# SOCI 1520 Contemporary Social Problems



# Spring 2020 / Online

# Dr. Karen Monique Gregg / TA Jameelah Ra’oof

# Important UNT Dates

Classes begin: 1/13 Spring Break: 3/9-3/15

MLK Day (No Classes): 1/20 Last Day of Class: 4/28

Census Date: 1/27 Pre-Final Days: 4/29-30

Mid-Semester: 3/6 Final Exams: 5/2-5/7

# Important Dates for this Course

* Natural History Paper due before 11:59 p.m. on 5/2
* Case Study Qs due before 11:59 p.m. on Saturdays on various dates
* Other assignments due as scheduled in Syllabus

# General Information

**Contact with Professor:** Please post any questions you may have in the Discussion for Q&A. I will correspond with you and grade for this course frequently.

**Office Hours:** Sycamore 288V, Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. and by appointment.

**Inbox Canvas:** If you need to speak to me privately, the BEST way to do so is via theInbox inCanvas.Please allow 24-hours for a response.

**Unavailable:**

I do not respond to emails or messages in the evenings and on weekends. If you email me then, please expect a reply the next business day.

Dr. Gregg E-mail: Karen.Gregg@UNT.edu

**TA E-mail:** JameelahRaOof@myunt.edu

## UNT INFORMATION

The University of North Texas (UNT) is a major public research university deeply committed to advancing educational excellence and preparing students to become thoughtful, engaged citizens of the world.

### College of Liberal Arts and Sciences / Mission and Vision

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (formerly the College of Arts and Sciences) began in 1945 with a diverse set of 14 departments. Today, our family of 22 academic departments and programs remains eclectic. And so are the college's alumni, who number in the tens of thousands and live throughout the United States and in many countries around the world. Our alumni have distinguished themselves in areas ranging from scientific research to politics to business and finance.

**Mission:** Our mission is to kindle the thirst for truth, justice, and beauty; to foster cultural literacy and scientific investigation; and to cultivate thinking, speaking, and writing abilities characterized by clear expression and logically coherent, evidence-based arguments. We see these as the values, forms of knowledge, and skills most needed by citizens of a democracy and by productive members of the global workforce.

**Vision:** We seek a future in which the achievements of our faculty and students reach ever greater heights of excellence and public recognition; in which a spirit of inclusion and mutual respect is maintained and strengthened among faculty and students with differing viewpoints and from diverse backgrounds; and in which increasing interdisciplinary collaboration opens up new opportunities for intellectual, empirical, and creative discovery.

### Department of Sociology

We are a dynamic community of faculty, staff and students who share a commitment to developing sociological imaginations in ourselves and others. Our mission as a department is to provide undergraduate and graduate students with conceptual and methodological tools to productively analyze social patterns. High-level sociological training prepares our students for careers in education, marketing, social services, government, data science, health care and many other fields.

## COURSE INFORMATION

### Course Catalog Description

1520 (1306). Contemporary Social Problems. 3 hours. Conditions disruptive to society today, both those seen as problematic as a whole and those that violate the norms of special groups in society; includes population, poverty, minorities crime, drugs, sexual deviance, mental illness, changing family patterns and violence.

* Satisfies arts and sciences core social science requirements. Advised for students planning sociology graduate work.
* Satisfies the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement of the University Core Curriculum.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

* Develop an understanding of the constructionist approach to studying social problems.
* Learn and be able to apply a critical analysis of the different stages of the Natural History of Social Problems Process to a social problem.
* By the end of the course, the student will be better able to analyze what they read and hear about social problems going forward.

# Required Materials

 **ISBN: 978-0-393-28341-9**

1. Joel Best. 2018. *Social Problems,* W.W. Norton. Students must get 3rd edition! If the picture on the front of your book does not look like this, you have the wrong book. All assignments, quizzes and other papers are **based on the 3rd edition of the book**. Do not buy any other version! This is the primary text for the course. Everyone needs this book ASAP, Day 1 of the course.

The best way to obtain the required course materials is through the UNT bookstore on campus. Not having the required material for the course by week one of the course is not a sufficient excuse for missing class or the assignments.

Bottom Line: FOR THE COURSE **TO BE FAIR**, EVERYONE MUST HAVE THE REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE COURSE.

To function in this course, students must have access to a working computer with reliable Internet access. Computer failures or Internet outages are not acceptable excuses for missed work.

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| 1. Students will choose one of the following books to base their term paper on. The term paper is due during finals week. The bookstore should have a few of these books.
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| /var/folders/vv/129_2lks0sb7gjxqw38y08nw0000gn/T/com.microsoft.Word/WebArchiveCopyPasteTempFiles/51Jw1mvwZHL._SX312_BO1,204,203,200_.jpg | A picture containing cabinet, furniture, red, outdoor  Description automatically generated | A close up of text on a white surface  Description automatically generated | A blue sign with white text  Description automatically generated |

1. Each book has a corresponding research article assigned to go with it. Students are responsible for obtaining the research article from the UNT Library. A permalink to the corresponding article has been created in Canvas for your convenience. Students must use this article for an assignment called the Research Article Overview and for their term paper.

## UNT ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

### UNT Code of Student Conduct

Click here to see the expectations regarding your conduct as a student of UNT. <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>

### UNT Academic Integrity

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. For more information, see: <https://vpaa.unt.edu/fs/resources/academic/integrity>

### UNT Participation/Attendance

The University of North Texas recognizes that student success is promoted by regular attendance and participation in class. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to notify students in writing of any special attendance requirements for the class. This policy applies to all modes of course delivery. For more information see: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039>

### Prof Gregg’s Requirements

You are expected to log into the Canvas site often and to participate on a weekly basis in the course. You have work to complete every week in Canvas. If it appears that you are not participating in the course, I will use the Care Team reporting system to alert the university of your lack of participation. Someone will reach out to you.

### Office of Disability Access

UNT is committed to providing equal access to higher education for academically qualified students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Access assists students with disabilities in achieving their academic potential by coordinating a variety of services. The office acts as a liaison between the student, instructors, and other university resources and community agencies.

To be eligible for services, you must register with the Office of Disability Access and provide current documentation of the disability. Contact the office at least eight weeks before enrolling at UNT to ensure sufficient time to plan for individualized academic modifications and services. While every effort is made to accommodate students with disabilities, it is the student’s responsibility to make needs known, provide proper documentation, and request services in a timely manner. See: <https://disability.unt.edu>

### Prof Gregg’s Requirements

If you are eligible for accommodations based on a documented disability with the Office of Disability Access, you are required to notify me in the form of a letter from the Office of Disability Access within one week of the start date for the course. At that time, we will meet (or trade emails) to discuss reasonable accommodations for you to be successful in this course. Once the course has started, no new accommodations will be made (unless the documented disability is new).

### UNT Writing Center

The Writing Center at the University of North Texas provides support for undergraduate and graduate writers across the disciplines. Our mission is to help students improve as writers at all levels, and we support a culture of teaching and learning at UNT through peer tutoring, interactive workshops, classroom support, and consultation with faculty and staff. For more information, see: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/our-mission>

### UNT TITLE IX Information

The University of North Texas is committed to providing a safe environment for all community members. Dating violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual coercion, sexual exploitation, sexual violence, and stalking are prohibited. Please see our page on reporting sexual violence for more information. We are here to help. Find more information about sexual violence, including campus and community resources at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct?utm_medium=deanofstudents&utm_source=web&utm_campaign=dsa-home-page>.

## PROFESSOR GREGG’S COURSE EXPECTATIONS

### What you can expect from your instructor:

1. Respect and active listening.
2. Consistent grading with return time within one-two weeks.
3. Willingness to teach, learn and answer questions.
4. To be prepared each week for our class.
5. To allow ample opportunity for you to do well in this course.
6. To be available by appointment for additional help.
7. To treat everyone equally and fairly.

### What I expect from you:

1. Patience with me as the instructor and with all others who participate in this class.
2. Active participation in our class in the Canvas environment as required by the syllabus.
3. To complete all assignments as they are scheduled in the syllabus.
4. Consistent participation in person and on-line. If it appears you are not actively engaged in this course, Prof. Gregg will use the UNT Care Team reporting system to make recommendations.
5. To read the syllabus carefully each week and know what is supposed to happen. This is our contract. Prof. Gregg and her TA will do all that they can to abide by the syllabus, so they expect you to do the same.
6. To act with academic integrity during any quizzes and in all writing. Your work should be your own. Cheating will not be tolerated! See above for the UNT policy on academic dishonesty.
7. To read the grading comments that Prof. Gregg and her TA provide on all of your assignments. They will incorporate tips and you will learn important things about yourself as a student by reading these comments. If you need extra help with your writing, Dr. Gregg and her TA will suggest that you use the Writing Center on campus (Sage Hall).
8. To put assignments in the correct space in Canvas. If you put things in the wrong spot, you will receive a zero (0) and your work will not be graded.
9. To follow ALL directions in the syllabus, if you do not follow the directions, you will automatically receive a zero (0) on that assignment.
10. To buy and use the correct version of the book. Right now, that is the 3rd Edition of Joel Best’s *Social Problems*.If you analyze something other than what everyone else is analyzing, you will receive a zero (0). This is especially important when completing any writing assignment. Please buy and use the correct version of the book.
* IMPORTANT: For example, if we happen look up something you quote in the book and it is not on the page cited, you will automatically fail the assignment and receive a zero (0) with no chance to redo the assignment.
1. To be responsible for your work and prepare for and handle situations of computer and Internet difficulties. If your Internet is out, go somewhere where it is working so that you do not miss quizzes or other assignments. **You have 7 days each week to complete the work items for the week.** Do not wait until the last minute to begin your work. I recommend completing your work by Thursday or Friday each week. That way, if you do have some technical difficulty, you’ll have 24-48 hours to correct it.
2. If you need additional help in this course, it is your responsibility to contact Dr. Gregg or her TA to make an appointment. Visits to office hours usually help students get on track. Both the TA and Dr. Gregg with hold regular office hours.

## ASSIGNMENTS and TECHNICAL ISSUES

All assignments should be submitted by the indicated dates and times embedded in the syllabus. There will be no extensions, except in cases of documented emergencies. In the event of a legitimate emergency, students are to contact the Dr. Gregg to arrange for an in-person meeting during office hours. When possible, students should contact Dr. Gregg **PRIOR TO** missing the assignment. Each student is allowed **only one documented emergency** per semester. If you contact Dr. Gregg **PRIOR TO** the missed assignment, you may or may not be granted leniency in missing the assignment.

Students are responsible for knowing the Canvas environment. This means that students are responsible for their own training in Canvas. Technical problems with Canvas software are to be directed to the **Help Desk**.

[UNT Help Desk](https://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/) - 940-565-2324 / Sage Hall 330 / helpdesk@unt.edu
Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - midnight
Friday 8:00 am - 8:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday noon – midnight

Technical problems with computers or CanvasARE NOT satisfactory excuses for missing assignment deadlines. I suggest that you DO NOT wait until the last minute to submit assignments. If you experience trouble with your computer or your home Internet access, you are expected to use the computer clusters on campus to complete your work on time.

At the end of the semester I will base your grade on the Grading Scale below.

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| ABOUT GRADES |
| ≥ 92% = **A** | 74-83% = **C** | Anything lower than 65% = **F** |
| 84-91% = **B** | 65%-73% = **D** |  |

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS and VALUES

### Assignments:

To succeed in this course, you are asked to carefully read chapters from Best’s 3rd Ed. of *Social Problems*,follow the Syllabus closely, and complete and turn in assignments as scheduled in the Tentative Course Schedule below. To proceed, I recommend that each week you read the syllabus and check off the expected work items as you go. If you do this, you won’t miss a thing.

Again, although the due date for most of the work is before midnight on Saturdays, it is best to complete your work sometime before Friday. All work is open and ready for you to complete and it is okay to work ahead in this course. That’s the beauty of taking an online course!

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| Assignments and Values |
| Figure 1.1[[1]](#footnote-1) (Week 2 Assignment) | 100 Points |
| There are a few required discussion posts. | Completion Grade |
| Case Studies and Questions (9 Chapters) | 100 Points X 9 = 900 Points |
| Research Article Overview[[2]](#footnote-2) (Week 4-5 Assignment) | 100 Points  |
| Natural History of Social Problem Process Paper(Based on your choice of 1 of 4 books)Writing every week of the semester | 500 Points |
| **TOTAL** | **1600 Points** |

Directions for all of these assignments are embedded in the Tentative Course Schedule and more details are found at the end of the Syllabus and in Canvas. Students should follow all directions.

# Tentative Course Schedule

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| **Wk 1 (1/12-1/18)****Theme: Getting Stuff, Getting to Know You, Getting Going** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| 1/13 | Classes Start | YAY! Check into course! |
|  | Find, read, and print out Syllabus. Post any questions to Q&A discussion in Canvas.  | In Canvas |
|  | Buy Best’s book ASAP!  | The bookstore should have the book for you. |
|  | Upload your picture to Canvas.  | Do this ASAP |
|  | Post introduction to Discussion. Tell us:1. Your Major
2. How far along you are in your studies at UNT
3. Why you took this course (required? for fun? because you’ve had Dr. Gregg before? Etc…)

Respond to one other person welcoming them to the course.  | In Discussions in CanvasDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 1/18Complete/Incomplete grade |
|  | Look over the 4 books to choose for the Natural History of Social Problems Process Paper. **Think about** which book interests you most.  | In Syllabus |

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| **Wk 2 (1/19-1/25)****Theme: The Social Problems Process** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| 1/20 | MLK Day | No Classes |
|  | Read: A Note to the Reader and Ch. 1 | Best TEXT |
|  | Handwrite out (do not type) Figure 1.1. Take a picture of what you wrote and upload to Canvas in the correct spot. | Best TEXT, p. 19100 pointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 1/25 |
|  | Look over the 4 books to choose for the Natural History of Social Problems Process Paper. **Decide** which book interests you most. | In Syllabus |
|  | Watch the Dr. Gregg YouTube explaining How to Earn an A on the Natural History Paper<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBj0_W9DDXU> | In Canvas |

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| **Wk 3 (1/26-2/1)****Theme: Claims** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 2 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 2 Case Study, “Threats to the American Dream as a Cultural Resource”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 62-65100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/1 |
|  | Buy book for Natural History of Social Problems Process Paper. Start reading.Post in Discussion for your Book:1. What book did you choose?
2. Why did you choose this book?
3. Respond to others who also post on your book.
 | Book store may have a few of these.Discussion in CanvasDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) on Saturday 2/1Complete/Incomplete grade |
| START WRITING | What to Write: **Introduction (1 paragraph):** Introduce your book. Explain to the reader the reasons why you chose the book. In this paragraph connect it to something in Joel Best’s Ch. 1. This means you need to directly quote something Best says about social problems. Then, introduce the Natural History of Social Problems Process. What is it? Finally, explain the **Subjectivist Outlook** that Best describes in Ch. 1. End the paragraph by telling the reader whether you agree or disagree with Best’s argument to use the **Subjectivist Outlook** (as opposed to the Objectivist).  | Begin writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 4 (2/2-2/8)****Theme: Activists as Claimsmakers** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 3 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 3 Case Study, “Mobilizing over Income Inequality”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 95-98100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/8 |
|  | Find the assigned research article that goes with the book you selected to read for the Natural History paper. Read article.  | Click on Permalink to Library in Canvas |
|  | Find and read the instructions for the Research Article Overview (RAO) Assignment in the Syllabus.  | PDF file in Canvas |

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| **Wk 5 (2/9-2/15)****Theme: Experts as Claimsmakers** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 4 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 4 Case Study, “Forecasting the Future”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 126-129100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/15 |
|  | Complete reading the assigned research article that goes with the book you selected to read for the Natural History paper.  | Click on Permalink to Library in Canvas |
|  | Complete the Research Article Overview (RAO) Assignment. Follow all directions in Syllabus pertaining to the RAO assignment.  | PDF file in CanvasLink to LibraryWorth 100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/15 |

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| **Wk 6 (2/16-2/22)****Theme: Reading Week**  |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: 2-3 Chs. of the book you selected to read.Take notes as you read. Link to the Natural History of Social Problems Process. | Your book.Aim to complete before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/22 |
|  | Begin reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book.  | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Literature Review (1 paragraph)**: Identify the social problem you are addressing in this paper. Using your RAO briefly describe the research article you were assigned to read. Use the article to discuss what has already been studied about your social problem. Describe the major findings or take-away points from your research article. Use the headings in the RAO to guide you in what to write. Somehow link the research article to Best’s book or the book you read in order to segue to the next paragraph.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 7 (2/23-2/29)****Theme:**  |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 5 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 5 Case Study, “Democratizing the Means of Media Production and Reproduction”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 161-164100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 2/29 |
|  | Continue reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Claimsmaking (2-3 paragraphs)**: Using Best’s book explain **Claimsmaking** generally. Then, describe who the **Activists** were in your book (Best 18). Were the activists **Experts**? (Best 20) If so, describe them. Best says that **Claimsmakers** tell us “here is what’s wrong and here’s what needs to be done” (Best 22). How did the claimsmakers in your book do this? How did it all start? To write these 2-3 paragraph use Chapters 1-4 of Best. The aim in these paragraphs is to make connections between Best’s chapters and your book, and if possible the research article you were assigned. To do this, quote from the chapters in Best (or research article), then connect to your book.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 8 (3/1-3/7)****Theme: Reading Week**  |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: 2-4 Chs. of the book you selected to read.Take notes as you read. Link to the Natural History of Social Problems Process. | Your book.Aim to complete before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 3/7 |
|  | Continue reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Media Converage (1 paragraph)**: Describe the role the media played in the social problem of your book. Did the **Claimsmakers** of your book seek media coverage? Consider whether (or how) the media hindered or helped (or both) to get the word out about the social problem. To do this, use what you’ve learned from Best’s Ch. 5 to support your findings. In this paragraph quote something from this chapter.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 9 (3/8-3/14) SPRING BREAK** |
| Catch Up on Reading and Writing! |

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| **Wk 10 (3/15-3/21)****Theme: Public Reaction** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 6 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 6 Case Study, “Public Reactions to Epidemics”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 195-198100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 3/21 |
|  | Continue reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Public Reaction (1 paragraph)**: Describe anything from your book that resembles what Best means by “**public reaction**.” Did you book describe anything about **public opinion** or **poll data**? If so, describe it. To do this, use what you’ve learned from Best’s Ch. 6 to support your findings. In this paragraph quote something from this chapter. Do not skip this paragraph.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 11 (3/22-3/28)****Theme: Policymaking** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 7 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 7 Case Study, “Legalizing Marijuana and Same-Sex Marriage”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 227-230100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 3/28 |
|  | Continue reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Policy Making (1-2 paragraphs)**: Did policy makers come into play in the discussion of your book’s social problems? Best tells us that, “Social policies are the means that society adopts to address troubling conditions, and such policies can be made in various ways” (Best 21). For example, did any laws change? Did any other sorts of policymaking bodies implement changes? To answer these questions, use Ch. 7 of Best’s book. In this/these paragraph(s) quote something from this chapter.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 12 (3/29-4/4)****Theme: Social Problems Work** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 8 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 8 Case Study, “Responding to Police Violence”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 260-263100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 4/4 |
|  | Continue reading book. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Social Problems Work (1-2 paragraphs)**: Explain what **“Social Problems Work”** is and identify for the reader any of the **Social Problems Workers** from your book. What sorts of problems did they encounter? Best states, “They must deal with particular cases and address a messy real world that often seems quite complicated” (Best 22). What does Best mean by this? Give examples from your book. To write this paragraph(s) use Best’s Ch. 8. In this/these paragraph(s) quote something from the chapter.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 13 (4/5-4/11)****Theme: Policy Outcomes** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
|  | Read: Ch. 9 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 9 Case Study, “Modifying Student Loans”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 292-295100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 4/11 |
|  | Aim to finish reading book in next week. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |

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| **Wk 14 (4/12-4/18)****Theme: Claims Across Space and Time** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| **Please do this!** | Complete the course evaluation when asked to do so. You should receive an email called SPOT evaluation. | DO ASAP – Please! |
|  | Read: Ch. 10 | Best TEXT |
|  | Read: Ch. 10 Case Study, “Is Social Problems Theory Ethnocentric”Complete Case Study Qs Submit to Canvas | Best TEXT, pp. 325-328100 PointsDue before midnight (11:59 p.m.) Saturday 4/18 |
|  | Aim to finish reading book in next week. Take notes. Try to link to the Natural History process described in Best’s book. | Your book choice |
| Keep Writing | What to Write: **Policy Outcomes (1 paragraph)**: Best tells us that there are several types of outcomes possible with the social problems process. Can you identify any policy outcomes in your book? If so, describe them. Then consider whether there were **critics** of the outcomes? At times **critics** argue that the policy changes are ineffective. Other times they argue that the policy changes go too far. Best says, “Often such complaints and questions lead to new claims, and the social problems process begins anew” (Best 23). Is this the case in your book? Use Best’s Chs. 9 and 10 to answer and explain. Be sure to quote something from both of these chapters.  | Continue Writing Term Paper |

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| **Wk 15 (4/19-4/25)****Theme: The Uses of the Constructionist Stance** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| **Please do this!** | Complete the course evaluation when asked to do so. You should receive an email called SPOT evaluation. | DO ASAP —Please!  |
|  | Read: Ch. 11 | Best TEXT |
|  | Watch the Dr. Gregg YouTube explaining How to Earn an A on the Natural History Paper<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBj0_W9DDXU> | In Canvas |
| Almost Finished | What to Write: **Conclusion (1 paragraph)**: Describe for the reader what you learned from: 1) Best’s book about the Natural History of Social Problems Process; 2) the book you selected; 3) this assignment; and 4) this course. (It is okay to say, “I learned…”) Conclude this paragraph saying something very general about social problems going forward. It is okay in a conclusion to speculate about the future of the social problem you studied. Do not quote Best’s book in the conclusion. The conclusion should be all you!  | Finish up First Draft of Term Paper |

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| **Wk 16 (4/26-4/28)****Theme: Preparing to Write Natural History of Social Problem Paper** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| **Please do this!** | Complete the course evaluation when asked to do so. You should receive an email called SPOT evaluation. | DO ASAP – Please! |
|  | Watch the Dr. Gregg YouTube explaining How to Earn an A on the Natural History Paper<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBj0_W9DDXU> | In Canvas |
|  | Reread instructions in Syllabus for writing the Natural History of Social Problems Process paper. Review First Draft. Make sure you followed all directions. If you need to, take Term Paper to Writing Center for help. | In Canvas and Syllabus |
| 4/29-4/30 | Pre-Final Days – Reading DaysUse to review your work and polish your writing. | No Classes |

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| **Wk 17 (5/2-5/7) FINAL EXAM TIMES****Theme: Preparing to Write Natural History of Social Problem Paper** |
|  | **Description of Work to Complete** | **How to / When Due** |
| **Please do this!** | Complete the course evaluation when asked to do so. You should receive an email called SPOT evaluation. | DO ASAP |
| DUE | Turn in Natural History of Social Problem Paper | In CanvasWorth 500 PointsDue date before midnight on Monday 5/2/2020  |

Thank you for taking this course!

Please complete the SPOT evaluation.

# **COURSE ASSIGMNMENTS AND VALUES**

# Assignments Based on Best’s Book (1000 Points)

* Read Chapters as assigned in Best’s book.
* After reading Ch. 1 hand write out Figure 1.1, take picture, and upload to Canvas in the correct spot. (100 points)
* Complete Case Study Qs for Chs. 2-10. (9 X 100 = 900 points)
* To complete the Case Study Qs, follow the instructions carefully in Canvas.
	+ If you do not fully answer the questions or carefully address what is being asked, you will not do well. Use your best college writing and thoroughly answer the questions asked.
	+ Be sure to format your paper exactly as it says in Canvas.
	+ You must include a heading, a title, and type out all of the questions before providing your answers.
* How will you be graded on these papers?
	+ We will be looking for both quantity and quality of your answers. Following directions and answering what is asked is key to doing well. Whenever possible refer to something that you’ve read in the chapter assigned. To quote Best, do so like this: (Best 10).
	+ Only perfect papers will be awarded 100 points.
	+ Very good papers will be awarded 90 points (an error).
	+ Average papers will be awarded 84 points (some errors).
	+ If you fail to follow too many of the directions, you grade will reflect the effort you put into the paper and will be less than 84 points.

**Extra Credit Points:** Write out by hand any Figure the week we are on that chapter, take a picture, upload to EC Spot. (5-20 points for each one).

# Natural History of Social Problem Process Paper (500 Points)

## Steps to Prepare for Paper:

### Pick book and read

1. Research 4 books assigned in course for term paper and pick one to read. (Weeks 1-2) See below for choices and a brief synopsis of each.
2. Post in discussion for your book (I chose Missoula, I chose Evicted, etc…). Only post in one. Share your book choice and explain WHY you picked the book. Buy book. Begin reading.

### Complete Research Article Overview

1. Find research article assigned in Canvas that corresponds to your book choice. (See below underneath each synopsis of book for the specific research article assigned for each book.) Print, save, and begin reading. A permalink to UNT’s library has been created in Canvas for your convenience.
2. Read research article. Begin preparing Research Article Overview (RAO).
3. Review, revise, and submit RAO to Canvas.

### Read, Read, Read your Book

1. Read 2-3 Chs. of book. Take notes. Link to the Natural History of Social Problems Process discussed in each chapter of Best’s book.
2. Read another 2-4 Chs. of book. Take notes. Link to the Natural History of Social Problems Process discussed in each chapter of Best’s book.
3. Finish reading book. Take notes. Link to the Natural History of Social Problems Process discussed in each chapter of Best’s book.

### Write, Write, Write your Paper

1. Watch Dr. Gregg’s YouTube video explaining how to earn an A on this paper.
2. Begin writing the Natural History of Social Problems Process paper. Follow all directions in syllabus and in Canvas for doing so.
3. Complete and submit the Natural History of Social Problems Process paper. Paper is due during Finals Week. Go to Writing Center if you think you need help with your writing.

## Considering Book Choices: PICK JUST ONE! The bookstores will have a few on hand. If they do not have one, order it how you see fit.

 

2015

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn’t commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinksmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

*Just Mercy*is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer’s coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.

**Complete RAO using this article entitled**: “Perceptions of Collective Efficacy and Bullying Perpetration in Schools” Source: *Social Problems* Date: June 2015 (permalink to UNT Library in Canvas).



2013

Being a teenager has never been easy, but in recent years, with the rise of the Internet and social media, it has become exponentially more challenging. Bullying, once thought of as the province of queen bees and goons, has taken on new, complex, and insidious forms, as parents and educators know all too well.

No author is better poised to explore this territory than Emily Bazelon, who has established herself as a leading voice on the social and legal aspects of teenage drama. In *Sticks and Stones*, she brings listeners on a deeply researched, clear-eyed journey into the ever-shifting landscape of teenage meanness and its sometimes devastating consequences. The result is an indispensable book that takes us from school cafeterias to courtrooms to the offices of Facebook - the website where so much teenage life, good and bad, now unfolds.

Along the way, Bazelon defines what bullying is and, just as important, what it *is not*. She explores when intervention is essential and when kids should be given the freedom to fend for themselves. She also dispels persistent myths: that girls bully more than boys, that online and in-person bullying are entirely distinct, that bullying is a common cause of suicide, and that harsh criminal penalties are an effective deterrent. Above all, she believes that to deal with the problem, we must first understand it.

**Complete RAO using this article entitled**: “Perceptions of Collective Efficacy and Bullying Perpetration in Schools” Source: *Social Problems* Date: February 2011 (permalink to UNT Library in Canvas).



2016

In this brilliant, heartbreaking book, Matthew Desmond takes us into the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee to tell the story of eight families on the edge. Arleen is a single mother trying to raise her two sons on the $20 a month she has left after paying for their rundown apartment. Scott is a gentle nurse consumed by a heroin addiction. Lamar, a man with no legs and a neighborhood full of boys to look after, tries to work his way out of debt. Vanetta participates in a botched stickup after her hours are cut. All are spending almost everything they have on rent, and all have fallen behind.

Even in the most desolate areas of American cities, evictions used to be rare. But today, most poor renting families are spending more than half of their incomes on housing, and eviction has become ordinary, especially for single mothers. In vivid, intimate prose, Desmond provides a ground-level view of one of the most urgent issues facing America today. As we see families forced into shelters, squalid apartments, or more dangerous neighborhoods, we bear witness to the human cost of America's vast inequality - and to people's determination and intelligence in the face of hardship.

Based on years of embedded fieldwork and painstakingly gathered data, this masterful book transforms our understanding of extreme poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving a devastating, uniquely American problem. Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home, without which nothing else is possible.

**Complete RAO for article entitled**: “Racial and Spatial Targeting: Segregation and Subprime Lending within and across Metropolitan Areas” Source: *Social Forces* Date: March 2015 (permalink to UNT Library in Canvas).



2015

From best-selling author Jon Krakauer, a stark, powerful, meticulously reported narrative about a series of sexual assaults at the University of Montana - stories that illuminate the human drama behind the national plague of campus rape.

Missoula, Montana, is a typical college town, with a highly regarded state university, bucolic surroundings, a lively social scene, and an excellent football team - the Grizzlies - with a rabid fan base.

The Department of Justice investigated 350 sexual assaults reported to the Missoula police between January 2008 and May 2012. Few of these assaults were properly handled by either the university or local authorities. In this Missoula is also typical.

A DOJ report released in December of 2014 estimates 110,000 women between the ages of 18 and 24 are raped each year. Krakauer's devastating narrative of what happened in Missoula makes clear why rape is so prevalent on American campuses and why rape victims are so reluctant to report assault.

**Complete RAO for article entitled**: “Sexual Assault on Campus” Source: *Social Problems* Date: November 2006 (permalink to UNT Library in Canvas).

## DIRECTIONS FOR RAO (100 Points)

1. Copy and paste the RAO template (in module in Canvas) into a Word document (.pdf, .doc, or .docx ONLY).
	* Important: Do not submit your RAO with Google Docs or Pages. Neither of these interfaces with Canvas. If you do this, and we open your RAO to grade it and nothing is there, you will earn a zero (0)
2. The title of your RAO should be Research Article Overview.
3. Leave the headings (**the bolded and underlined typing**) in you document. Delete the instructions for what to type.
	* For example, your document should look like this:
		+ **Title of Article:** “Sexual Assault on Campus”
		+ **Journal Name:** Social Problems
		+ And so on...
4. Using your best college writing fill in the details of your assigned research article. Answer all questions asked. We will grade for accuracy, quality, and quantity in your writing.
	* Important: Do not go over 2 pages.
5. This research article is necessary for your term paper. This RAO assignment will help you when it comes time to write the term paper.

## How You Will be Graded on the RAO

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Points** |
| Directions/Writing | 25 Points |
| Describes research article fully in each part of RAO. Doesn’t miss a section.  | 50 Points |
| Makes good connections to Best’s book and poses a discussion worthy question at the end. | 25 Points |
| **TOTAL** | **100 Points** |

**(Template for Completing) Research Article Overview**

At the top left of the document (.doc, .docx, .pdf only) copy and paste all of the following bolded typing. Do not miss any section.

**Your Name**

**Date Due**

**Your Chosen Book Title**

**Title of Article:**

**Journal Name:** (a scholarly, top-tiered, peer-reviewed journal article)

**Date Published:**

**Authors:**

**Study Rationale:** What issue/topic is under investigation? What do the researchers want to know?

**Study Design:** How do the researchers propose to study this issue/topic? Is the study quantitative or qualitative? How can you tell?

**Describe Data Collected:** What do the researchers propose to study? Who will they study? Where does study take place? When did the study take place? How much time did it take the researchers? Did the researchers receive funding for this study? Who from?

**Literature Review:** Tell me **at least two** things you learned from the literature review that these researchers conducted for their research. (Researchers must make a case for what they study. To do this, they do research themselves. They cite other studies. What did you learn from the other studies that the researchers discuss? How do these other studies relate to your own study?)

**Main findings/results/conclusions:** What are the main findings/results/conclusions from this study? What contribution did these scholars make to our knowledge about society?

**Criticisms/Opinion:** What do you think about this research article? Do you have any criticisms of the study? How it was conducted? Are there any holes in what the study finds? What more needs to be researched regarding your issue/topic related to society?

**Connections to Course Materials:** This is the hardest part of the RAO assignment. Being able to make connections tests your knowledge of the course material. If you do not do well here, you will not earn all of the points for the RAO. In this part of the RAO you need to make connections with the other course material. This will require you to review what you’ve read. You must quote something from the course materials (Best’s book or the book you’ve selected for the Natural History paper) and link it to your journal article. When you do so, cite the source and page number like this: (Best 22). This section of the RAO will be the most helpful for you when you go to write your Natural History paper.

**Discussion Point:** Pose at least one discussion worthy point or question about the journal article you reviewed. Your discussion worthy point or question can be broad and general.

# Term Paper: Natural History of Social Problem Process (500 Points).

## Follow these Instructions:

* This is a 5-7 page paper[[3]](#footnote-3) about the book your selected to read, Joel Best’s *Social Problems* 3rd Edition, and one specifically assigned research article.
* You must use MLA format to format this paper. To do this, please look at the following helpful aids in Canvas:
	+ Dr. Gregg’s MLA Handout
	+ Dr. Gregg’s YouTube explaining how the paper should be formatted
	+ Example papers from other classes
* There will be no rewrites of this paper. It is very important to follow all instructions and to work on this paper for the entire semester (not just a few hours before it is due).
* You will be graded on both breadth and depth of your connections between the three sources (your book, research article, and Best’s book).
* No other sources are required for this paper. This means DO NOT USE OTHER SOURCES.
	+ Your Works Cited page should have 3 sources listed: 1) Best’s book; 2) the book you selected; and 3) the assigned research article. That’s it!
* Important: When you quote Best in this paper, at the end of the quote cite the book like this:

“We might think of this as a subjectivist approach, in that it defines social problems in terms of people’s subjective sense that something is a problem” (Best 9).

* Important: When you quote, quote entire sentences. This means, do not chop up and quote fragments of anything from your sources. If you do this, you will lose points.
* Use the 9 bolded titles below to create headings for each section of your paper. If you fail to do this, I will not grade your term paper. You will be awarded a zero (0) for failure to follow directions.
* There will be no rewrites of this paper. It is very important to follow the directions exactly. If you deviate too far from these directions, you will automatically be awarded a zero (0). Your paper should follow the exact structure below for what to write.

## What to Write:

**Introduction (1 paragraph):** Introduce your book. Explain to the reader the reasons why you chose the book. In this paragraph connect it to something in Joel Best’s Ch. 1. This means you need to directly quote something Best says about social problems. Then, introduce the Natural History of Social Problems Process. What is it? Finally, explain the **Subjectivist Outlook** that Best describes in Ch. 1. End the paragraph by telling the reader whether you agree or disagree with Best’s argument to use the **Subjectivist Outlook** (as opposed to the Objectivist).

**Literature Review (1 paragraph)**: Identify the social problem you are addressing in this paper. Using your RAO briefly describe the research article you were assigned to read. Use the article to discuss what has already been studied about your social problem. Describe the major findings or take-away points from your research article. Use the headings in the RAO to guide you in what to write. Somehow link the research article to Best’s book or the book you read in order to segue to the next paragraph.

**Claimsmaking (2-3 paragraphs)**:

Using Best’s book explain **Claimsmaking** generally. Then, describe who the **Activists** were in your book (Best 18). Were the activists **Experts**? (Best 20) If so, describe them. Best says that **Claimsmakers** tell us “here is what’s wrong and here’s what needs to be done” (Best 22). How did the claimsmakers in your book do this? How did it all start? To write these 2-3 paragraph use Chapters 1-4 of Best. The aim in these paragraphs is to make connections between Best’s chapters and your book, and if possible the research article you were assigned. To do this, quote from the chapters in Best (or research article), then connect to your book.

**Media Converage (1 paragraph)**: Describe the role the media played in the social problem of your book. Did the **Claimsmakers** of your book seek media coverage? Consider whether (or how) the media hindered or helped (or both) to get the word out about the social problem. To do this, use what you’ve learned from Best’s Ch. 5 to support your findings. In this paragraph quote something from this chapter.

**Public Reaction (1 paragraph)**: Describe anything from your book that resembles what Best means by “**public reaction**.” Did you book describe anything about **public opinion** or **poll data**? If so, describe it. To do this, use what you’ve learned from Best’s Ch. 6 to support your findings. In this paragraph quote something from this chapter. Do not skip this paragraph.

**Policy Making (1-2 paragraphs)**: Did policy makers come into play in the discussion of your book’s social problems? Best tells us that, “Social policies are the means that society adopts to address troubling conditions, and such policies can be made in various ways” (Best 21). For example, did any laws change? Did any other sorts of policymaking bodies implement changes? To answer these questions, use Ch. 7 of Best’s book. In this/these paragraph(s) quote something from this chapter.

**Social Problems Work (1-2 paragraphs)**: Explain what **“Social Problems Work”** is and identify for the reader any of the **Social Problems Workers** from your book. What sorts of problems did they encounter? Best states, “They must deal with particular cases and address a messy real world that often seems quite complicated” (Best 22). What does Best mean by this? Give examples from your book. To write this paragraph(s) use Best’s Ch. 8. In this/these paragraph(s) quote something from the chapter.

**Policy Outcomes (1 paragraph)**: Best tells us that there are several types of outcomes possible with the social problems process. Can you identify any policy outcomes in your book? If so, describe them. Then consider whether there were **critics** of the outcomes? At times **critics** argue that the policy changes are ineffective. Other times they argue that the policy changes go too far. Best says, “Often such complaints and questions lead to new claims, and the social problems process begins anew” (Best 23). Is this the case in your book? Use Best’s Chs. 9 and 10 to answer and explain. Be sure to quote something from both of these chapters.

**Conclusion (1 paragraph)**: Describe for the reader what you learned from: 1) Best’s book about the Natural History of Social Problems Process; 2) the book you selected; 3) this assignment; and 4) this course. (It is okay to say, “I learned…”) Conclude this paragraph saying something very general about social problems going forward. It is okay in a conclusion to speculate about the future of the social problem you studied. Do not quote Best’s book in the conclusion. The conclusion should be all you!

See course Syllabus for when this paper falls due. It will be due some time during Final Exams Week.

## How You Will be Graded on this Term Paper

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Points** |
| Directions/Writing/MLA format | 25 Points |
| Introduction (1 Paragraph) | 25 Points |
| Literature Review (1 Paragraph) | 50 Points |
| 1. Claimsmaking (2-3 Paragraphs) | **100 Points** |
| 2. Media Coverage (1 Paragraph) | 50 Points |
| 3. Public Reaction (1 Paragraph) | 50 Points |
| 4. Policy Making (1 Paragraph) | 50 Points |
| 5. Social Problems Work (1-2 Paragraphs) | 50 Points |
| 6. Policy Outcomes | 50 Points |
| Conclusion | 50 Points |

1. **Extra Credit Points:** Write out by hand any Figure the week we are on that chapter, take a picture, upload to EC Spot. (5-20 points for each one). Each student is limited to 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Research Article Overview assignment is referred to in the syllabus as RAO. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Do not go over 7 pages of written content for this paper. The Works Cited should begin on page 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)