

COURSE INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

SOCI 1520-900,950 SOCIAL PROBLEMS FALL 2019 Credit Hours 3

Internet Class mandatory online meeting times to be announced

Professor / Instructor Contact Information

Milan Zafirovski, Professor

SYCAMORE 288G

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Office hours face to face Tuesday 2:5PM
9PM

online every day 9AM-

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Teaching Assistant information to be announced

About the Professor / Instructor

Milan Zafirovski is professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of North Texas. He received his doctoral degree in sociology from Florida International University, Miami in 1999. He teaches Social problems, SOCIAL PROBLEMS, Social Problems for undergraduate students and Sociological Theory and Social problems for graduate students.



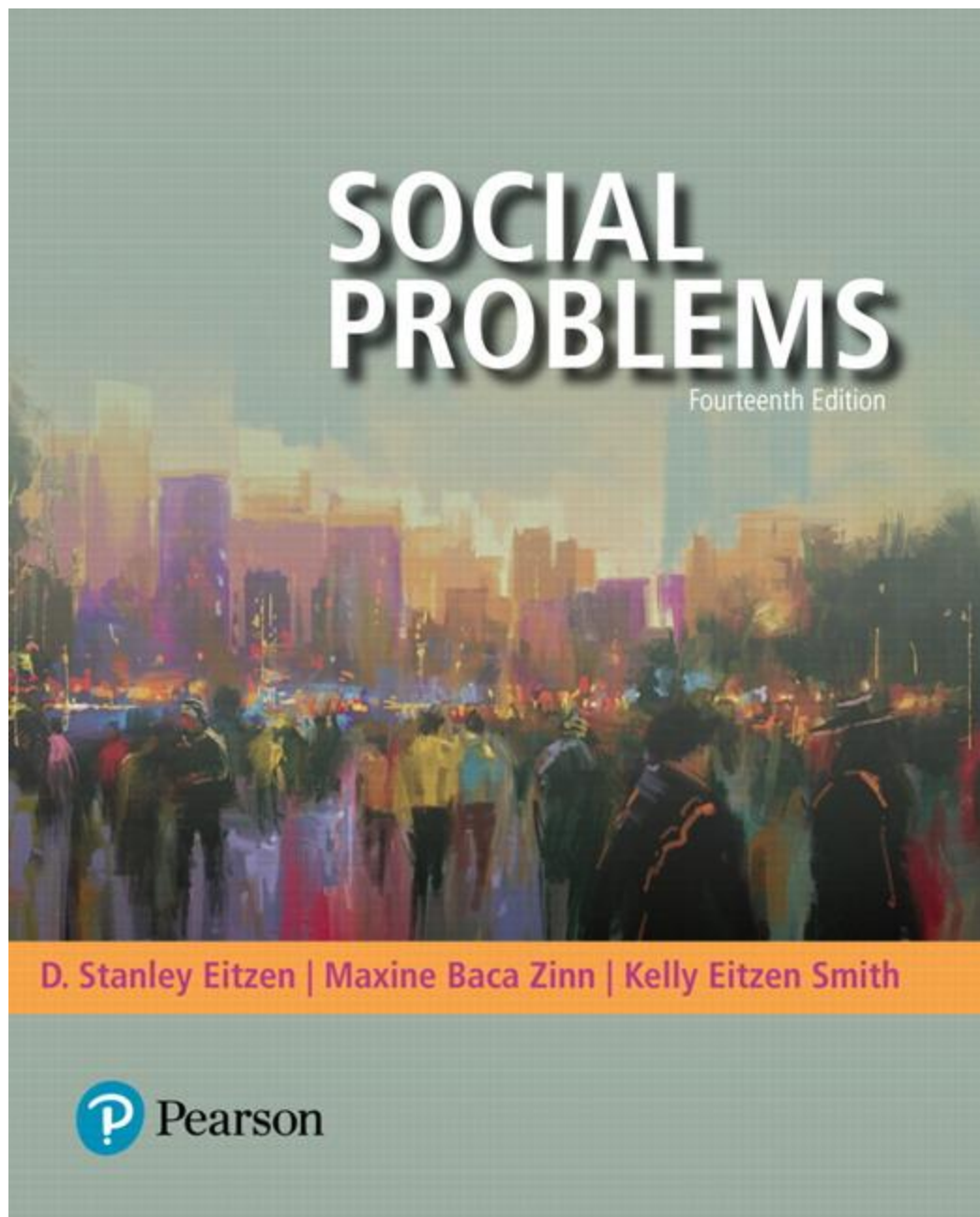
Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Pre-requisites None

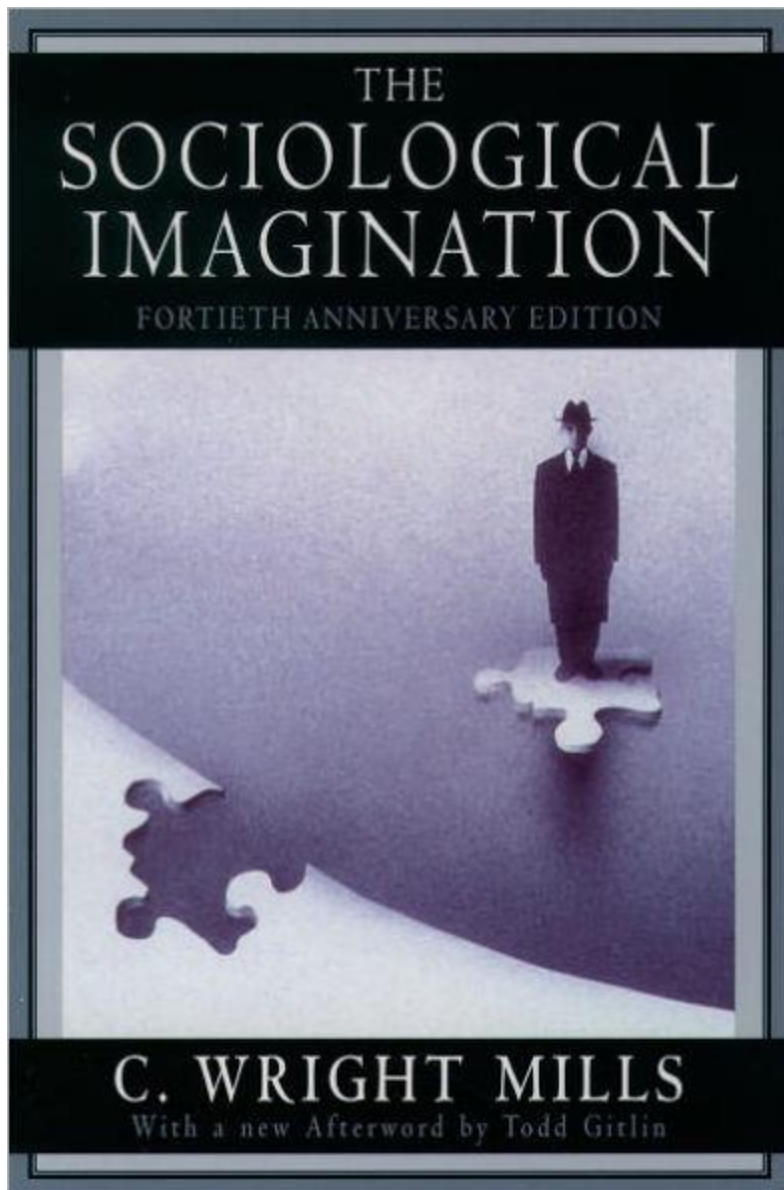
Instructor permissions Not required

Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required materials Stanley Eitzen, Maxine Zinn, and Kelly Smith. Social Problems. Pearson. 14th edition ISBN 9780134631905



Supplementary Readings Mills, C. Wright. *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press, any edition, ISBN 9780195133738.



Course Description

Description of general content of the course. This course is designed to provide students with conceptual frameworks and tools necessary to analyze and understand social problems. The class will analyze the nature and interconnections between the functioning and mal-functioning social institutions, the problems of social problems, the problems of deviance and crime, the problems of social change, and so forth. The course strongly emphasizes the sociological perspective and imagination. There are no prerequisites for this course. The main purpose of this course is to make students familiar with a sociological, i.e., systematic and critical, perspective on modern post-industrial societies, with an emphasis on American society and culture. The hope is in doing so the course will help students

in evolving and applying their original view of social problems and generally their own vision of life in society.

Instructional methods. In general, the course combines sociological methods and concepts with empirical observations and facts to objectively examine social problems, including wealth and power, world population, threats to the environment, problems of place, racial and ethnic inequality, poverty, crime and justice, economy and work, families, and healthcare. Sociological methods, concepts, and data are used for the sake of a better understanding and explaining social problems in contemporary communities and larger societies. Specific instructional methods include online lectures presenting main sociological concepts and empirical facts of social problems through course outlines, online discussions, and the like. The profile and perspective of this course is mostly sociological. Nonetheless, this sociological perspective on social problems will often be combined with those of other social sciences, especially anthropology, political science and history. In this regard, the course will have a thorough inter-disciplinary orientation, which is necessitated by the (multi-disciplinary) character—economic, political, historical, and cultural--of the subject of social problems. Given this orientation, the course can be interesting and challenging both for students with majors/minors in sociology and for those majoring in such social sciences as anthropology, history, political science, as well as psychology, economics, business, etc. However, the course is not limited to social-science students, but can also be of interest and use for those in the physical and other sciences, especially biology (e.g. the issue of the role of biological determinants in social problems and human behavior overall). Preferably, students should possess some elementary preparation in sociology and related social sciences at the introductory level, such as introduction to sociology, but this is not required. Given its introductory character, the course can serve as a stepping-stone for further studies of social problems on undergraduate as well as graduate levels.

Goals / Rationale of the course. The content of the course will benefit students by helping them better understand and make sense of social problems in America and other contemporary societies, including real-life, topical, and publicized issues of wealth and power, environment, racial and ethnic inequality, poverty, crime and justice, work, family healthcare, and others. The course closely relates to the content, primary concepts and principles of sociology which has a long-standing tradition of studying social problems and related issues. The course will emphasize acquiring and applying a basic scientific and inter-disciplinary type of knowledge by providing the main sociological and related concepts, objective facts (including statistical data), and explanations of social problems in America and comparable societies. It will also emphasize a specific type of abilities such as comprehending,

learn, applying, and connecting (rather than merely memorizing) concepts and facts. The course is organized in a specific sequence through learning modules because these are seen as the most appropriate ways to reach the goals and learning objectives of the course. Each particular course subject or lesson is presented by a learning module. A learning module includes learning objectives to be reached for that particular lesson, lesson content with sub-contents, summary, and assignments for students.

Learning objectives/outcomes. The learning objectives/outcomes for the overall course (also provided for each learning module) are the following.

- students will learn, comprehend, and connect principles, concepts, and empirical facts about social problems in contemporary society;
- students will be able to analyze, understand, and explain how and why social problems exist, persist, or change in society;
- students will be able to relate and compare social problems to society as a whole, including economy, politics, civil society, and culture;
- students will be able to place and analyze social problems within a larger comparative-historical and global context by comparing the United States with other contemporary societies;
- students will be able to apply sociological concepts, principles, and methods to better understanding and addressing current tendencies in social problems;
- students will be able to increase their capacities and motivations or interests in further studying social problems and related sociological subjects at undergraduate and graduate levels

Teaching Philosophy

I emphasize that teaching and education overall is based on science and research such as sociological and other scientific studies, as complementary in relation to each other. Therefore I emphasize and reiterate that scientific knowledge represents the basis of teaching and education and really ‘power’ for students and society as a whole. I stress practical applications of concepts and principles to understanding, analyzing and helping resolve contemporary social issues. I use a variety of teaching methods, including both traditional and modern ones. I strive for maximum student-teacher communication, interaction and cooperation. I pursue justice in evaluating students through an equality between performance/merit and grades.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS / ASSISTANCE

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparation for the technological aspect of the course.

UIT Help Desk: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

Hardware and software necessary to use CANVAS:

<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas>

Browser requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Computer and Internet Literacy:

http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit

Headset/Microphone (if required for synchronous chats)

Word Processor

Other related hardware or software necessary for the course

Minimum Technical Skills Needed:

Examples include:

Using the learning management system

Using email with attachments

Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats

Copying and pasting

Downloading and installing software

Using spreadsheet programs

ACCESS & NAVIGATION

Access and Log in Information

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas' Learning Management System, CANVAS. To get started with the course, please go to: <https://clear.unt.edu/home>

You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to: <http://ams.unt.edu>.

Student Resources

As a student, you will have access to:

- Student Orientation via CANVAS. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within the Orientation to better equip you in navigating the course.
- CANVAS's On Demand Learning Center for Students. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials to better equip you to navigate the course.

- From within CANVAS, you will have access to the “UNT Helpdesk” tab which provides student resources and Help Desk Information.

How the Course is Organized

The course information is organized by using learning modules consisting of learning objectives to be reached, content and sub-contents, summary, and assignments (see above). It is structured by week or part of it such that for each week or part of it a learning module is used.

What Should Students Do First?

Students should first, once they have accessed the course, read carefully the syllabus. Also, they need to complete an introductory assignment, and discussion post. In addition, they need to send contact information to the instructor via the email tool and introduce themselves to each other.

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities

Students will be able to access the materials each week in order to successfully complete the course activities, including exams, participation in discussions, and other assignments. Necessary files such as lecture materials are located in Course Content, exams in Assignments, and discussion topics in the Discussion Forum. A class activity schedule has been created to track student activities, including participation in discussions and other assignments.

Student Technical Support

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of CANVAS and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940.565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Please refer to the website (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm>) for updated hours.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will access and follow all course instructions found in the weekly content area of the CANVAS course. Students will follow and access all online lectures provided in Course Modules. Students will complete the assigned ‘online’ exams and quizzes by accessing Modules in the CANVAS course. Quizzes and exams are located in weekly Learning Modules. Students will respond to posted online course discussion questions using the CANVAS discussion tool. Online participation through discussions is required. Each student should post at least 1 discussion per

week based on the readings and lectures. Students will complete and submit assignments electronically using the CANVAS assignment tool if such assignments are specifically required. Student will complete an on-going semester project in accordance with the instructions given in this syllabus and the online course if such assignments are specifically required.

This course has simple requirements, namely objective exams that make the grading process as simply and objective as possible. In this course there will be two exams, a midterm exam and a final examination (see course schedule). The format of midterm and final exams will have short, clear multiple-choice questions (usually 50). The exams will be objective such to evaluate students' reading, knowledge, and grasp of the readings. Exam scores will be computer-generated and so will be the final grade. Therefore there will be *no* subjective elements in how exam scores and the final grade are determined. The worth of each exam will be 100 points (maximum). Exams will be given and taken only online (UNT CANVAS) during the specified time period and with specific time limits (e.g., 1 hour).

Failure to take an online exam, without proper documented justification, during the specified time period (see below) will result in a *zero* (0) score for the missed exam. If an online exam is missed with documented justification during the specified period, make-up exams can be taken either online or in person (*closed* books and notes) in the department of sociology no later than 2 days after the specified exam period. This applies only to *midterm* exams, *no* final make-up exams will be given after the specified time period. Therefore, *no* incompletes will be given in case of a failure to take an exam during the specified time period without documented justification. Exams *cannot* be retaken or continued either online or in person because of 'bad' Internet connection and other computer 'problems'. It is student responsibility to have a proper Internet connection and computer. Online computer-generated exam scores are final and *cannot* be changed by professor under any circumstances (just as SAT or GRE scores cannot be changed). Each exam may be taken only ONCE (in one attempt), and any attempts to take the exam again will be an act of academic dishonesty and pursued accordingly. Exams must be taken by each student *individually* and independently of other students, and not in groups and collaboratively; if it is determined that an online exam is taken in groups and collaboratively, this will be treated as academic dishonesty and pursued accordingly. There is no 'curving' of exam scores. The only basis for dispensing credits/grades is objective performance and merit. This ensures maximum fairness in grading. It is students' own responsibility for class

notes, outlines, announcements, etc. The professor will be always and maximally available to students online and in office to address their queries and concerns.

Technical instructions (from UNT CLEAR). Avoid using a wireless connection for exams unless one is certain of its reliability. Take exams using a supported web browser on a computer or laptop rather than using an iPad. If using an iPad, the Chrome browser is recommended. Contact the UIT Helpdesk at 940-565-2324 for assistance in the event of technical problems affecting the ability to access or complete a test.

Optional course requirements

Optional course requirements include quizzes, participation in discussions, and a review of supplementary readings. Quizzes are given every week (see the weekly schedule in the last part of the syllabus) and cover the reading assignment for that week. Quizzes are optional (not required) and provide extra-points to be added to and thus increase total exam scores.

Discussions are on a weekly basis, also optional and worth extra points, specifically 1 point per 1 weekly discussion forum, if discussions are posted by due date and according to instructions. Discussions can be very useful in preparing for the midterm and the final exam. The discussion forums are primarily related to the textbook readings, as well as other readings and resources and activities. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your learning community peers. Your contributions to discussion forums will be graded for quality, timeliness, linking together readings to real-life activities, and above all being grounded in readings. Discussions close a week after the last discussion topic. In order for students to receive bonus points, their discussions should be original posts so that students initiate and write them first, as different from replies to others, which normally do not receive extra-points. In addition, student discussions should follow additional instructions as specified for discussion forums. In sum, these instructions are that discussions should be (1) original posts, (2) have a minimum 1 paragraph with 4 full, elaborate (as distinct from overly short) sentences, (3) are based on the book overall, and (4) give specific book support such as citations or data.

Lastly, a review of supplementary readings noted above can be done by the end of the semester as an optional activity awarded extra-points. Instructions for a review are writing 5 full pages, double-spaced, font 12, margin 1, covering the entire reading, minus tables, numbers, and notes extensively cite the reading, but the review should not be a copy of it. The completed review should be submitted by the due date specified below.

COMMUNICATIONS

The communication tools in the course are:

- Announcements at least weekly and more frequently as needed
- Email / Messages
- Discussions by week on a particular topic

Interaction with Instructor Statement. The primary tool to communicate directly with students is Email / Messages. Students should send personal concerns or questions to the email tool. Students can expect to receive a response to course e-mail and discussion board postings the same day (if they sent and posted by 9PM), at the latest following day. The time frame in receiving feedback on assignments will be 2 days. Grades will be posted 1 day after the exam is over. For student behavior online see 'netiquette.'

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Exams: 100 points each

Course Objective/Learning Outcomes: students will demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and explanation of basic concepts and facts regarding SOCIAL PROBLEMS. The exams are closed-book and taken individually. The exams will cover the required textbook reading and the content of the online lectures. Complete the exams online by accessing the CANVAS exam tool in Modules. The exams will be timed and grades made available to students following the submission of the exam. If you lose Internet connectivity during the exam, log back in immediately and continue on with the exam. Save your answers often (every 5-10 minutes). If you experience any issues while taking the exam, you must contact the CANVAS Helpdesk immediately so that your issue is documented with a helpdesk ticket number. Considerations regarding exam issues will be made by the instructor on an individual basis based on the documentation. Assignments Method: Multiple Choice

Quizzes: Maximum extra-points for each quiz is 4, with 1 point @ 1 question/correct answer. The number of quizzes for a semester is 12, therefore total possible quiz points are 48. This is an optional activity, i.e., not required, but its extra-points can substantially increase exam scores and thus improve the final grade.

Assignments Method: Multiple Choice and/or Essay Exam.

Discussion Forums: Maximum extra-points for discussions is equal to the number of weekly discussion forums multiplied by 1, namely 12 points, 1 point @

discussion forum. This is an optional activity, not required, but awards extra-points to be added to and increase exam scores. The discussion forums are primarily related to the textbook readings, as well as other readings and resources and activities. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your learning community peers. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for quality, timeliness, and an analysis of linking together concepts in readings to applications such as real-life activities. As stated above, discussion posts will be given extra-points, so that 1 weekly discussion forum post is worth 1 point.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcome. Students will be active and engaged participants in discussion forums within their learning community by analyzing, creating, and evaluating information presented in the textbook, other readings and resources, student research or observations, and class and other activities.

Reviews of supplementary readings: reviews of supplementary readings are optional, and extra-points for a review range from 1-5 depending on Assignments, with the maximum of 10 points. This is an optional activity, not required.

Assignments Method: comparison of the review with the reviewed reading and instructions

Grading

Grades will be determined as follows:

Total Required Points Possible for Semester = 200 points maximum from exams. Total extra-points possible = 65 points maximum from quizzes (48), discussion forums (12), and review of supplementary readings (5), as optional activities (see above). Grades are calculated based on 200 maximum points from exams, for example, 182 (including exams and any extra-points) out of 200, which gives an appropriate grade, A. Note: Grades are not calculated based on 265 maximum points including exams and extra-points, so students who wish not to engage in optional activities are not penalized under any circumstances, as their grades will be obtained only from their exam scores according to the grading scale below.

Grading

Grades will be determined as follows:

Total Points Possible for Semester = 200

200-180 = A
179-160 = B

159-140 = C
139-120 = D
119-0 = F

Grading Scale	
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 60	F

Tentative Assignments by Weeks

(Please note that course schedule is subject to change if necessary)

WEEK 1 August 26-September 02, 2019 Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 1
The Sociological Approach to Social Problems, in
Eitzen, pp. 1-19.

September 01, 2019 Quiz #1—optional activity for extra-
points.

WEEK 2 September 02-09, 2019 Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 2
Wealth and Power, in Eitzen, pp. 20-45.

September 08, 2019 Quiz #2—optional activity for extra-
points.

WEEK 3 September 09-16, 2019 Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 3
World Population and Global Inequality, in Eitzen,
pp. 46-67.

September 15, 2019 Quiz #3—optional activity for extra-
points.

WEEK 4 September 16-23, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 5 Problems of Place, in Eitzen, pp. 94-121.
September 22, 2019	Quiz #4—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 5 September 23-30, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 6 Threats to the Environment, in Eitzen, pp. 122-144.
September 29, 2019	Quiz #5—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 6 September 30-October 07, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 7 Poverty, in Eitzen, pp. 145-170.
October 06, 2019	Quiz #6—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 7 October 07-14, 2019	Review for Midterm Exam.
October 12-13, 2019	Midterm Exam —covers above chapters, mandatory activity for grade.
WEEK 8 October 14-21, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 8 Racial and Ethnic Inequality, in Eitzen, pp. 171-196.
October 20, 2019	Quiz #7—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 9 October 21-28, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 11 Crime and Justice, in Eitzen, pp. 244-270.
October 27, 2019	Quiz #8—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 10 October 28-November 04, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 13 The Economy and Work, in Eitzen, pp. 299-321.

November 03, 2019	Quiz #9—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 11 November 04-11, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 14 Families, in Eitzen, pp. 322-345.
November 10, 2019	Quiz #10—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 12 November 11-18, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 16 The Health Care System, in Eitzen, pp. 375-398.
November 17, 2019	Quiz #11—optional activity for extra-points.
WEEK 13 November 18-25, 2019	Reading Assignment: CHAPTER 18 Progressive Plan to Solve Social Problems, in Eitzen, pp. 424-437.
November 24, 2019.	Quiz #12—optional activity for extra-points, mandatory activity for grade.
WEEK 14/15 November 25-December 05, 2019	Review for Final Exam
November 28-29, 2019	Thanksgiving Break
December 04-05, 2019	Pre-finals Week
December 05, 2019	Last class day Review of supplementary readings due—optional activity for extra-points.
December 06, 2019	Reading day (no classes)
December 07-08, 2019	Final Exam--- covers chapters after the midterm exam.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and

disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu