



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2228B-001
Social Inequality in Canada
Winter 2024
In-Person

Instructor: Shane Goodwin, PhD

Office Hours: By appointment

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This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.

Course Description: Social Inequality is the study of the causes and consequences of the unequal distribution of prestige, power, and wealth and of the ideologies used to defend and criticize inequality. This course focuses on inequality within Canadian society and its institutions.

Prerequisite(s): none

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 2239.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

This course is intended to provide the foundation required to understand and investigate social inequality in Canada. Specifically, by the end of this course students will:

- Identify and describe different types and sources of social inequality.
- Gain a familiarity with different measures of inequality.
- Understand the impact of reliability, validity, and other measurement properties on the tools we use to assess inequality.
- Be able to conduct basic research investigating inequalities among various social groups.
- Develop critical thinking skills surrounding the interpretation of published results within a social inequality framework.

Course Material:

Textbook: There is no required textbook for this class. Readings for this class will include excerpts from the textbook: *Understanding Social Inequality: Intersections of Class, Age, Gender, Ethnicity, and Race in Canada*, 3rd Edition by Julie McMullin and Josh Curtis, Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press. It is available to purchase at the UWO bookstore.

In addition, research papers and articles will be used, available to download on OWL.

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.

If you have specific questions, I will respond to you within 48 business hours.

Method of Evaluation:

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

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| 1. Assignments (2) | 40% |
| 2. Research Presentation | 30% |
| 3. Midterm | 30% |

Assignments (40%): There will be two assignments (20% each) in this class, with details to be provided prior to the assignment due date. A handout will be posted on OWL with additional details and we will briefly discuss the assignments upon release during lecture. The assignment will be released two weeks prior to their due dates, as noted in the course schedule below. Assignments are to be submitted through OWL's Assignments tab.

Research Presentation (30%): Students will work in small groups of one to four individuals to prepare a brief (~7 minutes + ~3 minutes for questions) presentation. Each group will select a research question surrounding social inequality and conduct a simple analysis, description, or visualization of the problem using a dataset of their choice. If you are unable to come up with a research question of interest, one can be selected from a predefined list on OWL. Presentations will occur over (approximately) the last three lectures of class. Presentation slides and any other material will be submitted on OWL following your presentation. **Groups will be required to sign up for a presentation date by Week 3 class (January 24).** Grading will be based upon both the presentation and submitted slides. Full details will be provided on OWL and important dates will be noted in the course schedule below.

Midterm (30%): The midterm exam will be administered in class on February 28. You will have the full class time to complete the exam, however the exam is expected to take no more than 1.5 hours to complete. The exam will be mixed format. Electronic devices, books, or aids of any kind will not be allowed during the examination.

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 delivery of our course moving away from face-to-face interactions, affected course material will be delivered entirely online through OWL. The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted 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.

For assignments, students who receive accommodation from the Academic Counselling Office will receive an extension.

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.

Course Schedule and Readings:

This schedule is subject to change to meet the needs of the course requirements. Any changes will be announced on OWL. All course readings will be posted on OWL.

| Dates | Topics Covered |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 10, 2024 | Course Introduction What is Social Inequality Theories of Social Inequality |
| January 17, 2024 | How Do We Measure Inequality? Sources of Data to Study Inequality Developing Measure of Inequality |
| January 24, 2024 | Measurement Properties <i>Assignment 1 is released on January 24 at 9:00am.</i> <u>Due: Presentation sign-up by end of class</u> |
| January 31, 2024 | What is Meaningful Inequality? Introduction to Describing and Visualizing Inequality (I) |
| February 7, 2024 | Income inequality (I) <u>Due: Assignment 1 at 9:00am on February 7, 2024</u> |
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| February 14, 2024 | Income inequality (II) |
| February 21, 2024 – Reading Week (no class) | |
| MIDTERM (February 28, 2024 – In Class) | |
| March 6, 2024 | Introduction to Describing and Visualizing Inequality (II) |
| March 13, 2024 | Health Inequality (I) |
| March 20, 2024 | Health Inequality (II) Group Presentations (I) <i>Assignment 2 is released March 20, 2024 at 9:00am</i> |
| March 27, 2024 | Environmental Inequality (I) Group Presentations (II) |
| April 3, 2024 | Environmental Inequality (II) Group Presentations (III) Due: Assignment 2 at 9:00am on April 3, 2024 |
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Academic Policies:

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf)” document https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health

Use of AI:

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools to aid in information gathering and preliminary research purposes. Additionally, students may use AI to help with the generation of basic descriptions and visualizations of data. AI may not be used as a tool to write and complete assignments for a student. Students are expected to generate their own ideas and interpret and evaluate results independently to ensure they can develop the skills necessary to be successful in their academic careers. Students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately citing all sources of information and any use of AI to aid their presentation of data.

2023-2024