

***SOCIAL PROBLEMS (Fall 2024)***  
**SYG 2010, 23673, Section RG15**

*Class: MWF, Period 6 (12:50-1:40 pm)*

*Location: MCGA G186*

**Instructor:**

***Dr. Ravi Ghadge*** (phonetically, ghaad gay; he/him/his)

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Office hours: MWF 1:55-2:45 PM in person or by appointment on Zoom

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(E-mail is the preferred way to contact me. Please include your full name and the course title in your subject line)

**Teaching Assistants**

Jingqin Ji

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**GENERAL EDUCATION SUBJECT AREA OBJECTIVES**

**General Education Credit**

- Social and Behavioral Sciences (S)

*This course accomplishes the [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.*

This 3-credit-hour course, delivered 100% traditionally (face-to-face), satisfies three credits of Gen Ed: Social Science. In this course, students will learn about various theoretical and conceptual frameworks sociologists use to examine social problems in the United States and other parts of the world. What we consider social problems and issues have varied over time and will continue to do so. Therefore, we will examine the contexts in which we define specific processes and social behaviors/practices as “problematic” and the strategies to address social problems available to policymakers. This course will examine diverse social issues (e.g., crime, racial and ethnic inequality, gender inequality, educational, environmental, healthcare crises, etc.) within a sociological framework.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) To introduce students to the sociological approach to understanding social problems through applying “sociological imagination” to various social problems.
- 2) To understand the contexts that shape and define social problems.
- 3) To familiarize students with diverse social problems in the United States and other countries.

## STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the Social and Behavioral Sciences (S) [General Education](#) learning outcomes as follows:

**Content:** *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the social sciences.*

- Students will identify and apply theories, concepts, and analytical frameworks to understand social problems from a sociological perspective.
- Assessments
  - In-class assignments, quizzes, and exams will assess students’ competence in utilizing sociological imagination to understand society’s social problems.

**Critical Thinking:** *Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the social sciences.*

- Students will analyze several social problems utilizing different theoretical frameworks.
- Students will examine and critique proposed solutions and offer alternatives to core social problems.
- Assessments
  - In-class assignments and exams will assess students’ ability to analyze social problems from multiple perspectives.

**Communication:** *Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the social sciences.*

- Students will communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning related to various social issues in written and oral forms.
- Assessments
  - Students will participate in written or oral discussions in the classroom through in-class assignments.

## COURSE FORMAT

This course is entirely in-person. I will use a combination of methods of instruction. Class meetings will comprise PowerPoint lectures, in-class activities, discussions, and films. Class participation is an essential component of the learning process for this course. Students are expected to read all the assigned reading materials before each class and be prepared to participate in class discussions. To perform well in this course, it is crucial that you read the assigned readings carefully, take copious notes in class, and review the material regularly.

We will also make use of Canvas/e-learning. I will post lecture presentations and other class materials on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking e-Learning for updates, discussions, instructions, posted lecture notes, and many other resources. Students can learn more about Canvas and other technologies by visiting [UF's e-learning website](#). The [UF Computing Help Desk](#) is available to help troubleshoot technical issues.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

Eitzen, D. Stanley, Maxine Baca Zinn, and Kelly Eitzen Smith. 2018. *Social Problems*. 14th ed. New York: Pearson (ISBN: 9780134631905).

The readings encompass multiple theoretical perspectives and interpretations, as well as different sources and types of evidence. Our use of readings will highlight critical engagement of all perspectives and evidence covered, rather than endorsing one perspective over others.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

Class Protocol: Please be mindful of the following

- Please do not crosstalk during lectures, when someone is speaking or asking a question, or when we are watching a film or a video.
- Avoid walking in late or leaving early, as it disrupts the class.
- Please come to class prepared to complete in-class writing assignments (bring blank sheets of paper and a pen or pencil, etc.).

Classroom Environment—People learn best when encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content, including images, texts, data, and theories from across disciplines. This is especially true in courses that deal with provocative or contemporary issues. UF offers many such courses where students encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, facts, ideas, and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. Students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas in response to challenging material. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the University of Florida's mission, which includes exploring intellectual boundaries, creating new knowledge, and pursuing new ideas.

Occasionally, we will engage in a frank discussion of controversial and sensitive topics in this class, including (but not limited to) race, sexuality, political, and religious views. Given the diversity of our experiences, there may be occasions when conflicting viewpoints are expressed, but we must learn to disagree respectfully and with reason.

Therefore, to ensure that we have an effective classroom that is conducive to learning, we need to establish specific **ground rules**:

- We will create a safe atmosphere in the classroom that is conducive to learning.
- We will respect others and their ideas even when we disagree with someone during class or online discussions. We will respond to *ideas* rather than personally attacking or labeling the *person* expressing them.
- Our questions should show some consideration for your audience, and our answers should show some knowledge and context for the topic being discussed.
- We will not dominate class discussions.
- We will not discriminate, harass, or intimidate another student(s).
- We will respect the instructor's role as the class moderator and facilitator.
- We will observe other common-sense courteous behavior in class and during online discussions.

I reserve the right to act against consistently disruptive students according to legal and university guidelines.

Office Hours—If you need clarification or do not understand what we discussed in class, I am available to discuss anything with you during my office hours or over Zoom by appointment. I am happy to explain anything you do not understand or are having trouble with, so please come prepared with specific questions.

E-mail Policy: Students can contact me via email on my university account ([ravighadge@ufl.edu](mailto:ravighadge@ufl.edu)) or through Canvas. However, I prefer that you contact me via my e-mail. In every email, please write your full name and the course title in the subject line. This helps me quickly identify you. I will do my best to reply to emails in a timely fashion. There is one exception: any email sent in the afternoon on a Friday or other non-business day will be responded to on the following business day.

Class participation and Excused Absences: Class participation is an essential component of the learning process for this course. Students must complete the assigned readings **prior to** class. Keeping up with the readings and attending classes regularly are critical for performing well on assignments and achieving good grades.

Students who miss classes for excused absences must email the instructor to arrange any make-up work as soon as their condition permits. To be excused, medical situations must be documented (such as a signed physician's form). Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies](#). If you plan on missing any classes due to religious observances, please let me know early in the semester.

Classes will be conducted in a mixed format (lecture-discussion). The instructor will provide a context-setting lecture, and students should come prepared with questions from readings – the two will form the basis of structured discussions.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS, MASTERY OF SLOs, AND GRADING

**Your grade will be based on your scores in three assessment categories: Online Quizzes, In-class Tests, and In-class exercises.**

Assessment	Description	Due Date	Percentage of Final Grade
Online Quizzes (11/13)	Online Quizzes will evaluate students' comprehension of class material related to each topic (Content)	Every Sunday, 11:59 pm	24%
Tests (3 total)	Tests will evaluate student knowledge about the subject matter discussed in the textbook and lectures (Content and Critical Thinking)	Test 1: 9/23 Test 2: 10/28 Test 3: 12/4	66%
In-class exercises (12)	In-class exercises will evaluate students' ability to interpret and apply information from the textbook and lectures (Critical Thinking and Communication)	Assigned unannounced throughout the semester	10%
Total Grade			100%

*A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.*

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points may be accessed [here](#).

**Online Quizzes (24%):** Students must complete a 20-question multiple-choice quiz via Canvas at the end of each module. The quiz will be made available on Wednesday and due at the end of that week on Sunday at 11:59 pm. The quizzes will contain multiple-choice and T/F questions covering the material discussed in the textbook that week. You can access each quiz by clicking on your Canvas shell's "Quizzes" tab. You have 40 minutes to complete the quiz. PLEASE take the quiz after you have completed all the readings and activities. I recommend that you study for the quiz. You will run out of time if you try to look up the answer for each question (in the text and lecture slides). Since it is timed, ensure you will not have interruptions (i.e., friends, kids, work, etc.). There will be no make-up quizzes; however, I will drop your two lowest grades when calculating your quiz average. Students may only take each quiz once. Quizzes are auto-graded on Canvas. Please note that collaboration on tests is a form of academic dishonesty and, if noted, will be pursued per the university's honesty policy regarding cheating and plagiarism as discussed in the [University's Conduct Code](#).

Important dates for Quizzes (all are due before 11:59 PM on the specified due date):

Quiz #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Available:	Aug 28	Sep 4	Sep 11	Sep 18	Sep 25	Oct 2	Oct 9	Oct 16	Oct 23	Oct 30	Nov 6	Nov 13	Nov 20
Final Due Date:	Sep 1	Sep 8	Sep 15	Sep 22	Sep 29	Oct 6	Oct 13	Oct 20	Oct 27	Nov 3	Nov 10	Nov 17	Dec 24

**Very important:** Quizzes must be *completed* before the due date/time. If you begin the quiz before it is due but do not submit it in time, Canvas will record your grade as a zero. This score will remain and count toward your final grade. Be aware of the time and complete quizzes in a timely fashion.

*In-class Tests (3x22% each = 66% total):* There are **three required tests** for this course that are aimed at testing your knowledge of information from the textbook and lectures. Each in-class test is paper-based and will cover material from specific chapters (non-cumulative). All tests will be closed-book and consist of multiple-choice and true/false questions. Students will have the entire class time to complete the test. Each test is worth 22% of the final grade. Please note that collaboration on tests is a form of academic dishonesty and, if noted, will be pursued per the university's honesty policy regarding cheating and plagiarism as discussed in the [University's Conduct Code](#).

Test	DUE (In class)	Material Covered
Test 1	Monday, Sep 23	Chapters 1-5
Test 2	Monday, Oct 28	Chapters 6-9; 11
Test 3	Wednesday, Dec 4	Chapters 12, 13, 15, 16, 18

*In-class Assignments (12 = 10% total):* Over the semester, we will have 12 short in-class assignments (unannounced) intended to encourage students to come to class and keep up with the readings. Each in-class assignment will be graded based on the following rubric:

Criteria & Points	Description
Exemplary (5 points)	The student assignment demonstrates excellent comprehension of class material, and the writing is clear and convincing with specific details and examples.
Satisfactory (3 points)	The student assignment demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the class material, and the writing is clear but lacks specificity and detail.
Absent (0 points)	The student did not complete the assignment.

If you are absent from class due to a **university authorized** (legitimate reasons include illness, family emergencies, or university-sponsored activities) and miss an in-class assignment on that day, you need to provide written documentation explaining your legitimate absence. The easiest way for you to do this is to reach out to the university Care Team ([umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or by phone at 352-294-2273) and explain your situation. They will gather appropriate documentation and let me know which, if any, days you need to be excused.



## Grading Scale

A	94.0–100	C	74.0–76.9
A-	90.0–93.9	C-	70.0–73.9
B+	87.0–89.9	D+	67.0–69.9
B	84.0–86.9	D	64.0–66.9
B-	80.0–83.9	D-	60.0–63.9
C+	77.0–79.9	E	≤ 59.9

*A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.*

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points may be accessed can be accessed [here](#).

Please be aware of your grade trajectory throughout the semester, and if you are concerned about your grade at any point, you should speak to me about it during office hours as soon as possible. **I will not round up final grades.** Also, be aware that Canvas is only a medium for me to display your individual assignment and test scores. Even though Canvas calculates your overall grade, you should always calculate your grade to verify that it is correct.

## UF Policies

### Course Compliance

In SYG2010, there may be content on historical background and sociological concepts about sociological topics. Multiple sources, types of evidence, and interpretations are included, and differing interpretations of historical events are discussed with an emphasis on diverse theoretical perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. The class emphasizes maintaining accuracy and objectivity and skills to evaluate evidence and claims. Discussions of history are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy, and students can draw their own conclusions.

Social Problems may touch on topics germane to identity, but as subjects of study and not advocacy; in that spirit, we routinely teach on diverse theoretical perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. Discussions of identity are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy.

The course may discuss systemic theories as they relate to sociological perspectives on social problems, but it considers them in the context of other theoretical approaches and includes critique of all theoretical perspectives. The course does not endorse concepts of systemic racism, sexism, oppression, or privilege. It also does not treat inequalities or injustice as inherent, but instead discusses theoretical perspectives that explain whether and how social structures may create and reproduce inequalities. Such processes are viewed as contingent and negotiated and often contested rather than natural or determined. The course cites relevant facts based on research demonstrating how institutions are social contexts that shape inequalities within the United States and globally. Discussions of various interpretations are case- or data-driven rather

than driven by an ideology. Grading of assignments and/or exams focuses on understanding of content rather than adopting a specific opinion.

### **Academic Misconduct**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information.](#) If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **In-class Recording**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### **Online Evaluation Policy**

Evaluations: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback professionally and respectfully is available on the [GatorEvals page](#).



Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [this link](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students on the [GatorEvals Public Results page](#).

## **Classroom Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [See the "Get Started With the DRC" webpage on the Disability Resource Center Site](#). You must share your accommodation letter with me and discuss your access needs as early as possible in the semester.

## **Student Complaints Policy**

If students have concerns about classroom issues, disagreements, or grades, their first point of contact is the classroom instructor, whose contact information appears on the syllabus. If the problem cannot be resolved, the student should email the next departmental contact: in classes with TAs, this is the instructor of record; in classes without TAs, this may be the departmental course coordinator or the department chair. Their contact information can be found on the syllabus or the [department website](#). Email to the departmental contact should include a clear description of the student's concern and supporting documents. Most concerns are resolved at this level. If a resolution cannot be reached at the departmental level, the student will be referred to the [Office of the UF Ombuds](#).

## **Helpful Campus Resources**

### ***Health and Wellness***

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

## Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.
- [Teaching Center](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.](#)
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)

## Course Calendar

I plan to follow the course syllabus presented in this document will be followed as closely as possible. However, it is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, including the tentative calendar presented below.

Week	Topic and Reading (Complete prior to class)	Course Work (Quizzes due on Canvas on Sunday @11:59 pm)
<u>Week 1</u> Friday, Aug 23	Introduction—No Readings	
<u>Week 2</u> Monday, Aug 26 Wednesday, Aug 28 Friday, Aug 30	<b>Ch. 1 The Sociological Approach to Social Problems</b> <b>Ch.2 Wealth and Power</b>	<b>Quiz#1 DUE: Sep 1</b>
<u>Week 3</u> Monday, Sep 2 Wednesday, Sep 4 Friday, Sep 6	<b>No Class—Labor Day</b> <b>Ch.3 World Population and Global Inequality</b>	<b>Quiz#2 DUE: Sep 8</b>
<u>Week 4</u> Monday, Sep 9 Wednesday, Sep 11 Friday, Sep 13	<b>Ch. 4 Demographic Changes</b>	<b>Quiz#3 DUE: Sep 15</b>
<u>Week 5</u> Monday, Sep 16 Wednesday, Sep 18	<b>Ch. 5 Problems of Place: Urban, Suburban, and Rural</b>	

Friday, Sep 20		<b>Quiz#4 DUE: Sep 22</b>
<u>Week 6</u> Monday, Sep 23 Wednesday, Sep 25 Friday, Sep 27	<b>Ch. 6 Threats to the Environment</b> <b>Test #1</b>	<b>Quiz#5 DUE: Sep 29</b>
<u>Week 7</u> Monday, Sep 30 Wednesday, Oct 2 Friday, Oct 4	<b>Ch. 7 Poverty</b>	<b>Quiz#6 DUE: Oct 6</b>
<u>Week 8</u> Monday, Oct 7 Wednesday, Oct 9 Friday, Oct 11	<b>Ch. 8 Racial and Ethnic Inequality</b>	<b>Quiz#7 DUE: Oct 13</b>
<u>Week 9</u> Monday, Oct 14 Wednesday, Oct 16 Friday, Oct 18	<b>Ch. 9 Gender Inequality</b>  <b>No class—Homecoming</b>	<b>Quiz#8 DUE: Oct 20</b>
<u>Week 10</u> Monday, Oct 21 Wednesday, Oct 23 Friday, Oct 25	<b>Ch. 11 Crime and Justice</b>	<b>Quiz#9 DUE: Oct 27</b>
<u>Week 11</u> Monday, Oct 28 Wednesday, Oct 30 Friday, Nov 1	<b>Ch. 12 Drugs</b> <b>Test #2</b>	<b>Quiz# 10 DUE: Nov 3</b>
<u>Week 12</u> Monday, Nov 4 Wednesday, Nov 6 Friday, Nov 8	<b>Ch. 13 The Economy and Work</b>	<b>Quiz#11 DUE: Nov 10</b>
<u>Week 13</u> Monday, Nov 11 Wednesday, Nov 13 Friday, Nov 15	<b>Ch. 15 Education</b> <b>No Class—Veterans Day</b>	<b>Quiz#12 DUE Nov 17</b>
<u>Week 14</u> Monday, Nov 18 Wednesday, Nov 20 Friday, Nov 22	<b>Ch. 16 The Health Care System</b>	<b>Quiz#13 DUE: Nov 24</b>
<b>Nov 25-30 No class--Thanksgiving</b>		
<u>Week 15</u> Monday, Dec 2  Wednesday, Dec 4	<b>Ch. 18 Progressive Plan to Solve Social Problems</b> <b>Test#3</b>	