Course Title:
Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Number:
HR 5013-106

Course Description:
The world is undergoing rapid and significant changes. We are experiencing advances in science, technology, transportation and communication. Out of these changes come stressful conditions that set the stage for social problems. Within this course we will review and discuss numerous current problems relevant to human relations (including both a domestic as well as an international focus) and their possible solutions. We will examine each topic in order to illuminate the complexity and contradictions inherent in each issue.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: February 21-23 & 28-March 2, 2014
Location: Bldg. 201 SE, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.
Hours: Fri 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Sat 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: January 23, 2014

This military installation is not open to the general public. In order to take courses at this installation, students must have a current military or Department of Defense identification card which allows them to access the installation.

Site Director:
Steve Watson. Phone: 405-739-7365 or DSN 339-7365; Fax: 405-739-7365; E-mail: aptinker@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: Shannon Bert, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: Department of Human Relations
601 Elm Ave
PHSC 706
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-1766
E-mail Address: Bert@ou.edu
Office Hours: 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.

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Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahoma.bkstr.com. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Representatives are available by phone at (405) 325-3511 or (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or E-mail at 0831mgrr@fheg.follett.com from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). (Text prices are available online.)


3. Materials posted on the Electronic Reserve system: Access the OU Electronic Reserves Page at [http://libraries.ou.edu/eresources/reserves/](http://libraries.ou.edu/eresources/reserves/); enter OU NetID (4x4) and password, and select course and access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

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/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

**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 the larger social context impacts individuals’ experiences, and visa versa. Finally, we will be analyzing the multiple dimensions that are of significance to individuals’ and communities’ experiences of these 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.

**Checking D2L:**

Regular updates and relevant information regarding the course will be posted to the “headlines” page on D2L (that is the main page you access when you first log on). This will include In order to ensure that you do not miss any new information of relevance to the course, you will be responsible for checking the “headlines” page at least once each week. Additional information, links, and documentation will be posted on the “contents” page. Please also see the “links” page for websites that may be of interest to you and that are relevant to the course. Finally, all assignments are due in the relevant “dropbox.”

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

The course will be conducted in a series of lectures, interactive group discussion, and media presentations, as well as individual presentations of selected chapter topics. **Before the class, students should have read all the assigned readings.**

**Attendance and Participation:**

Attendance and participation in class discussions and activities are valuable aspects of any course because much of 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.

**Individual Topic/Chapter Presentation:**

A 15-20 minute class presentation on a specific chapter from the Zinn and colleagues text will be required. Assignments of individual presentations will be made the first class meeting. Students will be asked to briefly summarize the content, critically analyze it and conclude their own reaction to the chapter (e.g., agree/disagree with the author, have had a similar or different experience in the same area, learned something or changed your views after reading the chapter). Within the reaction portion of the presentation, please minimize prejudices, biases, unfounded beliefs, and reliance on emotional reactions, which can sidetrack good sound judgment and opinions rooted in your learning and in the human
relations’ perspective. Presentations will receive a grade out of 100 points; more detailed grading guidelines are provided on the D2L site for the course.

Final Paper:

You will need complete a final paper discussing a current problem of your choice (you are responsible for identifying the issue from the topics listed below. It is highly recommended that you select an aspect of the 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.) You will need to submit your topic to me for approval by the final day of class. **If you do not submit a topic on time, 10 points will automatically be deducted from your final paper grade.**

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 that 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. The remainder of your sources needs to be scholarly books and/or journal articles. Only one of these may be a chapter we covered in class. Your paper should be approximately seven to ten 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. **Late papers will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day the paper is late.** 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.)

More details regarding your final papers will be posted to D2L closer to the due date. **Please note that all deadlines are 5PM CST.**

Final Paper Topics:

1. Health and Health Care
2. Mental Illness and Treatment
3. Alcohol and Drug Abuse
4. Crime and Violence
5. Poverty Amid Influence
6. Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination
7. Gender and Sexuality
8. An Aging Society
9. The Changing Family
10. Problems in Education
11. Problem in Work and Economy
12. Urban Problems
13. Population and Immigration
14. Technology and the Environment
15. Terrorism and War
Grading:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation (5 points per day)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Topic/Chapter Presentation</td>
<td>Beginning 4th day of class</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>1 week after the final day of class</td>
<td>43.5%</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. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. 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 and 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](#).

**Accommodation Statement**

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local 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. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

**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/](http://www.goou.ou.edu/)
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Shannon S.C. Bert, Ph.D.

Education

• 2001 BA in Psychology, University of Oklahoma
• 2004 MA in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
• 2006 Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
• 2005 – 2007 Doctoral Fellowship, Georgetown University

Current Positions

• 2007 – Present Assistant Professor; Department of Human Relations; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2008 – Present Graduate Program Instructor; Advanced Programs – Department of Human Relations; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2008 – Present Adjunct Assistant Professor; Women’s and Gender Studies Program; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2010 – Present Adjunct Assistant Professor; Liberal Studies Program; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

• HR 5403 Psycho-Social Development
• HR 5743 Violence Against Women and Children
• HR 5013 Current Problems in Human Relations
• HR 5970 Special topics/Seminar: The Prevention/Intervention of Critical Social Issue

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

• Developmental Theory
• Applied Research Methods and Advanced Research Methods
• Research for Human Relations
• Protective Factors and Resilience
• Biracial/Multiracial Identity Development
• Prevention and Intervention Programs for Disadvantaged Populations
• Emergent Adulthood
• Current Problems
• Violence Against Women and Children
• Women, Work, and the Family

Representative Publications and Presentations

Refereed Publications


**Book Publications**


**Chapter Publications**


**Presentations**


Metropolitan Alliance of Black School Educators (OCMABSE) Conference: Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education, Midwest City, OK.


- Carothers, S.S. (2004, August). *Social support as a coping resource for at-risk children exposed to negative life events*. Poster session presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Honolulu, HI.


Symposia Presentations


Representative Major Professional Affiliations

- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Society for Research in Child Development
- Society for Research on Adolescence
- APA, Division 35 – The Society for the Psychology of Women
- APA, Division 35 – Section 1, Psychology of Black Women

Representative Honors and Awards Received

- Received University of Notre Dame KANEK Teaching Certificate
- Listed in Cambridge Who’s Who Among Executive and Professional Women Psychologists
- Received University of Oklahoma New Faculty Seminar Certificate for “High Attendance”
- Received University of Oklahoma, Research Council Junior Faculty Award in 2008
- Received University of Oklahoma, College of Arts and Sciences Junior Faculty Award in 2009 and 2010
- Selected to participate as a protégé in the University of Oklahoma, Office of the Vice President of Research, Excellence in Proposals Pilot Project.
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