



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 3347F-001 Fall 2016
Current Issues in Stratification
Monday 9:30-12:30 P&AB 150

Instructor: Professor Anders Holm

Office Hours: TBA

Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5327

Email: aholm@uwo.ca

Course Description:

Social inequality is a fundamental and contentious issue in almost all societies that exist and that have ever existed. Together with social stratification it forms one of the most studied issues in the discipline of sociology. Although some patterns of social inequality are specific to a certain country or region due to unique historical experience, there are some common social structural factors explaining the root causes of inequality. In this class we will discuss many causes and consequences of inequality both in Canada and in global contexts. In this course we will study the distribution of wealth, power and influence; how these factors that influence inequality can be measured; and how their relative importance can change.

Prerequisite(s): Third or fourth year standing in any module in the Department of Sociology.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes:

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In this course, students will:

- 1) Learn about recent and important empirical facts and theories of inequality and social stratification.
- 2) Further develop their critical thinking and analytical skills regarding societal issues;
- 3) Apply sociological theories to their understanding of social inequality;

Required Text(s):

The readings for this class are excerpts from one single book: Grusky, D. B. (ed.) *Social Stratification, Class, Race and Gender in Sociological Perspective* (4th ed.), Westview Press. It is available at the UWO bookstore.

Method of Evaluation:

Class Participation 10%

Seminar 20%

Mid-term Exam (Nov 7) 25%

Essay Proposal (Nov. 16) 5%

Essay (December 7) 40%

TOTAL 100%

Evaluation Breakdown:**Seminar**

Each student is expected to prepare a seminar presentation with at least one other student. These presentations will take place during the first half of each class. Each group will be expected to give a presentation on assigned readings for any given day. Students are encouraged to read extra resources to enrich their presentations. Each seminar presentation will run for roughly an hour. It is the sole responsibility of the presenters to organize, generate, and lead the discussion. Since the entire class is expected to have read the assigned readings, presenters are not expected to make a detailed summary. Presenters are expected to give a brief summary, synthesize the assigned material in a sociological manner, develop arguments around the key theme, find effective examples to clarify arguments, prepare discussion questions, and lead the class discussion. Students can show videos or use visual materials during the seminar presentations. Participation is a significant part of this course because this is a seminar course. Even if you are not a presenter, all students are expected to be involved frequently in discussions. Not only the frequency, but also the quality of your contribution will be taken into account. A significant part of your participation grade will come from your participation in seminar discussions. The seminars will be evaluated on the basis of a) a brief summary of the material b) synthesis of the assigned readings in a sociological manner c) arguments and effective examples d) discussion questions and class discussion.

Midterm Exam:

The exam will be held during the regular class time on Monday November 7th, 2016. The exam will be 2 hours long. This exam will cover all lectures, readings and seminars from Monday September 12th to Monday and October 31, 2016.

The exam will include multiple choice, fill in the blanks, and short essay questions.

Major Essay:

Each student is expected to write a research essay for the course AND SUBMIT A PROPOSAL FOR IT ON OR BEFORE November 16, Students are required to pick a topic of their choice that deals with social inequality, either globally or in Canada. This research essay must be about a topic that is relevant to the course and the instructor MUST approve the topic. The essay should not exceed 15 pages and be double-space typed. This essay

should specify the main questions raised in the essay; begin with a thesis statement; contain a relevant literature review; and conclude with your position on the topic. I will hand out detailed instructions for the essays.

How to Contact Me:

Should you need to contact me for any reason, you can email me at aholm@uwo.ca

How to get important information:

Course Website Link: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

Important Policies

A Note on 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 citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations

“Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.”

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

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.

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

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.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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.