Western University
SOCIOLOGY 9147A-001

Social Inequality

Fall 2017
Wed 9:30-12:30, SSC 5427

Instructor: Dr. Sean Waite
Office Hours: Fridays, 9am-11am
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5401
Email: swaite3@uwo.ca

Course Description
This graduate seminar course surveys classical and contemporary theories, as well as empirical research, on social inequality in Canada and the United States. Particular attention will be dedicated to the intersection of class, gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity.

Course Organization
Class time will consist of structured class discussions and mini presentations. Each week there will be five articles and/or book chapters assigned. Students will be assigned readings and expected to provide a short (five minute) summary of their article and facilitate class discussion for roughly 15 minutes. The last day of class students will present a 15-minute “conference style” presentation of their final term papers.

Required Text
Articles or book chapters assigned in the detailed reading list, excluding optional readings.

Method of Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Through term</th>
<th>15%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summaries &amp; facilitating class discussion</td>
<td>Through term</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper proposal</td>
<td>October 18, 2017</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>November 15, 2017</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference presentation</td>
<td>November 29, 2017 &amp; December 6, 2017</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>December 6, 2017</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participation
Participation is worth 15% of your final grade. Students are expected to participate in class discussions by sharing their thoughts, opinions, and, most importantly, by making connections between the readings. I endeavour to create a safe and welcoming environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas. Participation is not the same as attendance. If you attend class but do not participate, you will receive 0/15.
Summaries & Facilitating Class Discussion
Each week students will be assigned readings to summarize. They will be responsible for a mini presentation (roughly 5 minutes) and facilitating class discussion for roughly 15 minutes. **Students will also be asked to hand in a one-page summary of their reading.** When summarizing articles or book chapters, students should consider the strengths and weakness of their article and any policy implications from their readings. You should also consider how this reading fits within the larger social inequality literature we have been discussing in class. Students should avoid reading directly off their page during their summary and the facilitation of class discussion. A good presentation and discussion should feel natural for the presenter and audience.

Term Paper
Students will write a term paper using either qualitative or quantitative data to answer an original research question. Due to time constraints, students using qualitative methods will not be able to obtain ethics approval to conduct their own interviews but could analyze previously gathered interview data. Because of these challenges, I strongly encourage students to use secondary quantitative secondary. Odesi has a wonderful site for downloading many public use Canadian data sets. I will provide an in-class seminar on how to download data from this site and how to use STATA to analyze quantitative data. Although I encourage students to challenge themselves with more advanced methods, basic descriptive statistics (mean, mode, median) are also acceptable.

The term paper should be in the format of an academic journal article. Papers must include an abstract, introduction, literature review, data and methods section, results and discussion/conclusion. The purpose of this exercise is to write an original research paper that could be developed into a publishable paper. Those who are pursuing academic jobs should take this exercise seriously. This could lead to a publication, which could lead to an academic job!

An alternative option (for MA students only) would be to write a book review. You are expected to produce a review that can be submitted to an academic journal for publication. Some journals except unsolicited book reviews. In Canada, Canadian Public Policy (CPP) ([click here](http://www.cpp.ca)) and The Canadian Studies in Population (CSP) ([click here](http://www.csp.ca)) accept unsolicited book reviews. CSP provides a list of books that are available for review. Other journals may also accept unsolicited reviews. Students choosing this option must email me their book choice before writing their proposal.

Although I strongly encourage students to write an empirical research paper or book review, a less ideal option would be to write a literature review on a topic related to social inequality. Students should consider a topic that could complement to their own thesis/dissertation research.

For Data Analysis
We have a student version and full version of **Stata** on the network. Students can access it through Start > Programs > SSC Network > Statistics and Analysis or just SAStatistics and Analysis when they are working on a computer on the SSC Network. Students can access Stata from home using the SSCRemote server, they will only need to obtain ROAMs access (see [http://ssts.uwo.ca/network/remote/remote_service_new.html](http://ssts.uwo.ca/network/remote/remote_service_new.html)).

We have **NVivo** installed on two computers in the Sociology computer lab. For Faculty, graduate students, and post-docs, there is a Campus Agreement for NVivo purchases (see [http://ssts.uwo.ca/network/software_resources/nvivo.html](http://ssts.uwo.ca/network/software_resources/nvivo.html)).
Proposal
Students will be asked to submit a two-page research proposal on **October 18th, 2017**. Proposals should demonstrate that you have selected a relevant topic and have started conducting some preliminary research. You should also include a working research question, mention the data and methods that will be used and a preliminary list of references. Those writing a book review are asked to submit a brief summary of their book and justifying its relevance/contribution to the broader social inequality literature. In other words, why is this book suitable for a review? The book review should also include any references that are relevant for situating this book within the larger social inequality literature. **Research proposals should be submitted via email** in a word document.

Abstract
We will be holding a conference presentation entitled **Unequal Opportunities and Outcomes: Social inequality in Canada and abroad** on the last day of class. Students will have the opportunity to practice presenting their papers as if they were at a real academic conference. This requires that you submit an abstract prior to the conference date. Students are asked to email me a 200-word abstract of their research papers on **November 15, 2017** (Note: In a real academic conference, you are expected to submit an abstract a few months before the conference date. The abstract submission is used to select which submissions will be accepted to present). **Helpful information on how to write an abstract can be found here.**

Term Paper Conference Presentation
On **November 29th, 2017** and **December 6, 2017** we will hold a conference entitled **Unequal Opportunities and Outcomes: Social inequality in Canada and abroad**. Students will prepare a 15-minute conference presentation and share their research findings with the class. This exercise will help prepare students for presenting their research at an academic conference. Those who write book reviews or a detailed literature review will also present their papers. The final term paper is due via email on **December 6, 2017**.

Assignment formatting requirements
Marks may be deducted if you do not follow these instructions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times New Roman font</td>
<td>1 inch (2.54cm) margins on all sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-point font size</td>
<td>Papers should be numbered in the right side of the footer starting on the first page of text, not the title page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always use the name as it appears on OWL.</td>
<td>Pages should be staples, no paper clips, no folders, no glue, no tape, no gum, or other inventive ways of holding papers together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How to Contact Me**
- In person: during office hours or by appointment in SSC 5401
- By telephone: 519-661-2111 x.87689
- By email: swaite3@uwo.ca

If you have questions regarding the course, material, readings, assignments or general evaluation please ask during class. There will likely be other students who have the same question. I am typically available for 10 minutes after each class for quick questions. If you have more substantive or private questions please come to my office hours.
I respond to emails within 24 hours but I will not respond to questions where the answer can be found on the course outline. Similarly, I will not respond to questions that require a considerable amount of detail to answer. These are questions that should be asked in class or during office hours. I only respond to emails sent to swaite3@uwo.ca. Any emails/messages sent over OWL will not be answered.

**How to get important information**

Make sure to check the course OWL site regularly for course updates, cancellations, and other course-related postings. You are also responsible for any emails I send to your Western email account. Please be sure that you can receive and access emails from this account.

**Important Policies**

**Plagiarism**

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or in-text citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the *Scholastic Offence Policy* can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments can be emailed to me (swaite3@uwo.ca). For each day your assignment is late you will be deducted 1% from the final grade. For example, 1/45 for each day the final paper is late.

**Laptops, Phones and Tablets**

All types of technology are welcome in my class but *they must not interfere with my lecture or distract other students.* In the job market you will be expected to use technology in a professional manner. You should practice this in my class but also note that research suggests students do better when taking notes by hand. If your electronic device distracts me or other another student (Twitter, Facebook, movies, games etc.) you will be asked to put them away and not permitted to use them for the remainder of the class. Cell phones should be shut off at the beginning of class.

**Recording Devices**

No recording devices can be used in class. Some of the topics we discuss may be sensitive. If students wish to share personal stories or experiences they should not worry that they are being recorded. If you require a recording device for medical or other reasons, please see me.

**Lectures and Course Materials**

Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright is an academic offence.

**Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness**

Western’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at [www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: [http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html)

**Accommodation**

Only in exceptional circumstances may a student be provided special accommodation in the completion of a course requirement (i.e., exams, papers). To request a one-time accommodation (brief illness, family emergency), the student should inform the professor when they are able so accommodation can be
made. Accommodation for an ongoing disability may be requested through Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at Western. SSD is a confidential service, working with students and their programs, normally their graduate chair, to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. The following website provides further information - http://grad.wo.ca/current_students/regulations/14.html Students are encouraged to consult the program graduate chair (Professor Kim Shuey) if they would like to discuss whether this option would be appropriate for their situation.

Accessibility Options
Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: www.registrar.wo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Mental Health
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Health and Wellness
As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. The Wellness Education Centre (lower level UCC) assists students in finding mental health and other related resources best suited to their needs. Western’s School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies’ Living Well website provides tips for thriving at grad school and other helpful information.

Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western’s Campus Recreation Centre: Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Also, we encourage you to check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.wo.ca/, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/.

Compassionate Grounds
Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member's physician to your home faculty’s Academic Counseling office.

In Case of a Death: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty’s Academic Counseling office.

Disputed Grades
Student who wish to dispute the grading of an assignment must write a one-page explanation and justification for having their work re-evaluated. Work will not be re-evaluated on the basis that students were sick or under stress when writing.

Extraordinary Circumstances
In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University or instructor’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
**Readings**

There will be no textbook for this class. Instead, we will read articles and short book chapters that will be available online. Some classic readings, such as Marx, Durkheim or Weber, are marked as “review”. It is assumed that you are familiar with these texts. Please review them before class. Other readings are marked “optional”. You are not required to read these but I may mention them in class. Students that are preparing for a comprehensive exam in social inequality will find some but not all of these readings on their reading list. Due to time constraints, we are only able to cover a fraction of the immense social inequality literature. Students looking for a more extensive summary are encouraged to read Grusky, David. 2014. *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*. Boulder: Westview.

**Course Schedule and Readings**

**Sept. 13, 2017 - Introduction**

1. Syllabus and introductions

**September 20, 2017 – Trends in Social Inequality**


**September 27, 2017 – The Structure of Social Inequality: Mark and Neo-Marxism**


---

1 This is a lengthy article. Please focus on the main points and how it relates to the course. Consideration will be given to students who choose particularly lengthy and challenging articles for their summary and discussions.
Optional Readings

**October 4, 2017 - The Structure of Social Inequality: Weber and Neo-Weberian**
*Tutorial:* Downloading publically available data, using Stata, using NVivo, book reviews and answering any questions about the term papers.


Optional Readings

**October 11 – READING WEEK**
Work on proposals and catch-up on readings!

**October 18, 2017 – Durkheim, Structural Functionalists and Socioeconomic Indexes**
Proposals due (via email before the end of the day).


4. Classic Gradationalism

Optional Readings

**October 25, 2017 – Contemporary Class Theory (declining sig. of class?) and Other Arguments**
Return proposals, answer questions and discuss final class presentations.


**November 1, 2017 – Inequality at Extremes**
3. Canada’s upper class.

Optional Readings

**November 8, 2017 – Race / Ethnicity**

Optional Readings
1. Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan - Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination (Chapter 28)

**November 15, 2017 – Gender**
Abstracts due (via email before the end of the day).


Optional Readings

**November 22, 2017 – Gender and LGBTQ**

Optional Readings:

November 29, 2017 – Other Dimensions of Inequality
1. Disability
      i. Also see: Wall, Katherine. 2017. “Low income among persons with a disability in Canada.” Statistics Canada (Cat No. 75-006-x).
      ii. Also see: Turcotte, Martin. 2014. Persons with disabilities and employment. Minister of Industry: Ottawa, Canada (Cat. No. 75-006).
2. Appearance

Optional Readings:

Conference Presentations (DAY 1):

Unequal Opportunities and Outcomes: Social inequality in Canada and abroad

December 6, 2017 – Conference Presentation (DAY 2)

Unequal Opportunities and Outcomes: Social inequality in Canada and abroad

Term Papers Due (via email before the end of the day).