Dates and Times

This course meets the weekends of January 19-21, January 26-28, and February 9-11.
Fridays: 5:30pm till 9:10pm
Saturdays: 9:00am till 5:00pm
Sundays: 1:00pm till 4:00pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

American society continues undergoing rapid and significant changes. Relationships between majority (dominant) and minority (subordinate, marginalized) groups in this country are an integral facet of societal changes and contemporary problems. Economic, historical, political, and social factors are linked to individual, group, and institutional disparities and multiple forms of oppression. This unequal distribution of resources and power intersect to create stressful conditions and human relations problems.

This course is designed to expose students to an in-depth, scholarly, objective, and systematic analysis of some of the major human relations problems faced by society. Specifically, this course concentrates on the problem areas of social inequality (class, race, and gender), intra- and interpersonal tension (individual stress, personal relations in groups, and violence), and intergroup tension (multicultural and multinational). In addition, major change strategies are identified, analyzed, and assessed relative to past and future effectiveness. Contextual, demographic, and statistical data are integrated throughout to inform the discussions, facilitate understanding, and strategize amelioration of the range of human relations problems.

A wide variety of instructional approaches and student participation will be employed throughout the course. These may include lectures, guest speakers, films, poetry, in-class exercises, class discussion, oral presentations, journaling, book reviews, group projects, web-based technologies, as well as required reading.

INSTRUCTOR

The instructor for this class is Prof. Rodger A. Randle, a member of the faculty of the Department of Human Relations. His office is located in room 1J04 in the OU Tulsa.
Schusterman Campus. His telephone number is 660-3495, and the email address is randle@ou.edu. Prof. Randle keeps regular office hours, but please call ahead to confirm current office hours since they may change seasonally.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

The course will be conducted as a series of lectures, interactive group discussions, media presentations, as well as individual and team presentations of selected projects.

**Learning Objectives**

1. To identify the structural conditions and historical contexts that contribute to a broad range of societal problems.
2. To systematically analyze the intersections of race, class, and gender through existing systems of privilege and power.
3. To develop an awareness of the social construction of complex economic, political, and social phenomena that contributes to a broad range of current problems.
4. To creatively, critically, and practically analyze a significant current problem and develop a realistic strategy to ameliorate a given problem.
5. To understand, develop, implement, and evaluate a plan of advocacy around a specific issue related to human relations.

**Requirements, Evaluation, and Grading:**

**Course Requirements**

**Class Participation and Attendance:** Active participation of students is expected in class discussions and activities.

**Reading Assignments:** All reading must be completed prior to the class meeting. Class discussion is based on the assigned readings. Informed participation in discussion is expected.

**Major Assignments (Evaluation Components)**

There will be two major assignments during the course: one individual assignment and one group assignment.

**INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT:** Students will select one “current problem” of their own selection and present that issue to the class in a brief oral report of 10 to 15 minutes length. This report will be made on the second weekend. A short draft of the report shall be presented at the time of the oral presentation on the second weekend, but no grade will be given for the draft, which is only for the use of the teams that will write analysis reports on the third weekend. The final written paper, which will be graded, is due one week from the last day of class and shall be submitted to the dropbox at the learn.ou.edu site. The final report shall be at least six (6) pages in length, double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman type. At least 5 research sources shall be cited, and the paper shall follow APA style. The paper will describe a problem, analyze its origins, explain its contemporary consequences, and will identify and evaluate alternative proposals for amelioration of the problem. Further detailed instruction will be provided at the first weekend of class and will be posted on the learn.ou.edu website. References may come from online sources as long as they are appropriate.
References may come from online sources as long as they are appropriate. Fact references must be from sources with known authors; references from sources such as the “wikipedia” will result in an automatic grade reduction.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT: The class will be divided into groups of three, and each group will be assigned three of the topics on current problems presented by students on the second weekend. The teams will prepare reports that identify ways to analyze the problems and solutions presented in the reports. More detailed discussion of the requirements of these papers will be made at the first weekend of class. The group will present their papers to the class orally on the third weekend, but the written papers may be submitted on the same schedule as the individual papers. The group papers should follow the same format as the individual papers, but there is no specified length or number of references. The group reports will propose the kinds of analysis that should be given to each problem, and identify at least one source of data that could be used for the analysis. Further, the paper should critique the validity of each data source that is proposed as a tool of analysis.

The individual assignment will count for 40% of the student’s grade, the group assignment for 40%, and class participation will count for 20%. Class participation will be measured by attendance. Each hour of missed class will result in a one point reduction in grade. Absences of up to 10 (ten) hours may be excused in advance if there is an agreed make-up assignment. If a student misses an entire class meeting (a whole day or evening), the absence will be counted as equal to the number of hours of scheduled meeting, regardless of the actual number of hours that we met on the day of the absence.

For class grading, 90% or above constitutes an “A”, 80-90% a “B”, 70-80% a “C”, 60-70% a “D”, and below than 60% shall not be considered passing.

Attendance Policy

Because this class is heavily focused on class discussion, any student who is absent during a majority of the class meeting hours should withdraw. For grade penalties for absences, see above.

Late Work Policy

With advance approval a paper may be submitted late.

Course Material

Required Texts:

None. We will use readings assignments rather than a text. All readings will be assigned at least one week before the class meeting when the reading will be discussed.

Recommended Reference Text:

Masters of Human Relations Program Planner

Since Current Problems is a core course, students should become familiar with the MHR Program Planner that was sent to each student upon admission into the program. The planner has a description of the HR program objectives and requirements, suggestions for graduate study, financial assistance, and graduation information. Of particular interest is the information on the comprehensive exam schedules and internship requirements. Please refer
to the HR Website for information: http://www.ou.edu/cas/hr

**ADDITIONAL POLICIES:**

**MUTUAL RESPECT IN THE CLASSROOM**
Students are expected to participate in class discussions in a way that is respectful and tolerant of the views of other students. Disrespectful behavior towards other students will not be tolerated.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
Students with disabilities are protected under the American Disabilities Act, and accommodations are made to assist them. Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent her or him from fully demonstrating her or him abilities should contact the professor and OU Office so that arrangements can be made to provide accommodations.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**
It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities, and you have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic honesty includes:

- Cheating (using unauthorized materials, information or study aids in an academic exercise, plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidations, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance of achievement
- Assisting others with any such act
- Attempting to engage in such acts

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the Academic Misconduct Code at the University of Oklahoma.

Please be aware of the University of Oklahoma’s policy on plagiarism. This policy can be found as www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

*The website for the Department of Human Relations can be found at http://ou.edu/cas/hr*