



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4450F-001

Fall 2022

Wednesday, 9:30am-12:30pm, HSB-9

Delivery Method: in-person

Instructor: Dr. Wolfgang Lehmann

Office Hours: by appointment

Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5430

Email: wlehmann@uwo.ca

Course Description: This seminar will look at classical and contemporary theories as well as recent empirical research in the sociology of education. Emphasis will be placed on examining: the relationship between educational institutions and processes and the reproduction of social inequality; and the competing visions of educational reform offered in recent years.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third year or above in any Department of Sociology module, or fourth year in any module.

Unless you have either the prerequisites 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.

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 3383F/G

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Challenge common-sense assumptions about school success and failure.
- Compare and contrast different sociological and theoretical perspectives regarding the schooling experiences and outcomes of different social groups.
- Analyze the relationships between educational institutions and wider social structures.
- Evaluate critically different reasons for educational reform.
- Research and write an effective scholarly paper in the area of sociology of education.
- Assess educational policy issues and programs.
- Effectively lead a seminar.
- Prepare an oral presentation that presents key information in a narrow time frame.

Course Material:

No textbook is used. All readings will be made available through our OWL course site.

Communication: Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. You can contact me:

- In person: by appointment in SSC 5430
- By telephone: 519-661-2111 x85385
- By email: wlehmann@uwo.ca

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

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| • Participation | | 10% |
| • Seminar Leadership | | 10% |
| • Reading Reviews | | 10% |
| • Problem/Policy Issue Discussion | Due October 19, 2022 | 25% |
| • Final Assignment | Due December 7, 2022 | 45% |

Evaluation Breakdown and Detailed Information

Participation (10%)

This assesses your overall participation in seminar discussion, both in terms of quantity and quality of your contributions. It also takes into consideration attendance.

Seminar Leadership (10%)

The course has a seminar format. Each seminar is led by a group of students. The expectation is that students present the key arguments of the assigned readings for their seminar, offer a critical analysis, provide additional insights from other, related sources, and lead the discussion following their presentation.

The presentation should only be a summary of the highlights, plus your additional information. Please present a real-life issue and educational policy program that relates to the topic of the seminar you are leading.

Present these to the class for discussion. Also include and present at least two other relevant scholarly articles that will allow your peers to read further if they are interested.

After the formal presentation, you will lead discussions. You should therefore prepare discussion questions.

Reading Reviews (10%)

For five of the ten weeks (any five weeks; your choice), submit a short comment and questions regarding **each** of the three assigned readings for that week. In this submission, you should pinpoint one aspect of each reading that you thought worked well, and one aspect you would critique and include a question posed to class about each reading. Think of these comments and issues as something you would like to discuss further in class.

Keep the reviews short. **No more than two pages.** Do NOT provide summaries of the readings. I have read them. Focus on analysis. Also note that comments such as “I really liked the article” or “The author did a

great job explaining xyz” or “There are too few participants to make the research generalizable” will not gain you any marks. You need to demonstrate that you read and thought about the article.

On our OWL site, you will find an assignment for each week. Upload your submission for the respective week. Each submission will get a score out of 4, for a total of 20.

Educational Problem and Policy Discussion (25%); Due October 19, 2022

This assignment requires a number of steps:

1) Identify a problem/issue related to this topic of this course. Here are a few examples: How can we reduce bullying? How can we make curriculum more inclusive? How can we reduce racial discrimination and oppression in schools or university? How can we help high schoolers make good choices for what to do after high school? How can we overcome the COVID learning gap? How can we help university graduates enter the labour market? And so forth. ***I recommend that you discuss your choice of problem/policy with me before you get started.***

2) Once you have identified the problem, conduct a short literature review. Review at least five scholarly articles that have researched the issue/problem you are investigating.

3) Identify a current policy program that already exists and is trying to resolve the problem you identified (e.g., anti-bullying programs, or career counselling services). Just pick one that exists in real life. Briefly describe it and explain how it aims to solve the problem you identified.

The assignment shouldn't be longer than **8-10 pages** (double spaced, normal size font). Consider the following rule-of-thumb guidelines: 1) Introduction/Statement of Problem: max 1 page; 2) Literature review: 4-5 pages; 3) Description of policy: max 3-4 pages.

Upload your assignment on OWL by the due date (October 19, 2022). ***Note: late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless accommodation has been given.***

Final Assignment (45%), Due December 7, 2022 (last class)

You have two options. Choose one of them. Both options should end up being 10 to 15 pages in length, double spaced (approximately 3,000 to 4,000 words). ***Note: late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless accommodation has been given.***

Option 1) Expand on the Educational Problem and Policy Discussion assignment (see above). Here are the expectations:

Expand the literature review to at least 10 scholarly articles; they should have studied the problem using different methodological approaches (i.e., quantitative and qualitative) and provide a solid foundation for understanding what the problem is. A substantial portion of this literature review has to come from sources beyond those already covered in the course readings.

Expand the discussion of the policy program to include a critical evaluation of what aspects of it work (and why) and what aspects may not work (and why). Base your assessment on the literature you reviewed.

Option 2) Write an original term paper essay on a topic of your choice. This option works well if you want to explore a more conceptual or theoretical topic. You have to provide a critical literature review, including both theoretical perspectives and empirical research. A substantial portion of the paper has to come from sources beyond those already covered in the course readings. ***I recommend that you discuss your essay topic with me before you get started.***

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to your Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Deadline extension will be granted if your academic counsellor recommends it.

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

Important Policies

Academic Consideration for Missed Work: Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. The student medical certificate is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at <https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Accessibility Options: Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/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: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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.

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 (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

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

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#).

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Course Schedule and Readings

1. Introduction and overview: September 14, 2022

- No readings today; discussion seminar structure, expectations, and assigning presentations

2. Education: what is it good for? September 21, 2022

- Lehmann. Sociology of Education in Canada: History, Theory and Research (Chapter 1 in *Education and Society: Canadian Perspectives*, 2016)
- DeClou. Social Returns: Assessing the benefits of higher education (*HEQCO*, 2014)
- Gallagher-Mackay et al. COVID-19 and Education Disruption in Ontario (*Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table*, 2021)

3. Is achievement meritocratic and can schools lead to social mobility? September 28, 2022

- Sandel. Excerpt from *Tyranny of Merit* (2020)
- Brown & James. Educational expansion, poverty reduction and social mobility: Reframing the debate (*International Journal of Educational Research*; 2020)
- Downey & Condran. Rethinking the Relationship between Schools and Inequality (*Sociology of Education*, 2016)

4. Transitions and experiences within education: October 5, 2022

- McGillicuddy & Devine. Children's psychosocial response to ability grouping in primary school (*British Educational Research Journal*, 2020)
- Finnie et al. Access and Barriers to Postsecondary Education: Evidence from the Youth in Transition Survey (*Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 2015)
- Hegna & Smette. Parental influence in educational decisions: young people's perspectives (*British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017)

5. Transitions to employment: October 12, 2022

- Lehmann. Forms of capital in working-class students' transition from University to employment (*Journal of Education and Work*, 2019)
- O'Connor & Bodicoat. Exploitation or opportunity? Student perceptions of internships in enhancing employability skills (*British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017)
- Gaddis. Discrimination in the Credential Society: An Audit Study of Race and College Selectivity in the Labor Market (*Social Forces*, 2015)

6. Social class October 19, 2022

(Policy Paper Due Today)

- Jack. (No) Harm in Asking: Class, Acquired Cultural Capital, and Academic Engagement at an Elite University (*Sociology of Education*, 2016)
- Lehmann. Conflict and contentment: Case study of the social mobility of working-class students in Canada. (*European Journal of Education*, 2021)
- Binder et al. Career Funneling: How Elite Students Learn to Define and Desire "Prestigious" Jobs (*Sociology of Education*, 2016)

7. Gender: October 26, 2022

- Jackson & Gee. Constructions of gender in early school reader illustrations across 50 years (*Gender and Education*, 2005)

- Myklebust. Resistance and persistence: exploring gender untypical educational choices (*British Journal of Sociology of Education*; 2019)
- Scholes et al. Disrupting the 'boys don't read' discourse: Primary school boys who love reading fiction (*British Educational Research Journal*, 2021)

Fall Study Break: November 2, 2022.

8. Sexuality: November 9, 2022

- McCormack, Mark and Eric Anderson. 2010. 'It's Just Not Acceptable Any More': The Erosion of Homophobia and the Softening of Masculinity at an English Sixth Form. *Sociology*. 44(5): 843–859.
- Peter et al. A Queer Day in Canada: Examining Canadian High School Students' Experiences With School-Based Homophobia in Two Large-Scale Studies (*Journal of Homosexuality*, 2015)
- Saarreharj et al. Analysis on the online commenting on the curriculum reform in Ontario (*International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 2020)

9. Race and ethnicity: November 16, 2022

- Blackwell, D. 2010. Sidelines and separate spaces: making education anti-racist for students of color. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13 (4): 473–494.
- Howard & James. When dreams take flight: How teachers imagine and implement an environment that nurtures Blackness at an Africentric school in Toronto, Ontario. (*Curriculum Inquiry*, 2019)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Introduction of *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015)

10. Intersections: November 23, 2022

- Universities Canada. *Equity, diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities* (2019)
- Bhopal. Confronting White privilege: the importance of intersectionality in the sociology of education (*British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2020)
- Samatar et al. No love found: how female students of colour negotiate and repurpose university spaces (*British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2021)

11. Big picture: November 30, 2022

- Lavallee. Is Decolonization Possible in the Academy? (Chapter 7 in *Decolonizing and Indigenizing Education in Canada*, 2020)
- McGowan. The impact of universities on climate change: a theoretical framework. (*Transforming Universities for a Changing Climate: Working Paper Series; No. 1*, 2020)
- Robertson & Nestore. Education cleavages, or market society and the rise of authoritarian populism? (*Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 2022)

12. Last day, Review and Wrap-Up: December 7, 2022

(TERM PAPERS DUE TODAY)

- No readings, term papers due; wrap up

NOTE: THIS IS A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE; SOME READINGS STILL SUBJECT TO CHANGE