Western University
SOCIOLOGY 9147A-001

Social Inequality
Mondays 1:30 to 4:30pm¹
Fall 2020
Instructor: Dr. Sean Waite

Office Hours: Monday 4:30pm to 5:30pm
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5401
Email: swaite3@uwo.ca

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapēewak (Len-ahpay- wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run) peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We also acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as in a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through teaching, research and community service.

Course Description
This graduate seminar course explores the extent, causes, and consequences of social inequality in Canada and abroad. We start the course with a discussion on recent trends in income inequality and some foundational stratification theory (Marx, Weber and Durkheim). We then move on to specialized topics, such as: the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19; black lives matter and the criminal justice system; race, residential segregation, and discrimination; colonization and the Indigenous peoples in Canada; residential segregation; poverty; the gender wage gap; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender+ (LGBTQ2+) labour market inequality; beauty premiums; disability discrimination; and intersectional disadvantage.

Technical Requirements and Schedule

Stable internet connection. Check your internet speed here.
Laptop or computer

Working microphone
Working webcam (preferred)

Mondays 3:00pm to 4:30pm¹ via Zoom meeting. See OWL ‘Zoom’ tab for Zoom meeting links. Password required to join. Password = Inequality

Course Organization

¹ This is a 3 hour course that includes synchronistic and asynchronistic learning. See Course Organization for more information.
This is an online course that will include both synchronistic and asynchronistic learning. Students will be asked to review and critically engage with course material (1:30pm to 3:00pm) prior to the synchronistic seminar held via Zoom (3:00pm to 4:30pm). The live portion of the course will consist of structured class discussions and presentations. Each week, one student (or a pair of students depending on class size) will be assigned readings and asked to provide a short summary (10 min or so) of their articles and facilitate class discussion (60 minutes). Students not presenting that week will submit a written summary and reflection on the readings prior to class. At the end of the term, students will present a 15-minute conference style presentation on their final papers.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
- have a greater understanding of social inequality and stratification in Canada and abroad;
- understand different dimensions of social inequality, including their causes and consequences; and,
- learn how sociological research methods can be used to study social inequality, which will be helpful for graduate student’s own research.

**Required Text**

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

**Methods of Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation:</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and class discussion:</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating class discussion:</td>
<td>On assigned date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summaries and reflections:</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article summaries and reflections:</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term Paper:</strong></td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal:</td>
<td>October 5, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract submission:</td>
<td>November 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical paper or Research paper</td>
<td>December 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference presentation:</td>
<td>December 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation**

Participation is worth 30% of your grade. Students are expected to participate in class discussions by sharing their thoughts, opinions, and, most importantly, by making connections between the readings. Please use the ‘hand raise’ feature in Zoom or post your comment/question directly in the Zoom chat box. Each week, one student (or a pair of students depending on the class size) will be assigned a topic and asked to facilitate class discussion. Students should avoid reading directly off their page during their summary and the facilitation of class discussion. A good discussion should feel natural for the presenter and audience. Students should discuss all articles assigned that week but are free to focus on particular readings for the purposes of discussion.

**Webcam, preferred but not mandatory**

I encourage students to use a webcam during synchronistic class discussion. This gives class a more natural feel. It is also helpful for your peers who may be facilitating class discussion. Although I strongly encourage you to use a webcam, it will not be mandatory.

**Summaries and Reflections**

Weekly summaries and reflections are worth 20% of your final mark. Each week, students, with the exception of the weekly presenter, will post a 5-page double-spaced summary and reflection on the articles
covered that week. When summarizing articles, students should consider the strengths and weakness of the articles and the intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. You should also consider how this reading fits within the larger social inequality literature that we have discussed in class. Students are encouraged to critically engage with the readings and consider how the topics/reading can contribute to their own research. Students may also pose questions/topics they would like to raise during class discussion.

**Term Paper Options**

*a) Empirical paper*

I encourage PhD students to write an empirical term paper, using either qualitative or quantitative methods. MA students are encouraged to write a research paper (see below). 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 is a wonderful site for downloading many public use Canadian data sets. Although I encourage students to challenge themselves with more advanced methods, basic descriptive statistics (mean, mode, median) are also acceptable.

This should be formatted like 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!

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 S:\Statistics 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).

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).

*b) Research Paper*

Alternatively, students can write a research paper on any topic related to social inequality. Ideally, students will choose a topic that complements their thesis/dissertation research. Research papers should be roughly 25 double-spaced pages.

**Proposal**

Students will be asked to submit a two-page research proposal on October 5, 2020. Proposals should demonstrate that you have selected a relevant topic and have started conducting some preliminary research. If you are writing an empirical paper, be sure to mention your research question, data and methods that will be used.

**Abstract**

We will be holding a conference entitled Unequal Opportunities and Outcomes: Social inequality in Canada and abroad on the last day of class. Students will have the opportunity to present their research 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 23, 2020 (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. If students fail to submit an abstract, they will not be scheduled to present at the conference.

In-class Conference Presentations
On December 7, 2020 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 students prepare 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 on December 7, 2020.

Conference presentation peer-review
Your peers will evaluate your conference presentation and provide me their feedback and grade. This feedback and the average grade from your peers will be considered when determining your conference presentation mark.

Submitting your paper and TURNITIN
All papers should be submitted via email. You must also submit your paper to TURNITIN through OWL. This is done by submitting your paper on OWL in the “assignments” tab.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times New Roman font</th>
<th>1 inch (2.54cm) margins on all sides</th>
<th>Papers should be double-spaced.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-point font size</td>
<td>Pages should be numbered in the right side of the footer starting on the first page of text, not the title page</td>
<td>Your full name should appear in the right side of the header.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All papers need to be submitted through TURNITIN on OWL.</td>
<td>All papers must be submitted via email.</td>
<td>ASA (American Sociological Association) style.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication
- In person during office hours: Mondays 4:30am to 5:30pm via Zoom. Office hours will be held immediately after class. Please remain in the Zoom meeting following class and I will invite you into a Zoom breakout room to chat.
- By telephone: 519-661-2111 x.87689
- By email: swaite3@uwo.ca

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.

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 / Missed Assignments or Presentations**

There are no late penalties. The consequence for not submitting a proposal or term paper is an incomplete grade for this course. Those who are absent on their assigned class discussion day will not be reassigned. Instead, you will need to submit a **20-page summary and reflection** on the articles assigned that. Be sure to discuss how the readings fit within the larger social inequality literature. If you are sick on your article summary day, you can also switch articles with a peer.

Students who miss their conference presentation dates will be assigned a make-up conference date. Students will receive an incomplete grade on their transcript until they complete the course conference presentation.

**Copyright and Audio/Video Recording Statement**

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws. You must always ask permission to record another individual and you should never share or distribute recordings.

**Recording Devices**

No recording devices can be used in class. This includes recoding class Zoom discussions. 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.

**Standards of Professional Behaviour**

It is the responsibility of all members of the Department of Sociology to adhere to and promote standards of professional behaviour that support an effective learning environment. These include:

- **Respect for others** both in and out of the classroom through words and actions (be professional, fair, and respectful in interactions with people on-line and in-person; understand and respect differences among classmates and colleagues; avoid disrupting the learning environment; respect others’ expectations of confidentiality and privacy)

- **Active engagement in learning** and commitment to quality (being prepared for classes; participating and listening actively to other; using technology and social media appropriately, striving to do your best)

- **Personal integrity** (following through on commitments; doing own work)

**Discrimination and Unconscious Bias**

- **Zero-tolerance** for discrimination. I encourage students to “call out” comments or content that may be marginalizing, oppressive, or discriminatory. If students are uncomfortable raising concerns in class, please speak to me immediately about any discriminatory conduct.

- **Unconscious/implicit bias.** We all have unconscious biases. Yes, everyone! Our brains unconsciously process huge amounts of information without us even being aware of it. This can include snap judgements about people we meet and situations we encounter. People have unconscious preferences for people who are similar to them and situations that are familiar. This unconscious bias can exclude, marginalize, and discriminate against minorities. As sociologists, it is our duty to use our sociological imaginations to combat unconscious bias.

  - **Here is some additional information and tips to combat unconscious bias:**
    - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP-cqFLS8Q4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP-cqFLS8Q4)
Students should also be aware of the **UWO Student Code of Conduct** found at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf

**What do you need?**
What do you need to work at your best? Please let me know how I can help you. Western provides a number of resources for students who need accommodation or who are having mental health challenges (see below) but I encourage students to speak to me if there is anything I can do to improve their learning experience.

If students need assistance with OWL and/or online access, they can seek support on the **OWL Help page**. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

**Absence from Course Commitments**
**Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences**

In the interest of the health and safety of students and health care providers, you are no longer required to seek a medical note for absences this term. If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness you should use the **Illness Reporting Tool**. This tool takes the place of the need to submit a medical note and the Self-Reported Absence System formally used by undergraduate students.

You are required to self-report every day that you are ill and unable to complete course commitments. Details about when you should submit missed work, the format of the missed work can be found in the Section 7. Evaluation above. Students should communicate promptly with their instructor and use this tool with integrity.

**Accommodation**
Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are encouraged to register with Student Accessibility Services, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both SAS and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction. For more information, see [http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/).

**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](http://www.registrar.uwo.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](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.
Digital Student Experience
Students should also consider checking out the Western University Digital Student Experience website for additional information about online learning [https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/](https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/).

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.uwo.ca/](http://www.music.uwo.ca/), and our own McIntosh Gallery [http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/](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.

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.

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.

Course Schedule and Topics
Zoom links for joining class can be found in OWL under “Zoom” tab.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Discussant Sign-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Introduction, gender pronouns, creating a respectful class environment, forms of privilege, and the course outline. Does inequality serve a purpose? The Davis-Moore theory. <em>Note:</em> No summary/reflection this week.</td>
<td>Watch posted video. Sean Waite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>Recent trends in social inequality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>Building a foundation: Marx, Durkheim and Weber</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td>The socioeconomic impact of COVID-19</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Oct. 12</td>
<td>Thanksgiving – no class / office hours</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Inequality at the extreme and new classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>Black lives matter and the criminal justice system</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td><strong>Reading week – no class / office hours</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>Race, residential segregation, and discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>Colonization and the cultural genocide of Canada’s Indigenous peoples</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>Gender and sexuality in the labour market</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Beauty premiums, disability, and intersectionality</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Class conference presentations</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Mandatory Readings**

**WARNING:** Some readings may contain offensive language and/or content. I encourage students to raise this issue during class discussion. Do you think that the educational benefits from these readings outweigh the offensive language, or should these readings be shelved?

**Week 1: September 14, 2020 – Does inequality serve a purpose? The Davis-Moore theory.**


**Optional Readings:**


**Week 2: September 21, 2020 – Recent trends in social inequality**


Optional readings:


**Week 3: September 28, 2020 – Building a foundation: Marx, Weber, Durkheim**

Note: I assume that students have taken undergraduate social theory courses and are familiar with the works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. If not, please review some of the optional readings listed below.


Optional readings:


**Week 4: September 5, 2020 – The socioeconomic impact of COVID-19**


2. Choi, Kate, Patrick Denice, Michael Haan, and Anna Zajacova. 2020. “Studying the social determinants of COVID in a data vacuum.” *SocArXiv*


**Optional readings:**


**Week 5: October 12, 2020 – Thanksgiving – no class/office hours**

**Week 6: October 19, 2020 – Inequalities at the extreme and new classes**


**Optional readings:**


Week 7: October 26, 2020 – Black lives matter and the criminal justice system


Optional readings:


Week 8: November 2, 2020 – Reading week – no class/office hours

Week 9: November 9, 2020 – Race, residential segregation, and discrimination


Optional readings:


Week 10: November 16, 2020 – Colonization and the cultural genocide of Canada’s Indigenous peoples


Optional readings:


Week 11: November 23, 2020 – Gender and sexuality in the labour market


Optional readings:


**Week 12: November 30, 2020 – Beauty premiums, disability, and intersectionality**


**Optional readings:**


Turcotte, Martin. 2014. Persons with disabilities and employment. Minister of Industry: Ottawa, Canada (Cat. No. 75-006).


**Week 13: December 7, 2020 – Conference presentations**

*Please note that class will start at 1:30pm today.*