Course Title:
Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Number:
HR 5013-227

Course Description:
This course will be conducted in seminar format. This will require your active participation in all aspects of the course. We will discuss numerous current problems relevant to human relations, and we will jointly complete a book review intended to provide you with applied insight into some of the topics that we will be covering. Your grade in this course will depend upon your attendance, your individual presentation and chapter reaction papers, the quality and thoughtfulness of your book review discussion posts and your book review reaction paper, and your final papers.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: January 24-29, 2012
Location: Naples, Italy. See Site Director for classroom site.
Hours: Tue-Fri 6:00-9:30 p.m.; Sat-Sun 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 26, 2011

Site Director:
Rosalinda Archuleta Pintor. Phone: 39-081-568-6672; DSN 626-6672; Fax: 39-081-568-6671; DSN 626-6671; E-mail: apnaples@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Peter C. Vail, M.Ed
Mailing Address: 1932 Shelby Court
Norman, OK 73072
Telephone Number: (405) 364-9307 (home)
E-mail Address: pvail@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion.bkstr.com or by telephone at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-1557 (outside the U.S.).


4. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

**Course Objectives:**

The goal of this course will be to familiarize you with some of the complex social issues that impact the human experience and that have implications for human relations. We will be examining the ways in which larger social contexts impact individuals’ experiences, and visa versa. Finally, we will be analyzing the multiple dimensions that are of significance to individuals’ and communities’ experiences of current problems. These include the importance of factors such as race, gender, class, culture, nation of origin, popular culture, etc. It is expected that by the end of the course you will not only be familiar with some of the issues impacting individual and social health and wellbeing, but that you will also be able to provide a thoughtful analysis of these issues.

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

**Writing:**

- You can find an excellent resource on APA style and general academic writing at Purdue University’s Owl website located at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
- The OU Writing Center is another good resource. Their website is located at: http://www.ou.edu/writingcenter/

**Attendance:**

You will be able to earn two attendance points per evening class and four per full-day weekend class. One point will be awarded for your presence in class, and one point will be awarded for your timely arrival to class (or your timely return after lunch). If you arrive more than five minutes late without clearing it with me advance or providing me with a valid excuse (e.g., doctor’s note or unavoidable personal emergency) or you leave class early without first clearing it with me or providing me with a valid excuse (e.g., personal emergency) you will lose an attendance point for that class.

**Individual chapter presentations and reaction papers:**

Presentations:

You will be responsible for an in-class presentation based upon one chapter from Zinn, Hondagneu-Sotelo, and Messner (2011). These can include both chapters we do or do not cover in class. Your presentation should be approximately 15 minutes long (with an additional 5 minutes allowed for questions and answers) and should provide your classmates with an overview of the content of the chapter as well as your thoughts on and reactions to the chapter. You may use handouts, visual aids such as PowerPoint, etc. in order to make your presentation engaging. You should locate your discussion in the context of the other topics that we have covered in the class. You should additionally consider the goal of the chapter author(s) and your reactions to their writing (do you agree or disagree with them and why?). You should also consider whether the author(s) changed the way you think about the topic, whether you
learned something new from the article, how it fits with the rest of what we are learning, etc. Finally, you should come prepared to answer questions on your chapter.

I will assign chapter presentations on the first day of class. As much as possible, I will attempt to accommodate your preferences. Hence, it is your responsibility to review the book before class in order to be able to make your selection. I will post the schedule of presentations on D2L and will announce the order in class. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know when you will be presenting and that you come to class prepared.

Your presentation will be graded based upon the thoroughness of the overview of the chapter you provide, as well as the degree of critical thinking you display in providing an analysis of the author(s)’ goals and your reactions to their argument. You will receive a grade out of 100, with engaging presentations showing the highest degree of critical thinking receiving the highest grades.

**No presentation extensions will be granted.** In the event that you experience a true emergency (e.g., the death of a relative, a car accident, etc.) or a genuine illness on the date that you are required to present, you will be allowed to present on a different day, at the discretion of the instructor. However, in order to receive such accommodation, you will need to provide documentation in support of your absence on the presentation date. In the absence of documentation, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

Reaction papers:

You will additionally be expected to complete a papers based upon a chapter of your choice from CQ Researcher (2010). You may select any of the chapters in this book for your reaction paper, including those that we did not cover in class. Your paper should be typed using 12-pt font and standard margins and should be three to five pages long. Your paper should be written as you would any other academic paper and should be proofread and spell and grammar checked. Your papers should document your reaction to the material presented in the chapter, including your thoughts on the pro and con perspectives provided as well as the key questions the authors address in the chapter.

Your paper will be due on the last day of class. You will receive a grade out of 100 for each of these papers. **Late papers will receive an automatic 5-point deduction if these are handed in on the due date but after 5PM. Ten points will be deducted for each additional day that your paper is late.** In the event of a documented true emergency or illness (please see above for a definition) you may receive an extension on this assignment. This will be at the discretion of the instructor.

**Book Review:**

In addition to your other assigned reading, we will be completing a review of *Nickel and Dimed.* This book illustrates many of the concepts and issues we will be covering in the class. We will discuss each of the three chapters on different class days. On those days, you will earn additional points for participating in the class discussion and making at least one substantive contribution. A substantive contribution is one that moves beyond simply indicating that you agree or disagree with a statement made by someone else or the author, but is backed up with an argument and/or a thoughtful illustration of your point. You will be able to earn up to five points per book review discussion, with a total of fifteen possible points. You will be graded on the critical thinking you demonstrate during the discussion and the degree of thoughtfulness you put into your contribution. The more thoughtful you are, the higher your grade. It is highly recommended that you start reading the book before the first day of class.

Final papers:

You will need to hand in a final paper discussing a current problem of your choice (your are responsible for identifying an issue that you consider to be a current problem for human relations). You may select an issue we covered in class or you may select an entirely new topic (e.g., teenage drug use, urban homelessness, women’s mental health, the school experience of immigrant children, etc.). It is highly recommended that you select an aspect of a problem to discuss; this will make your paper more manageable (e.g., rather than looking just at drug use in general, look at teenage drug use or discuss urban homelessness, etc.). I am happy to review paper topics if you place these in the relevant dropbox on D2L. However, I will not review any topics after the first day of class.
Your paper should include an overview of the problem that you have selected. You should explain the various dimensions of the problem (e.g., the ways in which race, class, gender, culture, etc. interact when considering this problem) and the reasons why you have selected it as a current problem for human relations. In addition, you should provide an analysis of some of the ways in which the problem can be addressed (what has already been done, why has this worked or not worked, what do you think should be done to address the problem and why, etc.). You need to use at least seven sources for your paper of which no more than two may be reports published by governmental, non-governmental, and/or non-profit organizations or internet-based sources such as newspaper articles or websites. The remainder of your sources needs to be scholarly books and/or journal articles. Only one of these sources may come from one of your required texts. Your paper should be approximately 7 to 10 pages long and should be typed, double-spaced, and should use conventional margins. Finally, your paper needs to conform to APA formatting guidelines.

Your paper will receive a grade out of 100. Final grades will be assessed in the following manner: 10 points for stylistic considerations (correct use of APA format, font, margins, page length, etc.); 60 points for content (the thoroughness of your discussion of the problem you selected, the completeness of your analysis of potential solutions to the problem, etc.); 30 points for critical thinking (the degree to which you provide a thoughtful analysis of the dimensions of the problem, the thoughtfulness of your discussion of potential solutions to the problem, etc.). **Late papers will receive an automatic 5-point deduction if these are handed in on the due date but after 5PM. Ten points will be deducted for each additional day that your paper is late.** In the event of a documented true emergency or illness (please see above for a definition) you may receive an extension on this assignment. This will be at the discretion of the instructor. If you would like to receive feedback on an early draft of your paper, please see me earlier rather than later in order to arrange a date by which you need to submit a draft. **I will not accept early drafts after the last day of class.**

**Important Due Dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date and Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final day to submit final paper topics for review</td>
<td>In dropbox – 1/24/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter presentation assignments made</td>
<td>In class - 1/24/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review discussion – chapter 1</td>
<td>In class – 1/26/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review discussion – chapter 2</td>
<td>In class – 1/27/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review discussion – chapter 3</td>
<td>In class – 1/28/2012 (morning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter reaction paper due</td>
<td>In dropbox by 5PM – 1/29/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final day to submit early drafts of final paper</td>
<td>Via email – 1/29/2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Grading:**

This is a letter-graded course: A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%; F = <60%

Grades will be assigned using the following breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each book review discussion is worth 5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter reaction paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**NOTICE:** Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy
Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty
Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement
The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies
Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright
Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Peter C. Vail, M.Ed.

Education

- BA in Psychology - Bowling Green State University
- M. Ed. in Education - Bowling Green State University
- Additional graduate courses in Public Administration, The University of Oklahoma

Current Positions

- Advanced Programs Professor since 1996
- Director (Retired), Executive Training and Team Quest, University of Oklahoma
- Adjunct Professor, College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma
- Contract Trainer, Oklahoma City Community College

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- Presentation Skills for the Human Relations Professional
- International Training & Development
- Current Problems in Human Relations

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

Current member, Past President and Board Member of the Central Oklahoma Chapter of ASTD
Member, ASTD (American Society for Training and Development)

Representative Publications and Presentations

- Has conducted training and has done consulting throughout the United States, Trust Territories, American Samoa, and Puerto Rico.
- Has made presentations in several national and regional conferences, including the 1996 American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) International Conference.
- Has been involved in planning and managing several national conferences.
- Conduct ongoing leadership and related training through Oklahoma City Community College.
- Has conducted training for the U.S. Postal Service, the U. S. Army Defense Ammunition Center, the Transportation Security Administration, Diamond Offshore Drilling Corporation, Devon Energy Corporation and many other public and private organizations.