



## Course Outcome Summary

### Course Information: **Social Problems**

**Description:** Social Problems is an issues based class that breaks down how society chooses to organize itself to best provide for the wants and needs of its citizens.

**Instruction Level:** 12<sup>th</sup> grade

### Course Standards:

This current events course is driven by the Wisconsin State Standards and ACT college Readiness standards.

- Explain how such factors as physical endowment and capabilities, family, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, attitudes, beliefs, work, and motivation contribute to individual identity and development
- Evaluate the ways in which public opinion can be used to influence and shape public policy
- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Identify a clear central claim in highly complex passages
- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it
- Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective
- Explain current and past efforts of groups and institutions to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against racial, ethnic, religious, and social groups such as women, children, the elderly, and individuals who are disabled
- Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration

### Unit

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1. **Morality**
2. **Ethics and Social Norms**
3. **Social Implications of Government Policies**
4. **Social Issue Group Analysis**
5. **Social Issue Individual Analysis**
6. **Resolving Social Issues: An Ongoing Debate**

## Unit Outlines

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### 1. Morality

#### Standards:

- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it
- Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective
- Explain how such factors as physical endowment and capabilities, family, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, attitudes, beliefs, work, and motivation contribute to individual identity and development

#### Essential Questions:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What is Morality?
- What is Sociology?
- What is a moral decision?
- How do I identify what my morals are?
- What is moral relativism and absolutism?
- To what extent should individuals spread their morality?

#### Essential Knowledge:

- This is the introductory unit for the class that examines the basis for studying social issues through examining the study of sociology and the existence of morality. An emphasis will be placed upon identifying individual moral standards and analyzing an individual's world view.

### 2. Ethics and Social Norms:

#### Standards:

- Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration
- Explain how such factors as physical endowment and capabilities, family, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, attitudes, beliefs, work, and motivation contribute to individual identity and development

#### Essential Questions:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What are ethics and social norms?
- What role do ethics play in our lives?

- How do social norms influence our behavior, especially within the context of social issues?
- Can we change social norms, if so how?

**Essential Knowledge:**

- This unit will introduce the students to ethics and social norms. We will examine the role of ethics in society and draw connections to ethical behavior in our own lives. We will also discuss the role of social norms, including their definition, why they exist, and a specific emphasis on how to change social norms if they are not to our satisfaction.

### 3. Social Implications of Government Policies

**Standards:**

- Explain current and past efforts of groups and institutions to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against racial, ethnic, religious, and social groups such as women, children, the elderly, and individuals who are disabled
- Evaluate the ways in which public opinion can be used to influence and shape public policy

**Essential Question:**

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What makes a social issue a government concern?
- Should the government intervene in social issues? How so?
- What are historical examples of government intervention in social issues?
- What policies should the government have in regards to a variety of social issues?

**Essential Knowledge:**

- This unit will consist of students learning about social issues such as drug use, policing, abortion, marriage and others that they choose, within the context of government policies. An emphasis will be placed upon debating what policies should be and the consequences of such policies on society.

### 4. Social Issue Group Analysis

**Standards**

- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it
- Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration

**Essential Question:**

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- How do I identify all viewpoints of a social issue?
- What is bias and how do I eliminate/reduce it?
- How do I research quality information on a social issue?
- How do I complete an informative presentation?

**Essential Knowledge:**

- This unit will be student driven, with the students being divided into groups of 4 and given the opportunity to choose a social issue to research. They will then complete academic research on their topic, compile their information into a multimedia presentation and present to the class with the goal of informing them on their topic.

**5. Social Issues Individual Analysis****Standards:**

- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it
- Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration

**Essential Question:**

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- How do I craft counterarguments to opposing viewpoints?
- How do I research information on a social issue with the goal to persuade?
- How do I complete a persuasive multimedia presentation?

**Essential Knowledge:**

- This unit will consist of the students choosing a social issue that they are passionate about and researching that issue with the goal of exploring every aspect of the issue and backing it up with evidence. There will also be a debate element to the presentations where the presenter will be expected to have prepared responses or “counter arguments” to respond to class criticism.

**6. Resolving Social Issues: An Ongoing Debate****Standards:**

- Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer’s own perspective

- Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration
- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it

**Essential Question:**

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- How do I engage in research and critical thinking to craft a resolution to a social issue?
- How do I think critically and identify the major stakeholders in a social issue?
- What processes do government organizations and non-profits use to resolve social issues?
- How can I take an active role in solving social issues?

**Essential Knowledge:**

- This unit is the capstone experience for the class where the students will work to bring together and present on ideas that they believe will work for solving aspects of the social issues that we see in class. They will be asked to go beyond the simple solutions and devise implementable solutions to the highly complex problems that we have been analyzing throughout the semester. Overall students will be expected to break down a social issue, identify the underlying causes and correlating factors, bring those to the table to craft a solution with their peers that addresses the needs of multiple concerned parties that have a stake in the social issue at hand.

