SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH PROJECT

The purpose of this assignment is to help you define and understand what constitutes a social problem. By reading and researching about the problems that you consider important, you develop a better awareness of your social world. Writing critically about the problem you select and attempting to come up with solutions will help you clarify your own perspective and values. You will be able to look at how the problem originated and examine what can be done about it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1- Choose a social problem of interest to you. You can choose a problem in your local community, in the nation or a more global issue that affects everyone. It does not have to be a problem that we discuss in class, but it should be an issue about which you are concerned.

2 – Find various articles regarding your social problem. Articles can be found in a daily newspaper (local or national), a weekly news magazine(Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report) or a regularly published journal (Social Problems, Social Work). You are **not to read someone’s blog.** Each article must be a minimum of 7 paragraphs.

3- Read the article and write a 1-2 page summary in APA format (see below for directions). In your summary you want to address as many of the following topics as possible. Not all articles will address all the topics. Submit to turnitin.com by the assigned due date.

A-Why is this problem considered a social problem?

B-When, how and where did the problem originate?

C-What other social problems are related to this problem?

D-What groups are affected by the problem?

E-Who is hurt by it?

F-Who benefits (or stands to gain) from the problem?

G -What can be done and by whom to alleviate the problem?

H – What statistics support the information?

Your summary is just that, a summary of the article. Within your summary you want to make sure that you include the information that answers the above questions. You are not simply answering the questions based on the article you read.

YOU WILL COMPLETE THIS ANALYSIS 6 Times throughout the semester. ONE FOR EACH ARTICLE.

APA Format includes a title page and a reference page. For the summaries, your title will be Summaries 1 and 2, Summaries 3 and 4, and Summaries 5 and 6 respectively. A slight difference than normal APA format, on the first page of the summary you will center the title of the article versus the title of the paper. Ask if you don’t understand what I mean. You will lose significant points if you do not follow the formatting directions.

4 -FINAL PAPER:

Write a comprehensive paper on your social problem. In your paper you will be summarizing all your information from the articles. The paper **must follow** the format listed below.

A-DEFINE THE PROBLEM OR ISSUE

GIVE THE HISTORY, BACKGROUND, DEFINE SIGNIFICANT TERMS, AND DISCUSS THE MAJOR ACTORS IN THE SITUATION.

B-DISCUSS THE CURRENT ISSUE

USE STATISTICS – a lot of people lose points here because they don’t do this. Statistics should not be older than 5 years.

C-WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY CONCERNING HOW THIS SHOULD BE SOLVED OR CHANGED?

5 - PRESENTATION

You will be presenting your paper to the class. Your presentation must include some type of technology driven visual and your voice. If you want to make a movie (you cannot show someone else’s movie), powerpoint, etc. that is up to you. Your presentation must address A, B, and C in step #3.

5. -GRADING CRITERIA

-on time

-organization

-explanation—depth of supporting evidence

-paper mechanics—grammar, punctuation, spelling, style

-format—correct documentation, references, length

-quality of conclusions—does it bring together major ideas and evidence? topic importance, social costs and consequences need to be fully explained.

SOCIOLOGY PROJECT DUE DATES

Assignment Value Due Date

* Preliminary Topic Selection Worksheet 10 pts 9/9
* Summaries 1 and 2 40 pts 9/23

See steps 2 and 3 above

* Summaries 3 and 4 40 pts 10/7

See steps 2 and 3 above

* Summaries 5 and 6 40 pts 10/21 See steps 2 and 3 above
* Rough Draft 50 pts 11/12

**If this is not submitted the final draft will not be accepted and you will fail the course. This is a complete paper in correct APA format.**

* Final Draft 600 pts 12/16

**If this is not submitted you will fail for the semester regardless of your class average.**

* Presentation 200 pts 1/9

POSSIBLE TOPICS—please contact instructor if you have a topic of special interest. Topics cannot be duplicated.

HeadStart programs for children

Job training programs for the poor

Unemployment in Illinois

Economic definition of poverty

Minimum wage—purpose vs. reality

County social services available

Teen pregnancy

Food pantries

Proposals against pan handling

Homelessness in Illinois

Welfare to work programs for the poor

High school drop outs

Crime and teens –be specific

Charter schools

Inadequate funding of city schools vs. suburban

Reasons for homelessness

Social service organizations (United Way, Salvation Army)

Immigrants and how they adjust to America

Immigrant restrictions

Importance of media to American culture

Overworked—“overconnected” America

Obesity and social problems

Influence of TV/video on the health of America

Impact of character education (First class etc) on the values of American kids

Impact of grandparents raising their grandchildren

Why are Americans waiting longer before they get married?

Does community policing work?

Zero tolerance gun policy/drug policy in schools

Recidivism in criminals

Is the American Dream a reality?

Death penalty

Racism in America

World population growth

World resource depletion

Influence of religion in society (schools etc)

Social impact of obesity