



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4472F-001

Health Inequalities: The Social Determinants of Health
Fall 2023

Delivery Method: In-person, with synchronous Zoom provided

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Willson

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: willson@uwo.ca

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

Course Description: Health is more than the product of individual lifestyle choices and genetic factors. There are marked inequalities in health by socioeconomic class, race/ethnicity, immigration experiences, and other forms of social exclusion, oppression, and domination. The goal of this course is to understand the patterns of inequality, identify the determinants and consequences of individual and population health inequality, and envision policy interventions that can diminish health inequalities.

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 or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, 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 4486F/G taught in 2020/2021.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

- * Analyze the relationships between social forces, social institutions and inequalities in health at the individual and population levels.
- * Critically evaluate theoretical arguments and current research related to social inequalities in health.
- * Critically evaluate possibilities for social programs and reform.
- * Demonstrate an ability to present and discuss ideas clearly and articulately through effective oral and written communication.

Course Material:

Articles and other materials used in this course will be publicly available or available through Western libraries and/or through OWL. There are no required texts to be purchased.

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.

Method of Evaluation:

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

Class participation	15%	
Weekly reflections	10%	
Class presentation	20%	
Term paper proposal	10%	Due October 18, 5:00 p.m.
Term paper	45%	Due November 29, 5:00 p.m.

1. Class participation (15%)

This course is organized as a seminar. Class periods will include a mix of lecture and student-led discussion. It is critical that everyone read the assigned readings each week and come to class ready to actively participate in the discussion. The more you participate, the more you will get from the class and the more interesting it will be for all of us. Participation will be evaluated both on the quality and frequency of contribution. Students attending class remotely through Zoom are required to have cameras on to receive participation credit.

2. Weekly reflections (10%)

Each week students (except for the discussion leader) will submit a brief written reflection on the articles covered that week (approximately 1.5 - 2 double-spaced pages). You should not summarize the articles but reflect on how they 1) relate to the topic of the day or other topics covered in the course and/or 2) how they relate to current events as covered in the media. Reflection papers should be submitted to the OWL course website by 9 a.m. the day of class. You are not required to submit questions on the day of your presentation, and you may skip two submissions.

3. Class presentation (15%)

Each student will be required to present orally on one of the readings assigned in a given week. The purpose of the presentation is not to provide simply a summary of the reading to the class, but instead to raise questions for class discussion through a critical analysis. Prepare for a 15 minute presentation. A week after the presentation, the student will submit a written version for grading.

4. Term paper proposal (10%)

Proposals should be two double-spaced pages, plus one page of references (minimum of five). The professor will comment on the proposal and provide feedback for the final term paper. Due October 18, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Submitted in OWL course site.

5. Term paper (45%)

The final paper should be between 3000-3500 words, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font (12-15 pages). Due November 29, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Unexcused late papers will be penalized 5% per day. Comments on the term paper will only be provided if requested in advance of submission; late assignments will receive no written feedback. The assignment will be submitted in the OWL course site, including Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking.

Note: All written work (including exams) is expected to meet the standards of university work. Grades will be based on mechanics, style, and clarity, in addition to ideas. This is a sociology class, so the major focus will be on learning sociological ideas. But clear thinking is related to clear writing, and the grading will reflect this. Marks are based on the following:

- A+ = outstanding work that far exceeds basic requirements
- A = outstanding work that significantly exceeds basic requirements
- B = work that exceeds basic requirements
- C = work that satisfies course requirements in all respects (average)
- D = substandard work
- F = performance that fails to meet course requirements

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. So that essential requirements of the course are still met, the following policies apply. For absences approved by Academic Counselling, an extension for the term paper will be arranged. In the case of absences approved by Academic Counselling that affect students' participation or weekly reflections, grades will be based on the student's existing participation and reflections. For absences approved by Academic Counselling, student presentations will be reassigned to a different date, if possible. If this is not possible, assignments will be reweighted.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Posted in OWL

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 exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. It is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. Students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Written assignments must reflect the student’s own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 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 at the times indicated in the timetable. The grading scheme will not change.