



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4450G - 001
Education in Society
Winter 2023

Mon 9:30-12:30am; SSC-5230

Instructor: Anders Holm

Office Hours: Wednesday 1-2.30 pm.
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5327

Email: aholm@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. Education is believed to be a major factor influencing stratification within the educational institutions of society. Upon entry into school systems students are stratified by socio-economic status. Furthermore, the process of stratification appears to influence students as they move through educational systems. In this course we study how education stratifies students from the start to the completion of their education. We also look at the mechanisms by which stratification happens and whether stratification through the educational system is constant across cohorts and whether certain institutional features matter in terms of educational stratification.

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 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.

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

Learning Outcomes:

In this course, students will:

- 1) Learn about recent and important empirical facts and theories of educational stratification.
- 2) Further develop their critical thinking and analytical skills regarding educational issues.
- 3) Learn to apply sociological theories to their understanding of educational stratification.
- 4) Learn about empirical trends in educational stratification.

Required Text(s):

Research paper and articles will be used. They are available for download via OWL.

Method of Evaluation:

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

Small assignments - 30% (2 x 15%):

Each assignment is comprised of two minor questions that should be answered in less than one single spaced typewritten page in total. The questions are based on the content provided in the lectures. Please provide clear, short and concise answers. The assignments are due January the 30th and March 20th respectively.

Midterm Test – 35%:

The midterm test will be administered in class the 27th of February, 9.30 to 12.30. It will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Essay – 35%:

Each student is expected to write a research essay for the course. 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 7 pages and be double-space typed. It should clearly specify the main questions it raises; begin with a thesis statement; contain a relevant literature review; and a conclusion. I will hand out detailed instructions for the essays. The Essay is due April the 10th.

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, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). 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, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible.

Submission of the Assignments and essay later than the due date will be graded lower based on the timing on the submission. Absence from the midterms must be declared in advance and there will be a required make up. Failing any of the submission or the midterm will result in a zero grade for that item.

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.

How to Contact Me:

Email: aholm@uwo.ca, Phone: 519 6612111 ext. 2111

How to get important information:

All course material except textbooks will be made available through OWL or provided in class.

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:

Policies for Assignment Deadlines: Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (including weekends) except in the case of extreme and serious documented circumstances, discussed with me in advance and following the same procedures describe above related to missed exams. Please note that computer problems are not an excused circumstance. You are expected to follow good computer practices, including backing up your work.

Policies on Examinations

Crip sheets are allowed both during the midterm.

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.

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 https://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 \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic_counselling/).

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:

Jan. 9. Introduction.

Jan. 16. Educational Stratification:

Robert D. Mare (1981) Change and Stability in Educational Stratification, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 46(1), pp. 72-87.

Mads Meier Jæger and Anders Holm (2007) Does parents' economic, cultural, and social capital explain the social class effect on educational attainment in the Scandinavian mobility regime? *Social Science Research*, Vol. 36(2), Pages 719-744.

Jan. 23. Theories of educational inequality, MMI and EMI

Raftery, A. E., and Hout, M. (1993). Maximally Maintained Inequality: Expansion, Reform, and Opportunity in Irish Education, 1921-75. *Sociology of Education*, 66(1), 41–62.

Samuel R. Lucas (2001) Effectively Maintained Inequality: Education Transitions, Track Mobility, and Social Background Effects, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 106(6), pp. 1642-1690.

Jan. 30. Theories of educational inequality, empirical evidence. First assignment due.

Davies, S., V. Maldonado and D. Zarifa (2014), Effectively maintaining inequality in Toronto: Predicting student Destinations in Ontario Universities. *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 51(1), 22-53.

Marks, G. N. (2013) Evaluating Effectively Maintained Inequality: School and post-school transitions, socioeconomic background, academic ability, and curricular placement. *Social Science Research*, 42, 1635-1649.

Feb. 6. Theories of educational inequality, RRA

Breen, Richard, and John Goldthorpe. 1997. "Explaining Educational Differentials. Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory". *Rationality and Society* 9 (3), 275–30.

Glaesser, J. and B. Cooper (2014) Using Rational Action Theory and Bordieu's Habitus Theory Together to Account for Educational Decision-making in England and Germany. *Sociology*, 48(3), 463-481.

Feb. 13. Persistence across cohorts

Breen, R. (2010). Educational Expansion and Social Mobility in the 20th Century. *Social Forces*, 89(2), 365–388.

Hansen, M. N. (2007) Rational Action Theory and Educational Attainment. Changes in the impact of Economic Resources. *European Sociological Review*, 24(1), 1-17.

Feb. 20. Reading week

Feb. 27. Midterm Exam

Mar. 6. How education shapes individuals:

Raudenbush, S. W. and Eschmann, R. D., (2015) Does schooling increase or reduce social inequality? *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 41: 443-470. DOI: 10.3102/0013189X15575345.

Raudenbush, S.W., (2009). The Brown Legacy and the O'Connor challenge: Can school improvement reduce racial inequality? *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp 169-180.

Mar. 13. How education shapes individuals.

Sara Geven, Øyvind N. Wiborg, Rachel E. Fish, Herman G. van de Werfhorst, (2021) How teachers form educational expectations for students: A comparative factorial survey experiment in three institutional contexts, *Social Science Research*, Vol 100.

Fabrizio Bernardi, Héctor-Cebolla Boado, Previous School Results and Social Background: Compensation and Imperfect Information in Educational Transitions, *European Sociological Review*, Volume 30, Issue 2, April 2014, Pages 207–217, <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jct029>

Mar. 20. Tracking. Second assignment due.

Van de Werfhorst, Herman G. 2019. Early Tracking and Social Inequality in Educational Attainment: Educational Reforms in 21 European Countries. *American Journal of Education*, [PDF](#), [DOI](#) <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/705500>

Anders Holm, Mads Meier Jæger, Kristian Bernt Karlson, David Reimer (2013) Incomplete equalization: The effect of tracking in secondary education on educational inequality, *Social Science Research*, Volume 42(6), Pages 1431-1442.

Mar. 27. The effects of education:

W. Craig Riddell and Xueda Song, (2017) The Role of Education in Technology Use and Adoption, *ILR Review*, Vol. 70, No. 5, pp. 1219-1253

Fabrizio Bernardi and Ilze Plavg, (2019) *Education as an equalizer for human development?* UNDP Human Development Report, background paper no. 4-2019.

Apr. 3. The effects of education:

Fabrizio Bernardi, and Macarena Ares Abade, (2017) *Education as the (not so) great equalizer: new evidence based on a parental fixed effect analysis for Spain*, EUI working papers, SPS 2017/6.

Torche F. Intergenerational Mobility at the Top of the Educational Distribution. *Sociology of Education*. 2018;91(4):266-289.

Apr. 10. Summary and discussion about the final essay.