

San José State University
Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
Sociology 80: Social Problems, Section 6
Fall, 2025, Course Syllabus

COURSE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor:	Soma de Bourbon
Office Location:	DMH 238A
Telephone:	N/A
Email:	soma.debourbon@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Wednesdays 12:30 to 2:00 pm at the Native American and Indigenous Student Success Center (the old Chapal near Tower Hall) and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Mondays 1:30 to 2:45 am and Asynchronous online
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall, room 434

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SJSU Catalog Description: “Sociological analysis of selected contemporary social problems such as housing and homelessness, economy and employment, environment and consumerism, family and divorce, crime and drugs, politics and media, race and gender, wealth and poverty, war and peace.”

Satisfies Area D: Social Sciences

Grading: Letter Graded

COURSE FORMAT

This class meets in person once a week in Sweeney Hall 434.

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (or other communication systems as indicated by the instructor). To log onto Canvas, go to <https://one.sjsu.edu/>

AREA D LEARNING OUTCOMES

CLO	Measurement
Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which social institutions, culture, and environment shape and are shaped by the behavior of individuals, both past and present	Midterm and final exam Reading quizzes In-class exercises
Compare and contrast the dynamics of two or more social groups or social systems in a variety of historical and/or cultural contexts	Midterm and final exam Reading quizzes In-class exercises
Place contemporary social developments in cultural, environmental, geographical, and/or historical contexts	Midterm and final exam Reading quizzes
Draw on social/behavioral science information from various perspectives to formulate applications appropriate to historical and/or contemporary social issues	Current Events Group Project Midterm and final exam Reading quizzes In-class exercises

REQUIRED TEXTS / READING

All readings will be available on Canvas or via an internet link.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

*****If you are struggling or think you may fail the class, please come and see me during office hours. The earlier you talk with me, the more I can assist you. Please do not come to discuss passing the class in the last three weeks of the semester.***

Exams (40%: 20% for midterm, 20% for final exam)

The exams, one midterm and one final, will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answers based on the readings, classroom presentations, and discussions. A makeup of a missed exam requires an official notice from a doctor, court officer, or other official.

In-Class Reading Quizzes (20%)

- Some information about the Reading Quizzes:
- The in-class quizzes will take place during the first ten minutes of class. If you come late, you will not be able to take the quiz.
- There will be quizzes most Mondays during the semester.
- Your lowest score will be dropped.
- You can bring one hand-written sheet of paper with you to use for each quiz.
- There are no make-up quizzes since you can miss one quiz without it affecting your grade.
- The first two quizzes will consist of the following open-ended question: “Discuss three things you learned from the reading.” You will be asked to respond with a one to two paragraph answer.

Discussion Posts (10%)

You will submit discussion posts on Canvas. Your lowest score will be dropped. Discussion posts may include a variety of things from watching a film and turning in your notes for the film to asking you to comment on the assigned reading.

In-Class Participation/Discussion/Films (10%)

We will do in-class assignments most class sessions. You get points for showing up to class and doing the assignment. Points are not assigned based on how many times you raise your hand or talk in class. Some students do not enjoy talking in front of the class, and other students enjoy it. I would like every person to participate as much as they are able. See classroom protocol for use of devices in class. Since this is a hybrid class, we will have online discussion posts most weeks of the semester.

Group Project (20%)

You will work in a group to present on some of the topics we will cover in class. We will discuss this more in class.

LATE POLICY

I will accept assignments turned in to me before class up until one week past the due date. **I will not accept assignments through email.** If you turn in the assignment late, you will receive partial credit, up to one half of the full credit for the assignment.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL

You are expected to arrive on time, participate in class discussions, and to be attentive during lectures and discussions. It is important to be courteous and respectful to your peers as well as to the instructor. Please refrain from using computers (unless typing notes from lecture), cell phones, earphones or other devices during class. When someone is using their phone or browsing the web on their computer, it is difficult to lecture, and makes discussions impossible. It is also distracting to other students. We do activities in class, so if you cannot participate in class without your technology, you should find another class.

If you are using your phone or computer while in class (unless cleared ahead of time), you may be asked to leave for the rest of the class period. If you are talking while the professor is lecturing or other students are presenting, you may be asked to leave for the remainder of the class period. This is not meant as a punishment; it is meant to ensure the wellbeing of the class as a whole. If you come to class, I expect you will give the class your full attention.

PHONE: I do not check the phone assigned to me, so please see me in class or during office hours for any important issues.

EMAIL: I cannot respond to hundreds of emails every day, and I do not want to miss any important emails from students who have an emergency or are requesting an in-person meeting. You can talk to me in class, so please only use email to set up an appointment with me or in case of an emergency.

Recording and Privacy: Recording any class activities, including lectures, is only allowed with the instructor's permission. You are not permitted to share or distribute class recordings. Instructor-generated materials (like syllabi, lectures, and presentations) are protected by copyright. Violation may result in referral to Student Conduct and Ethical Development office.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Use of an AI Generator such as ChatGPT, MidJourney, DALL-E, etc. is explicitly prohibited unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. It's imperative that all work submitted should be your own. Any assignment that is found to have been plagiarized or to have used unauthorized AI tools may receive a zero and / or be reported for academic misconduct.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance,

counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php)(https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

SJSU COUNSELING SERVICES

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](#).

GRADING

Percentage	Grade Assigned
100 or higher	A+
93-99	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-
59-	F

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Reading Quizzes	20
Discussion Posts	10
In Class Work	10
Group Projects	20
Midterm	20
Final Exam	20
TOTAL	100

Course Schedule

(See Canvas for most up to date schedule)