



Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

## **SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SCIENCES**

### **SYLLABUS**

|                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>TITLE:</b>        | Social Problems                       |
| <b>CODE:</b>         | TSO 209                               |
| <b>PREREQUISITE:</b> | N/A                                   |
| <b>CREDITS:</b>      | 3 credits   45 contact hours   1 term |

### **DESCRIPTION**

This course studies the conceptualization of the social question, the relationship with the categorization of the concept of social problem, and the ethical, economic, and socio-political dilemmas underlying contemporary social reality, mainly Puerto Rican. The course is designed to encourage students to reflect, analyze, and discuss the social question, starting from a holistic, critical, and transdisciplinary perspective. Students are expected to be able to explain the Puerto Rican reality through the development of critical thinking skills that allow them to think about the discourses that legitimize knowledge in society, based on the perspectives of human rights and what is considered the common good. The course is an elective, aimed at students of any discipline.

### **JUSTIFICATION**

The prevailing social situation in societies such as Puerto Rico requires students to develop a critical understanding of current social phenomena so that they can assume positions that make possible the solution of contemporary social problems, from the defense and promotion of human rights. This course allows students to analyze these phenomena in a scientific, critical, and discursive way in relation to the daily fragmentations of cosmopolitan societies, and to assume responsibly and creatively their civic ethics. Also, the course provides students with the opportunity to scrutinize and reflect on the category of social problems, underlying the social question, and its relationship to the violation of human rights.

## **COMPETENCES**

The course develops the following competences in students:

- **Critical questioning**

## **OBJECTIVES**

After completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the relationship between the categories social question and social problem.
2. Compare the concepts, theories, processes, and research related to contemporary social problems.
3. Critically analyze the applicability of the theoretical and philosophical models studied in class to the realities lived in contemporary societies.
4. Critically examine information, concepts, theories, and methods derived from multiple disciplines in order to understand social reality and promote social and economic justice, and human rights.
5. Identify the global interconnections of oppression (discrimination and stigmatization) and the human rights violations manifested in the social problems studied.
6. Develop an integrated and broad vision of the social environment in which human rights are operationalized.
7. Propose practices that promote human rights, social, economic, and environmental justice.

## **CONTENTS**

- I. Introduction: Philosophical, theoretical, and conceptual basis
  - A. What is meant by social problems and the dilemmas of conceptualizing and defining social realities?
    1. The category of social problem
    2. The social question
    3. The social question, research methodology, and paradigmatic conceptualization
    4. The transdisciplinary perspective
  - B. Philosophical/sociological conceptualization
    1. Conceptualization and the development of critical thinking
    2. Functionalist structuralist perspective and general systems theory
    3. Conflict theory and perspectives on power dependency

4. Critical theories
  5. Postmodern perspectives
  6. Human rights perspectives
- II. Socio-Economic And Political Trajectory Of Social Problems
- A. Modernity/post-modernity
  - B. Globalization and neoliberalism
  - C. Crisis of the welfare state and dependency policies
  - D. Human rights analysis
    1. Violation of rights based on human diversity, exclusion, and privilege
    2. Comparison between various economic, social, and political models
- III. Contemporary Social Problems
- A. Poverty and education
    1. Perpetuation of poverty, education, and lifestyles other than the recognition of social ties: discrimination and exclusion based on social class, ethnicity, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, among others.
    2. Poverty and power
    3. Poverty and identity of Puerto Rican society
    4. Environmental sustainability issues
  - B. Health and the social question: stigmatizing trends in their operationalization
    1. Old age
    2. Migration
    3. HIV/AIDS
    4. Homelessness
    5. Communities of contrasts
    6. LGBTTTQ Community
    7. Mental Health
  - C. Manifestations of violence
    1. The colony as a driving force for violence
    2. Criminality
    3. Punitive policies
    4. Drug trafficking
    5. Gender-based violence

## METHODOLOGY

The following strategies from the active learning methodology are recommended:

- Concept maps
- Panel discussions
- Individual and group presentations
- Written reflections
- Interactive conference
- Case studies
- Participation in activities to raise awareness of social problems or promote human rights

## EVALUATION

|                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Compositions          | 20%         |
| Partial assignments   | 20%         |
| Oral presentation     | 25%         |
| Participation         | 10%         |
| Final project or exam | 25%         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100%</b> |

## LEARNING ASSESSMENT

The institutional assessment rubric is applied to the course's core activity.

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## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Amnistía International <https://www.amnesty.org/en/>

Comisión de Derechos Civiles <https://cdc.pr.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/>

National Organization for Women <https://now.org/>

The Foundation for Critical Thinking <https://www.criticalthinking.org/>

Objetivos Desarrollo Sostenible

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/objetivos-de-desarrollo-sostenible/>

Periódico Post Antillano <https://elpostantillano.net/>

Periódico 80 grados <https://www.80grados.net/tag/puerto-rico/>

Unidos por los derechos humanos <https://www.unidosporlosderechoshumanos.mx/>

For more information resources related to the course's topics, access the library's webpage <http://biblioteca.sagrado.edu/>

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

For detailed information on the process and required documentation you should visit the corresponding office. To ensure equal conditions, in compliance with the ADA Act (1990) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973), as amended, any student in need of reasonable accommodation or special assistance must complete the process established by the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón to take courses with or without academic credit. A lack of academic integrity is any act or omission that does not demonstrate the honesty, transparency, and responsibility that

should characterize all academic activity. Any student who fails to comply with the Honesty, Fraud, and Plagiarism Policy is exposed to the following sanctions: receive a grade of zero in the evaluation and / or repetition of the assignment in the seminar, a grade of F (\*) in the seminar, suspension, or expulsion as established in the Academic Integrity Policy effective in November 2022.

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