsibility to contact the Special Populations Coordinator (828-286-3636, ext. 442) to discuss classroom accommodation. Please also contact me, so that I can help in any way possible.
# Introduction to Sociology – SOC 210
Mark C. Ellis

# Social Problems – SOC 220

Lesson plan: Ethnicity & Conflict (A Historical View)

## Questions for in-class discussion (chapters nine (SOC 210) & eight (SOC 220))

- What is ethnicity? How does it differ from the concept of race?
  - Ethnicity is a function of the cultural characteristics that form from common ancestry, language, religion, and customs. Race is the perceived physical characteristics.
- How was the concept of race “invented”?
  - With the birth of nationalism and modern ideas of exploration/colonization, “otherness” takes on new meaning.
- Why are people today more likely to identify with an ethnic group than with a racial group?
  - Over time, racial groups are less rigidly defined due to intermarrying and subsequent generations. Most people however do have a clearer image of the cultural components they still utilize.
- What are the four ways minority groups and dominant groups interact?
• Defining genocide, segregation, assimilation, & pluralism with examples

• How does modernization tie in with the concept of ethnic conflict?
  o In conflict theory there are two takes worth mentioning.
    ▪ Marxist theory states that the rise in the class system is always tied to particular ethnic groups that become dominant over time. This is helpful for looking at industrialized ethnic conflicts especially as modernization crosses international borders and becomes globalization.
    ▪ Multicultural theory states that ethnic dominant-majorities will always push minorities to the margins of society. This explains the historical inequalities as well as gives hope for future relations between groups as these barriers come down.

• Essay assignment for this week: Choose an ethnic conflict from the class resource page. First, explain the history of how this ethnic conflict arose. Next, what was/is being done to alleviate the conflict? Lastly, what additional steps would you suggest to help expedite the process? Explain your answer, citing specific examples.