Unit 4: Social Problems in the Social and Natural World

Course Objectives

CO2: Assess patterns and causes of social problems in social institutions in light of research findings.

CO3: Identify how social issues are impacted by local and global conditions.

CO4: Analyze the intersections of race, class, gender and other social dynamics to social problems.

CO5: Identify social policies and social changes/actions arising from social problems.

Module Objectives

MO12: Identify the social problems in relation to drug abuse, crime and deviance, environmental issues and war and terrorism and the local/global factors influencing them

MO13: Discuss social policies and actions that affect our social and natural world

A. Student Readings:

**Alcohol & Drugs**

Barkan, Steven. "[Social Problems: Change and Continuity](http://www.saylor.org/site/textbooks/Social%20Problems,%20Continuity%20and%20Change%20-%20Attributed.pdf)". Flat World Knowledge. Saylor.org. 2012. Web. 30 January 2012. Chapter 7

Rogers, Thomas. [“Why College Students Love to get Wasted”](http://www.salon.com/2011/08/28/college_drinking_interview/). Salon. Salon Media Group, 28 Aug. 2011. Web. 30 July 2012.

[“New Solutions for Drug Policy”](http://www.drugpolicy.org/new-solutions-drug-policy), Drug Policy Alliance, 2013. Web. 30 July 2012.

**Crime and Criminal Justice**

Barkan, Steven. "[Social Problems: Change and Continuity](http://www.saylor.org/site/textbooks/Social%20Problems,%20Continuity%20and%20Change%20-%20Attributed.pdf)". Flat World Knowledge. Saylor.org. 2012. Web. 30 January 2012. Chapter 8

Olson, Dan. [“Racial Disparities: An Overview”](http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/200111/12_newsroom_colorofjustice/overview.shtml). Minnesota Public Radio. Nov. 2001. Web. 30 July 2012.

**Population and The Environment**

Barkan, Steven. "[Social Problems: Change and Continuity](http://www.saylor.org/site/textbooks/Social%20Problems,%20Continuity%20and%20Change%20-%20Attributed.pdf)". Flat World Knowledge. Saylor.org. 2012. Web. 30 January 2012. Chapter 15

Sachs, Jeffrey. ["The End of Poverty"](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1034738,00.html). Time Website. 6 March 2005. Web. 21 May 2012.

B. Resources for Lectures:

["An Inconvenient Truth" website](http://www.climatecrisis.net/reading_list.php)

[Green Business Network website](http://greenbusinessnetwork.org/)

C. Films:

[TEDGlobal: “Lessons from Death Row Inmates”](http://www.ted.com/talks/david_r_dow_lessons_from_death_row_inmates.html) (Crime & Criminal Justice)

David Dow examines death penalty cases and the lessons we can learn from

hearing stories of inmates on death row.

[TED@Cannes: “Global Population Growth Box by Box”](http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_on_global_population_growth.html) (Population & the

Environment) Hans Rosling explores population growth using ikea boxes.

[Youtube: “Landfill Harmonic”](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXynrsrTKbI&feature=youtu.be) (Population & the Environment)

This film explores the innovative ways that youth in Paraguay

have utilized landfill waste to create musical instruments.

D. Activities

1. Participation: Small Group Discussion

Throughout the quarter, we frequently use small group discussion to elicit more in-depth examination of the course material. Small groups allow for a participatory learning environment. In our small groups, we find that explicitly stating the directive and the allotted time are key success factors. For this purpose, it may help to include a worksheet with guiding questions and/or instructions.

We recommend instructors choose these groups in order to ensure heterogeneity (i.e. a good mix of gender, ethnicity, skill level, and age). In our classes of 30-35 students, we generally assign groups of 4-5. We assess this small group work as part of the in-class participation points. Group activities range from 5 points – 20 points depending on the time and instruction.

2. Participation Activity - [How Many Slaves Work for You? Interactive](http://slaveryfootprint.org/) Web Survey

Students are instructed to go to this website and take the Slavery Footprint Survey.

http://slaveryfootprint.org

TYPE your answers to the following:

a) What score did you receive? (Please print the sheet with your score)

b) Look at the map which shows the main locations where your slaves

worked, discuss what areas of your lifestyle affected your score the most?

c) What are some concrete ways you could take action?

3. Connected Knower

This assignment (done 3 times throughout the quarter) contains 3 sections. In section one, students will identify main arguments and claims from select lectures, readings, statistical data, films and guest speakers. In section two they will connect some of the claims through an overarching theme, explaining the significance of the theme in society. In the last section they will reflect upon how the theme has significance to their own lives and lived experience.

4. Final Project

In the final project, students will use the knowledge gained over the quarter to demonstrate their understanding of a social problem and the real life organizations that attempt to eradicate the issue. In small groups, students will first choose a social problem they are interested in (using information from the concept map and media analysis); and then through scholarly research describe the causes, scope, and consequences. They then will choose and research an organization that attempts to address this social problem, examining through Internet research the organization’s mission, approach, resources, and effectiveness. The students will complete the project with a poster and presentation based on their findings.