

Sociology 10: Issues and Problems in American Society
Summer Session 2022



Instructor: Michelle Gomez Parra (she/her/hers)
Lecture: Tuesdays from 1:00-4:30pm at Earth&Marine B214 and Thursdays on Zoom from 1-4:30pm
Office Hours: Wednesday on zoom from 4-5pm and by appointment only
Email: mparra3@ucsc.edu

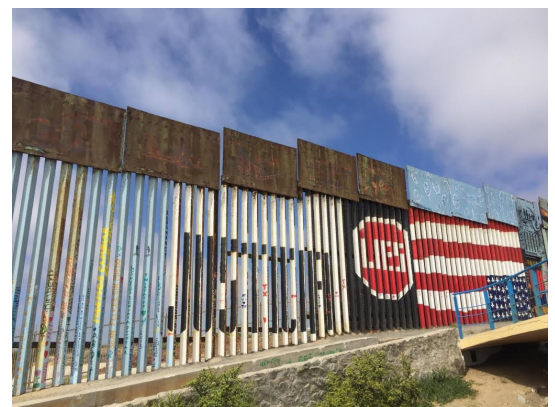
Zoom information for Thursday lecture:
Meeting ID: 956 6608 8553
Passcode: socy10

Zoom information for my office hours:
Meeting ID: 960 6242 2244
Passcode: socy10

Course Description: How do certain social conditions become social problems? Who decides what a social problem is? What discursive and material consequences do social problems have for different individuals and groups of people? How are social problems interconnected, and what do they tell us about power? This course will use sociological and feminist theories of color to examine the social construction of social problems in US society, as well as the Americas. We will use intersectionality as a theoretical lens to analyze how and why social problems are interconnected—and to think critically about building a future free of oppressions, violence, and inequality. Some of the social problems we will discuss include but are not limited to the struggle over global power, lack of immigration reform, racial discrimination, gender inequality, poverty, the pathologization of racialized sexualities, and state violence. To deepen our understanding of sociological and feminist theories, students will trace the historical development of these social problems and identify possible solutions to addressing these issues.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding how sociologists define social problems
2. Identifying who determines what constitutes a major social problem
3. Recognizing how multiple systems of domination cause a social problem
4. Understanding comparative and contrasting arguments about social problems, especially those focusing on individual, cultural, and social explanations.
5. Investigating the discursive and material consequences of social problems.
6. Proposing interventions for solving social problems
7. Connecting personal experiences to intersecting structural conditions



Skills Students will Develop

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communicating effectively with instruction team and peers
- Working individually
- Working in a team
- Developing research skills
 - Identifying peer review sources
- Public speaking (oral communication)
- Writing
- Identifying key arguments
- Translating scholarly research to the general public

Course Requirements and Grading

Required Book: There are no required texts for this course. All articles and books are either on Canvas or free through the [UCSC library](#).

Course Assignments: The course is based on a 100-point scale and is composed of the following assignments.

- About Me Assignment: 5 points
- Attendance and Participation: 20 points
- 4 Media Reflection Papers: 30 points
- 1 Class Facilitation: 20 points
- The Personal is Political Photo Essay Project: 25 points

Grading Scale:

98 - 100 A+	80 - 82 B-	63 - 66 D
94 - 97 A	77 - 79 C+	60 - 62 D-
90 - 93 A-	73 - 76 C	<60 F
87 - 89 B+	70 - 72 C-	
83 - 86 B	67 - 69 D+	

About Me Assignment: The purpose of this assignment is for the teaching team to get to know you. Please tell us about yourself. Some of the questions that you can answer include:

- Are you a new transfer student or a continuing student?
- Where did you grow up?
- What are you passionate about?
- Any hobbies or activities that you like to do for fun?
- Why are you taking this class?
- What skills do you want to enhance in this class?
- What is a social problem that you are interested in learning about in this class?

This assignment should be at least 1 page double spaced and is due by the end of the day that we first meet, **June 27, 2023**.

Attendance and participation: Attendance of in-person lecture is required. I will allow for **one excused absence** throughout the session. Each absence beyond the first will result in a grade

reduction. If you are facing any difficulties that are impacting your attendance, please contact me so that we can try to figure out what course of action is best for your circumstances.

Late Assignment Policy: Life does not go according to plan especially during college. To help students mitigate unforeseen circumstances, each student will have **3 late passes**, which allow them to turn in an assignment **up to 48 hours after the deadline**—without point deduction. Late passes can be used on all assignments except for the final project. If you are using a late pass, please leave a comment on your Canvas submission indicating “late pass #1, late pass #2, late pass #3). **Any assignment submitted without a late pass or submitted more than 48 hours late with a late pass will receive a point deduction of half a letter grade per day late.** For example, if you submit an assignment four days late, the highest grade you can get is a B.

Media Reflection Papers: You will submit a total of **four** reflection papers for this course. Your 3-page double-spaced paper should examine the social problem that is being discussed that week. 1) Please be sure to summarize at least **two** of the readings assigned that week. 2) In addition to providing a summary, please address what power structures contribute to this social problem. 3) Take time to discuss what institutions you believe help reproduce this social problem. 4) Find a media source (video, podcast, news article, tik-tok, documentary, show, or news article) that discusses this social problem. 5) Identify what the media source is saying about the social problem

- What individuals, groups, organizations, social institutions are involved?
- What values, beliefs, norms, and issues by whom are involved?
- What stand and (political) ideology are taken by whom? Is the media source employing conflict theory, functionalism, symbolic interaction theory, or intersectional theory to explain the cause of the social problem?
- What solution(s) are proposed by whom?
- What solution(s) have been tried already?

6) Explain what your thoughts are on this social problem. In your opinion, is this a social problem? Why or why not? Students can also reflect on the ways in which this social problem has impacted them, their communities, or loved ones. 7) Students should explain whether this social problem intersects with any other social problems we have learned about in class so far.

Class Facilitation: Students will sign up in small groups during the first day of class to help facilitate one day's discussion of the readings. Your group will be required to bring in one media-related example connected to that day's subject matter. Your group will need to (1) relate the media sources to **1 course readings assigned** for that day (2) pose 2-3 discussion questions to the class (3) each member will turn in a 1-page summary that details how each group member contributed to the group facilitation by the end of the day in which they present.

The “Personal is Political” Photo Essay Project: How have any of the social problems that we have learned about in class affected your lived experiences? How have they created marginalization for you or power? Students will create a photo essay to illustrate how larger structures of power, institutions, and cultural forces shape individual experiences. The photo



essay should include the following components 1) 2-4 original images that represent the social problem you wish to address 2) a 4-page double spaced essay which cites **3 course texts and 1 outside text** to describe the social problem represented in the images. All course readings and websites must be cited in ASA formatting.

Email Policy: Feminist and anti-racist pedagogical approaches acknowledge that students have many responsibilities and roles outside of being a student. For example, some of you may be parents, work a job, take care of family members, etc. I ask that you extend this empathy to the teaching team and recognize that we too are juggling many responsibilities. I also desire to model work/life boundaries for my students—which is a skill that I am still developing. Hence, I will only answer emails **Monday-Friday**. Please note that it may take me up to 2 business days to answer emails. If any urgent matter arises and you need a prompt response, please put “URGENT” in your email’s subject line and email both myself and the TA.

Academic Integrity

All members of the UCSC community benefit from an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. You are expected to present your own work and acknowledge the work of others in order to preserve the integrity of scholarship. please consult the Sociology Department’s Academic Integrity website: https://sociology.ucsc.edu/undergraduate/academic_integrity.htmlLinks to an external site.

Academic integrity includes:

- Following exam rules
- Using only permitted materials during an exam
- Viewing exam materials only when permitted by your instructor
- Keeping what you know about an exam to yourself
- Incorporating proper citation of all sources of information
- Submitting your own original work

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam
- Accessing exam materials without permission
- Copying/purchasing any material from another student, or from another source, that is submitted for grading as your own
- Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation
- Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor
- Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism) without prior permission from the instructor.

Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student’s transcript. For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Misconduct page \(Links to an external site.\)](#) at the [Division of Undergraduate Education \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Intellectual Property

The materials in this course are the intellectual property of their creators. As a student, you have access to many of the materials in the course for the purpose of learning, engaging with your peers in the course, completing assignments, and so on. You have a moral and legal obligation to respect the rights of others by only using course materials for purposes associated with the course. For instance, you are not permitted to share, upload, stream, sell, republish, share the login information for, or otherwise disseminate any of the course materials, such as: video and audio files, assignment prompts, slides, notes, syllabus, simulations, datasets, discussion threads. Conversely, any materials created solely by you (for example, your videos, essays, images, audio files, annotations, notes) are your intellectual property and you may use them as you wish.

Accessibility

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Religious Accommodation

UC Santa Cruz welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request the reasonable accommodation for religious practices. The instructor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation without penalty. You should first discuss the conflict and your requested accommodation with your instructor early in the term. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the [\(Links to an external site.\)Dean of Students office \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Title IX / CARE Advisory

The [Title IX Office \(Links to an external site.\)](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process. Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential, counseling support, (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University's Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1. For emergencies call 911.

Sociology Department's Statement on Bullying Harassment, and Harassing Speech

As scholars attuned to and teaching about the times in which we live, the faculty in Sociology, along with staff, have been discussing the new forms of bullying, harassment, and harassing

speech that have arisen alongside increasing political and cultural polarization, and that are often reinforced by news and social media platforms that spread falsehoods and allow for anonymity. For example, we have come to recognize that student-initiated Discord channels can create a platform for bullying and harassment that can leave student participants and the teaching team feeling unsafe. We also recognize these dynamics can be exacerbated by the trauma and isolation from the pandemic; the broad range of injustices we study in sociology, including along lines of race, gender, sexuality, and class; distress caused by contemporary issues such as climate change; and a multitude of other societal ills that Sociology explores and addresses.

The Sociology Department strongly condemns all such harassment, bullying, and harassing speech and is currently taking steps to better understand what makes our department safe for undergraduate students, graduate students, staff and faculty, and to institute new policies and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of our Sociology community.

The University of California Office of the President has released new guidelines on [abusive conduct in the workplace](#) that pertain to student employees, staff and faculty, which took effect in January of this year. If you have experienced bullying, harassment, harassing speech, or other abusive conduct, here are some action steps you can take.

- If you would like to discuss any experience of bullying, harassment, or harassing speech and/or seek conflict resolution, you may speak to someone confidentially at the [Office of the Ombuds](#).
- Note: The department is currently working on a list of referrals for students, staff, and faculty who may be dealing with these issues. This list will include a distinction between referrals to on-campus support services that are confidential and those subject to mandatory reporting laws relating to certain issues, such as sexual violence and sexual harassment. For now, if anyone is seeking counsel that is completely confidential, and that can refer you to other resources on campus, we recommend starting with the Ombuds office.

Reading Schedule

Week 1 (What is Social Problem? How do Sociologist Study Social Problems? What is Intersectionality and how can it help us understand Social Problems?)

Tuesday (June 27- In Person)

- C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press, 1959.
- “Understanding Social Problems.” 2012. Pp 6-28 in *A Primer on Social Problems* edited by Steven E. Barkan.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1990. "Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color." *Stan. L. Rev.* 43 (1990): 1241-1299.
- About Me due by the end of the day



Thursday (June 29-Zoom)

- Truth, Sojourner. 1851. “Ain’t I a Woman?”
- The Combahee River Collective Statement (1983) and Black Lives Matter Document.
- Lim, Genny. 1981. “Wonder Women” Pp 22-23 from *This Bridge Called My Back*.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1981. “La Prieta” Pg 220-233 from *This Bridge Called My Back*.
- Hough, Lauren. “I Was a Cable Guy. I Saw the Worst of America.” *Huffington Post*, December 30, 2018.
- Media Reflection Paper due the end of the day

Week 2 (Global Power and Immigration)

Tuesday (July 4)

- NO CLASS

Thursday (July 6-Zoom)

- Lugones, María, 2007. Heterosexuality and the Colonial/Modern Gender System. *Hypatia*, 22(1):186-219.
- Briggs, Laura. 2003. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U. S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*. Berkeley: University of California Press (Introduction, Chapter 3).
- Puar, Jasbir K, and Amit Rai. 2002. “Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots” *Social Text* 20(3): 117-148.
- Media Reflection Paper due the end of the day

Week 3 (Global Power Continued; Class and Racial Inequalities)

Tuesday (July 11- In Person)

- Arriola, Elvia R. “Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras: Linking Corporate Indifference to Gender Violence at the U.S.-Mexico Border” Pp 25-61 in *Making a Killing: Femicide, Free Trade, and la Frontera*. Austin: University of Texas Press. (Chapter 1)
- Schmidt, Leigh Anne and Stephanie Buechlet. 2017. “I Risk Everything because I have alreadylost Everything” Central American Female Migrants Speak Out on the Migrant Trail in Oaxaca, Mexico” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 16(1):139-164.

- Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette, and Ernestine Avila. 1997. "'I'm here, but I'm there'" the meanings of Latina transnational motherhood." *Gender & Society* 11(5): 548-571.

Thursday (July 13-Zoom)

- González-López, Gloria. 2006. "Heterosexual Fronteras: Immigrant Mexicanos, Sexual Vulnerabilities, and Survival." *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 3(3): 67-81.
- Pulido, Laura. 2016. "Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27(3): 1-16.
- Deener, Andrew. 2017. "The Origins of the Food Desert: Urban Inequality as Infrastructural Exclusion." *Social Forces* 95(3): 1285-1309.
- Heitzeg, Nancy A. "Education or incarceration: Zero tolerance policies and the school to prison pipeline." In *Forum on public policy online*, vol. 2009, no. 2. Oxford Round Table. 406 West Florida Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801, 2009.
- **Media Reflection Paper due the end of the day**

Week 4 (Racial, Gender and Sexual Inequalities)

Tuesday (July 18- In Person)

- Owens, Deirdre Cooper, and Sharla M. Fett. 2019. "Black maternal and infant health: historical legacies of slavery." *American journal of public health* 109(10): 1342-1345.
- Ortiz, Ana Teresa, and Laura Briggs. "The Culture of Poverty, Crack Babies, and Welfare Cheats: The Making of the "Healthy White Baby Crisis"." *Social Text* 21, no. 3 (2003): 39-57.
- Han, Chong-suk. 2006. "Being an Oriental, I could Never be Completely a Man: Gay Asian Men and the Intersection of Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Class." *Race, Gender & Class*: 82-97.

Thursday (July 20-Zoom)

- Hernandez, Jillian. 2009. "Miss, you look like a Bratz Doll": On Chonga Girls and Sexual-aesthetic Excess." *NWSA Journal*: 63-90.
- Ray, Ranita. 2022. "School as a Hostile Institution: How Black and Immigrant Girls of Color Experience the Classroom." *Gender & Society* 36(1): 88-111.
- Parra, Michelle Gomez, and Lorena Garcia. 2023. "' I Have Tasted Freedom": An Intersectional Analysis of College-Going Latinas' Desire for and Meanings of Mobility." *Gender & Society* 37(2).
- **Media Reflection Paper due the end of the day**

Week 5: Policing and Criminalization

Tuesday (July 25-In Person)

- Ocampo, Anthony. 2022. *Brown and Gay in LA: The Lives of Immigrant Sons* (Chapter 1,2,4)

Thursday (July 27-Zoom)

- Robinson, Brandon Andrew. 2020. "The Lavender Scare in Homonormative Times: Policing, Hyper-incarceration, and



LGBTQ Youth Homelessness." *Gender & Society* 34 (2): 210-232.

- Weitzer, Ronald. 2018. "Resistance to sex work stigma." *Sexualities* 21(5-6): 717-729
- Media Reflection Paper due the end of the day

Finals Week

- The Personal is Political Project Due by Monday, July 31 at 1pm