*Please note that this syllabus should be regarded only as a general guide to the course and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Boston College
Woods College of Advancing Studies

Course Title: Social Problems, 4 Credits
Course Number: SOCY104901
Schedule: Tuesday/Thursday @ 10:30 AM-1:45 PM
Summer 2018, Session 2 June 26-Aug 2

Instructor Name: Samantha Eddy
BC E-mail: eddysa@bc.edu
Office: McGuinn 410
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2pm-4pm

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
In an era of social media movements, tweeting presidents, and overnight tech takeovers, social issues can evolve at such a rapid pace that we find ourselves lost in trying to keep up. This course aims to help students confront some of the most crucial social developments in American culture by introducing students to historic precedents, exploring theoretical analysis and discussing modern implications. More than anything, this course aims to help students understand the structure of our culture as a social organization so that we can—as the great sociologist C. Wright Mills encouraged—move from thinking about such challenges as personal problems to understanding them as social issues.

Textbooks & Readings (Required)
There are no required textbooks for this course. All materials are hyperlinked and available through Boston College’s Library Systems.
Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more - all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click [here](#).

Course Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate a proficient understanding of sociological theory in understanding and analyzing culture
2. Students will demonstrate ethical attitudes pertaining to discussions of power, marginalization and social change.
3. Students will be able to analyze social phenomena from the perspective of classical and contemporary sociology.
4. Students will be able to apply a sophisticated understanding of race, class, and gender to the analysis of contemporary social phenomena.
5. Students will be able to communicate effectively, orally and in writing.
6. Students will have the capacity to engage in meaningful, constructive exchanges with others.

Grading
The course grade will be factored by the following:

- **First Exam**—July 17th: **25%**
  - Responsible for June 26th-July 12th material
- **Second Exam**—August 2nd: **25%**
  - Responsible for all course material
- **First Writing**—July 10th: **15%**
- **Second Writing**—July 26th: **15%**
- **Participation**: **20%**
  - Gauged by attendance and enthusiastic participation in class discussions

The undergraduate grading system for Woods College is as follows:

- **A** (4.00), **A-** (3.67)
- **B+** (3.33), **B** (3.00), **B-** (2.67)
- **C+** (2.33), **C** (2.00), **C-** (1.67)
- **D+** (1.33), **D** (1.00), **D-** (.67)
- **F** (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Students who complete course evaluations can access grades earlier, as they are posted.
**Deadlines and Late Work**
Due to the nature of the roundtable discussions, extensions will not be granted unless there are extreme or unusual circumstances. Students are expected to come to the three roundtable discussions outlined in the course prepared to present their work. Late work will not be accepted.

**Course Assignments**
It is expected that you will spend 8 hours per week on out-of-class assignments and exercises. These are listed below. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time but the average is approximately 8 hours per week over the semester.

**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>• C. Wright Mills’ “The Promise”</td>
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<td>• WEB Du Bois’ “A Program for a Sociological Society”</td>
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<td>June 28</td>
<td>Ethical Concerns and Studying Social Issues</td>
<td>• James Jones’ “The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment”</td>
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<td>• Chris Wild’s “A Stimulating History of Vibrators”, online:</td>
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<td><a href="http://mashable.com/2015/02/20/history-of-vibrators/#nTJjHhf.XOqo">http://mashable.com/2015/02/20/history-of-vibrators/#nTJjHhf.XOqo</a></td>
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<td>• M. Foucault’s <em>A History of Sexuality Volume 1</em>, “Right of Death and Power Over Life”: pgs 133-159</td>
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<td>July 3</td>
<td>Class Status and Power</td>
<td>• Mills’ “The Power Elite”</td>
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<td>• Bourdieu’s “Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction”</td>
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<td>July 5</td>
<td>Education, Achievement and, Social Immobility</td>
<td>• O’shea’s “Avoiding the Manufacture of Sameness”</td>
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<td>• Please watch: <em>Waiting for Superman</em> (2010)</td>
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<td>• Available through Amazon</td>
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<td>• Available from <a href="http://watchdocumentaries.com/waiting-for-superman/">http://watchdocumentaries.com/waiting-for-superman/</a></td>
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| July 10  | Confronting Colonial Histories             | - Writing Response Due: Consider the theoretical stances of Mills, Bourdieu and O'Shea. For each, write a 250-350 word paragraph detailing how they would analyze the experiences detailed in *Waiting for Superman*. How would their theories explain the circumstances of these families? Total word count: 750-1050  
- Tuck and Yang’s “Decolonization is not a Metaphor”  
- Rebecca Tsosie’s “Reclaiming Native Stories: An Essay on Cultural Appropriation and Cultural Rights”  
- MacDonald and Hudson’s “The Genocide Question and Indian Residential Schools in Canada” |
- Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow*: Introduction and Chapter One (pgs 1-58)  
- Macintosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” |
| July 17  | First Exam                                 | Responsible for June 26th-July 12th material                                 |
| July 19  | Gender: Understanding Heteronormativity   | - Westbrook and Schilts’ “Doing Gender, Determining Gender”  
- Sevelius’ “Gender Affirmation: A Framework for Conceptualizing Risk Behavior Among Transgender Women of Color”  
- Kian et al’s “Homophobic and Sexist Yet Uncontested” |
| July 24  | Intersectionality and the Meaningful Interactions of Identity | - Kimberlé Crenshaw’s “Mapping the Margins”  
- Smith’s “Beyond Pro-Choice Versus Pro-Life”  
- Sevelius’ “Gender Affirmation: A Framework for Conceptualizing Risk Behavior Among Transgender Women of Color” |
| July 26  | Sexuality and Culture                      | - Writing Response Number 2: Use Crenshaw’s theory of Intersectionality to explore the intersections of your identity. How does this relate to conversations we’ve had about class, gender, and race? What are you experiences with privilege or marginalization? How do the intersections complicate or compound that? Total word count: 750-1050  
- Better and Simula’s “How and for whom does gender matter? Rethinking the concept of sexual orientation”  
- Foucault’s *A History of Sexuality: Volume One*: Chapter One “We Other Victorians” (pgs 1-14)  
- Reling et al’s “Rape Myths and Hookup Culture” |
### July 31
**Ableism and the Subjugation of Bodies**
- Hauk’s “Authentic Inclusion: A Celebration of Exceptional Teachers and Student Identity A Phenomenological Self-Study
- Liebowitz’s “Everyday Ableism and How We Can Avoid It”
- Owen’s “Portrayals of Schizophrenia by Entertainment Media”

### August 2
**Final Exam**
**Responsible for all course material**

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**Written Work**

Woods College students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the [Connors Family Learning Center](#).

**Attendance**

Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Many instructors grade for participation; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. Students are required to attend all three roundtable discussions as the majority of their participation will be drawn from these discussions. If there are extreme or unusual circumstances, students are expected to reach out well in advance for alternative options. As this is a once a week course, students are permitted two absences from normal class days (whether for the reason of illness, unusual circumstance, etc.). Students will not receive participation credit for the two days missed. Any day over the two will drive the grade down a third of a letter value.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.
Accommodation and Accessibility
Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Woods College courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility.

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
Students in Woods College courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information.