

COURSE SYLLABUS

SOCIAL CONTROVERSIES

SOC/IDIS 256

SPRING 2010

MORAVIAN COLLEGE

DR. DEBRA WETCHER-HENDRICKS

CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR

Office: PPHAC 314

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

Friday 9:30-11:00 a.m.

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REQUIRED READING MATERIAL

available at Moravian College's bookstore.

Crossroads (2006) Upper Saddle River, N.J. Pearson Custom Publishing.

available on the World Wide Web

Pinker, S. (2004). Why nature & nurture won't go away. *Daedalus*

http://pinker.wjh.harvard.edu/articles/papers/nature_nurture.pdf

Kennedy, J. F. (1961). *Executive order 10925* Washington DC: The White

House. <http://www.thecre.com/fedlaw/legal6/eo10925.htm>

available on Academic Search Elite.

Blau, F.D., and Winkler, A.E. (2005) Does Affirmative Action Work? *Regional Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 14:3.

Colt G.H., and Hollister, A. (1998) Were you born that way? *Life* 21:4.

Legrand, L.N., Iacono, W.G., and McGue, M. (2005) Predicting Addiction. *American Scientist*, 93:2, 14

New Republic (2000), *Separate But Equal?* 222:2

Niemi, R. (2004) The Changing Shape of the River: Affirmative Action and Recent Social Science Research. *Academic Questions*.

Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders

on reserve in Reeve's Library:

American Psychological Association, (1994) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition. (DSM-IV)*.

Kinsey, A., Pomeroy, W., & Martin, C. (1948). *Sexual behavior in the human male*. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders.

distributed in class:

Center of the American Experiment (2006) Ideas to go: Affirmative Action. *Intellectual Takeout*.

Parker, R. (1989). Myths of Monogamy. *Open Hands*, 5:2

Additional primary and secondary source articles chosen by students

Course Outcomes

This course will provide students with

1. familiarity with various controversial issues related to the formation of social identity and the management of society.
2. the ability to approach controversial issues objectively, recognizing the importance of acknowledging differing attitudes regarding these issues.

3. well-developed sociological imaginations, allowing for the consideration of relationships between personal circumstances and large-scale conditions related to the topics raised.
4. strong critical thinking skills, enhanced by evaluating particular controversial issues through the combination of scholarly documented evidence and logical thought.
5. skills for formulating and justifying strong, cohesive arguments for chosen positions on controversial issues.
6. appreciation for the interdisciplinary natures of the topics discussed in the course.

evaluation

Two non-cumulative exams assess student understanding of the basic concepts discussed in class and in assigned readings. Exam questions, which require written answers ranging from a sentence to a paragraph in length, vary in point value.

During the semester, students, in groups of three or four must organize and present lessons on chosen topics. The "Guidelines for Presentations" contains specific instructions and suggested topics for these presentations.

In addition to the topic addressed by each student with his or her presentation group, he or she must select three issues considered worthy of further attention than given in class. For each of these topics, a one to two-page typed response should provide a subjective analysis of and any questions related to the topic. A description of the requirements for responses can be found in the "Guidelines for Written Assignments."

From the issues discussed in class, students must choose a single topic (It is suggested that they select from those that served as bases for their responses.) to examine in depth, resulting in a position paper. A description of the requirements for the position paper can be found in the "Guidelines for Written Assignments."

Each student also receives a class participation/class activities grade. The participation portion of the grade reflects students' interaction in class. Providing substantive class discussion and contributing to groupwork increases this grade. Conversely, disruption (including consistently arriving to class late), a lack of effort, and obvious inactivity (including sleeping) lowers the grade. The class activities portion of the grade reflects a student's efforts toward and completion of in-class assignments and exercises.

The preceding factors are combined in the following manner to determine students' course grades.



EXAMS	36% (18% each)
GROUP PRESENTATION	14%
INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES	18% (6% each)
POSITION PAPER	18%
CLASS PARTICIPATION/ACTIVITIES	14%

Course grades follow the letter-grade system. Please consult the Moravian College Student Handbook for a description of the level of work characteristic of each grade. The numerical ranges used in assigning each letter grade in this course are as follows.

A	92%-100%	B-	80%-81.9%	D+	68%-69.9%
A-	90%-91.9%	C+	78%-79.9%	D	62%-67.9%
B+	88%-89.9%	C	72%-77.9%	D-	60%-61.9%
B	82%-87.9%	C-	70%-71.9%	F	0%-59.9%

All standards listed in the college catalog that deal with attendance, withdrawal, cheating, plagiarism, and any other pertinent policies apply to this class.

Please make every possible effort to take exams and submit written assignments on the scheduled dates (see course schedule). All missed examinations are given at the end of the semester. Responses must be submitted in the class directly following that in which the topic of the response was discussed. Late responses will be accepted with a five-point penalty for each day they are late, beginning with the due date. Position papers that are submitted after the due date will be penalized fifteen points for each day that they are late. A student who does not attend class on the day of his or her scheduled presentation receives a grade of 0 on the presentation. (It is unrealistic to state that NO excuses will be accepted. But, very few excuses will be considered legitimate. A valid excuse must be accompanied by proper documentation as well as approval from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.)

Attendance, itself, does not directly affect students' grades in this course. However, attendance is indirectly reflected in the class participation/activities grade. Class participation grades rely, in part, upon presence in class. Also, students may not make up class activities that take place during classes for which they are absent.







PLEASE NOTE: The Course Schedule on the following page provides an anticipated calendar of topics and assignments. Please be aware that this schedule is subject to change based upon the progression of the term.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Copies of reading assignments followed by an asterisk (*) are on reserve in Reeves Library. Reading assignments followed by two asterisks (**) are available through Academic Search Elite. Reading assignments followed by three asterisks (***) are available on the World Wide Web. All other assignments can be found in the *Crossroads* reader or are distributed in class.

PLEASE NOTE: This Course Schedule provides an anticipated calendar of topics and assignments. Please be aware that this schedule is subject to change based upon the progression of the term.

assignment for this week	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Buy the book Read: Pinker***; Colt, and Hollister**	1/18	1/19 Introductions	1/20	1/21 Nature vs. Nurture	1/22
Read: Kinsey* (pgs 636-666); Walters and Hayes; Lacayo; Weston	1/25	126 Sexual Orientation	1/27	1/28 Public Perceptions of Homosexuals and Bisexuals	1/29
Read: Parker; New Republic; Ruether; The Christian Century Choose presentation topics	2/1	2/2 Public Perceptions of Homosexuals and Bisexuals	2/3	2/4 Public Perceptions of Homosexuals and Bisexuals	2/5
Read DSM-IV* (pgs 199-209 and 214-222); Becker; Legrand, Iacono, and McGue**	2/8	2/9 Addiction as a Disease	2/10	2/11 Addiction as a Disease	2/12
Read: DeZolt; Fox 	2/15	2/16 Addiction as a Disease	2/17	2/18 Addiction as a Disease	2/19
STUDY! Read: student-assigned articles	2/22	2/23 EXAM 1	2/24	2/25 PRESENTATIONS	2/26
Read: student-assigned articles Read: Chafel	3/1	3/2 PRESENTATIONS	3/3	3/4 Social Inequality	3/5

Rest and relax	3/8	3/9	3/10	3/11	
	3/12				
	S P R I N G B R E A K				
Read: Mergenbagan, Cox; Edin and Lein	3/15	3/16 Poverty	3/17 	3/18 Poverty and Welfare	3/19
Read: Cohen,; Eichenreich and Piven;	3/22	3/23 Poverty and Welfare	3/24	3/25 Roles of and Concerns about Welfare	3/26
Read: Cohen; Hofferth; Platt; Feagin and Sikes	3/29	3/30 Roles of and Concerns about Welfare	3/31	4/1 Racial and Ethnic Stratification	4/2
Read: Eddings; Ogbu; Kennedy*** 	4/5	4/6 Racial and Ethnic Stratification	4/7	4/8 Roles of and Concerns about Affirmative Action	4/9
Read: Intellectual Takeout; Blau and Winkler**, Nieli** STUDY	4/12	4/13 Roles of and Concerns about Affirmative Action	4/14	4/15 EXAM 2	4/16
Read: student-assigned articles	4/19	4/20 PRESENTATIONS	4/21	4/22 PRESENTATIONS	4/23
Read: student-assigned articles	4/26	4/27 PRESENTATIONS	4/28	4/29 make-up/review day	4/30
Write position paper	5/3	5/4	5/5	5/6	5/7