

COURSE OUTLINE – Fall 2026

SO2240 (A2): Sociology of Deviance and Conformity – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Michael Holland	PHONE:	780-539-2973
OFFICE:	C404	E-MAIL:	mholland@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	Mondays, 10:00–11:00 a.m., or by appointment		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: A study of the politics and social ramifications of conformity, deviance, and their relation to social change. The course examines how and why some behaviour patterns are defined as deviant or conformist, and factors that influence this. Many types of behaviour will be discussed.

PREREQUISITE(S):

Completed the following:
SO1000 – Introductory Sociology (3)

COREQUISITE(S):

None

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

All assigned readings are freely available through the linked titles in the tentative schedule and on myClass. Links were verified Aug. 19, 2026. The in-class film is provided by the instructor; students are not expected to purchase access.

DELIVERY MODE(S): In-Person – Grande Prairie Campus, Room A211; Mondays 11:30 a.m.–12:50 p.m. and Fridays 10:00–11:20 a.m.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define a range of concepts used within the fields of the sociology of deviance and conformity
- Explain deviance using sociological insights
- Illustrate the applicability of sociological concepts in the analysis of the cause and consequences of deviance
- Identify and explain the research tools used by deviance sociologists
- Explain key ethical principles employed in the study of the sociology of deviance.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check the transferability of this course at <https://transferalberta.alberta.ca/>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Item	Weight	Description
In-Class Activities (12; best 10)	15%	Brief individual and collaborative applications that use a simple 2/1/0 engagement scale. Twelve will be offered; the best 10 count.
In-Class Quizzes (6; best 5)	15%	Six short objective-format quizzes assess readings and class material; the best five grades count.
Midterm Exam	20%	An in-person exam on Oct. 16, consisting mainly of multiple-choice questions and one brief application.
Deviance Case Study	30%	A staged project: topic pitch and source check, 5% (Oct. 5); brief (maximum 750 words), 15% (Nov. 27); and in-class gallery visual and individual Q&A, 10% (Nov. 30 or Dec. 4). Students must select a gallery date by Nov. 20 at 11:59 p.m. or be assigned one.
Final Exam	20%	A comprehensive in-person exam during the Registrar-scheduled period, consisting mainly of multiple-choice questions and one brief application.
Total	100%	

Rubrics, checklists, and review materials will be posted on myClass. Quizzes and some activities will normally be submitted electronically. Students without a suitable device, or those experiencing technical difficulties, may use an equivalent paper version without penalty.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit IF your grade is **less than C-**.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week/Dates	Topic	Readings / Resources	Assessments
Week 1 Sept. 4	Welcome and Course Introduction	Course outline	Welcome, introductions, and syllabus overview
Week 2 Sept. 11 (No class Sept. 7)	What Is Deviance? Norms, Conformity, and Social Control	OpenStax, Chapter 7.1: Deviance and Control	Activity 1: Sept. 11
Week 3 Sept. 14 & 18	Studying Deviance: Research Methods and Ethics	BCcampus, Chapter 2: Sociological Research	Activity 2: Sept. 14; Quiz 1: Sept. 18
Week 4 Sept. 21 & 25	Anomie, Strain, Social Disorganization, and Subcultures	College of DuPage, Social Structure Theories and Crime Optional theory review: OpenStax, Chapter 7.2	Activities 3-4: Sept. 21 & 25
Week 5 Sept. 28 & Oct. 2	Social Learning, Social Control, and Labeling	College of DuPage, Social Process Theories of Crime	Activity 5: Sept. 28; Quiz 2: Oct. 2
Week 6 Oct. 5 & 9	Social Construction, Stigma, and Case Study Workshop	College of DuPage, Social Construction of Crime	Case Study topic pitch and source check (5%): Oct. 5; Activity 6 and Midterm review: Oct. 9
Week 7 Oct. 16 (No class Oct. 12)	Midterm Exam	No new reading	Midterm Exam (20%): Oct. 16; covers material through Oct. 9
Week 8 Oct. 19 & 23	Conflict, Power, Inequality, and Critical Perspectives	College of DuPage, Critical Approaches to Law and Crime	Activity 7: Oct. 19; Quiz 3: Oct. 23
Week 9 Oct. 26 & 30	Gender, Race, Intersectionality, and Criminalization	College of DuPage, Age, Gender, and Crime College of DuPage, Race/Ethnicity and Crime	Activities 8-9: Oct. 26 & 30

Week 10 Nov. 2 & 6	Deviant Identities, Stigma, and In-Class Documentary	Video (TBA, viewed in class) No outside film access is required; viewing is provided during class.	Full in-class film viewing: Nov. 2; Activity 10 film analysis and Quiz 4: Nov. 6
Week 11 Nov. 9–13	Fall Break – NO CLASSES		
Week 12 Nov. 16 & 20	Media, Claims-Making, Folk Devils, and Moral Panics	College of DuPage, Social Construction of Crime Focus on the moral panic and media material.	Activity 11: Nov. 16; Quiz 5: Nov. 20
Week 13 Nov. 23 & 27	White-Collar, State, Environmental, and Cyber Deviance	Selected sections from: Open Oregon, Chapter 2.2: Current Crime Categories Open Oregon, Chapter 9.2: Continuing and Emerging Crime and Victimization Topics	Case Study brief (15%) due Nov. 27 at 11:59 p.m.
Week 14 Nov. 30 & Dec. 4	Deviance Case Study Gallery Walk	No new reading; student case studies	Gallery walk visual and individual Q&A (10%): Nov. 30 or Dec. 4; Activity 12 peer feedback: Nov. 30 or Dec. 4
Week 15 Dec. 7	Course Synthesis and Final Review	No new reading	Quiz 6 (cumulative practice): Dec. 7; final exam review
Final Exam Period Dec. 12–19	Comprehensive Final Exam	All course material	In-person final exam scheduled by the Registrar

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept. 2	First day of classes; SO2240 first meets Friday, Sept. 4
Sept. 7	Labour Day – no classes;
Sept. 30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – no classes; SO2240 does not normally meet Wednesdays
Oct. 12	Thanksgiving – no classes; Monday SO2240 meeting cancelled
Nov. 9–13	Fall Break – no classes; both SO2240 meetings cancelled
Nov. 27	Last day to withdraw; SO2240 meets as scheduled
Dec. 9	Last day of classes; SO2240's last scheduled meeting is Monday, Dec. 7
Dec. 12–19	Final exam period; final exam scheduled by the Registrar

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Ultimately, you are responsible for your learning and performance in this course. Because quizzes, the midterm, case-study workshops and presentations, and many activities take place during class, regular attendance is important. Attendance itself is not graded. The lowest quiz and two lowest activity grades are excluded to provide flexibility for occasional absences. Missed in-class assessments ordinarily cannot be made up except in accordance with approved accommodations or documented exceptional circumstances.



Submission, Late Policies, & Issues of Intellectual Concern:

- Meeting deadlines and communicating professionally are important course expectations. Please complete your work on time and contact the instructor promptly if a serious situation arises.
- The case-study brief must be submitted to myClass by the stated deadline. Late briefs will be deducted **5% per day, including weekends, to a minimum grade of zero**, unless an approved accommodation or documented exceptional circumstance applies.
- In-class quizzes, activities, and presentations must be completed at the scheduled time. Please contact the instructor as soon as possible if a serious situation affects your participation.
- If questions arise about the authorship or creation of submitted work, students may be asked to discuss or explain their work. Any academic integrity concerns will be addressed in accordance with NWP's Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy and Academic Misconduct Procedure.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. For definitions, procedures, and consequences, consult the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy in Northwestern Polytechnic's Policies Directory: <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

Unless an assessment explicitly states otherwise, generative artificial intelligence tools may not be used to produce work submitted for grading. When AI use is expressly permitted, students must follow the stated limits and acknowledge that use. Students may be asked to explain their reasoning or discuss submitted work to confirm their understanding and authorship.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

This course will make extensive use of our course website (myClass) to support your learning. You are expected to keep current with the content of the site, and I advise you to log on often.

To support attention and respectful discussion, phones should remain put away during lectures and discussions unless they are required for a class activity or an emergency. Laptops and tablets may be used for course-related notes and materials, but should be closed or set aside when requested. Devices may be used for myClass quizzes, polls, and learning activities. Approved accommodations will always be respected.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

- Please be aware that I respect that everyone's time is valuable, and I ask that you afford me and your classmates the same courtesy.
- Instead of preoccupying your mind with questions such as, "How do I get an 'A'?", ask yourself, "How can I work to expand my knowledge, perspective, and outlook on the real world?"
 - Please only use your NWP email account to contact me to avoid having your message blocked by spam filters.
 - Always include "SO2240" and your section (A2) in the subject line so I can respond efficiently.
 - Finally, please practice writing emails formally. For example, use a simple greeting, avoid slang or abbreviations, and always sign off with your name.