



The University of Western Ontario  
**SOCIOLOGY 3333F-001**  
**Interpreting Law and Social Policy**  
**Fall, 2024**  
**In-Person**

**Instructor:** Holly Meaney, Lecturer  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Department of Sociology**  
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*This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.*

**Course Description:**

Students will learn to interpret law and social policy for communities according to the degree of political awareness and/or literacy levels. Through understanding of the scholarly literature and practical application, the student will facilitate dialogue among community members as they share experiential knowledge, to understand the impact of laws and policies on their neighborhoods and communities.

***Prerequisite(s):*** Prerequisite(s): 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

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):*** None

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:**

This course explores how community policies impact society, focusing on interpreting laws and social policies through different levels of political awareness and literacy. Students will engage with scholarly literature and practical applications to understand the effects of policies on local neighborhoods and communities.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Interpret laws and social policies considering varying levels of political awareness and literacy.
- Analyze the influence of community policies on social structures and inequalities.
- Assess the impact of specific policies on different societal groups.
- Evaluate how policies intersect with factors such as race, gender, ability, and ethnicity.

## **Course Material:**

Recommended Textbook: TDB

Supplementary readings each week

## **Communication:**

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) 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 Reflections: 25% total mark**

#### **Due Dates:**

**Reflection 1: September 24<sup>th</sup> @11:59pm**

**Reflection 2: October 1<sup>st</sup> @11:59pm**

**Reflection 3: October 29<sup>th</sup> @11:59pm**

**Reflection 4: November 12<sup>th</sup> @11:59pm**

**Reflection 5: November 19<sup>th</sup> @11:59pm**

**Reflection 6: December 3<sup>rd</sup> @11:59pm**

Throughout the semester, you will be given 6 class reflections that correlate with a specific lecture, but only your top 5 grades will count. This means you can choose not to complete one assignment, or if you attempt and do poorly, it will be dropped and impact your grade less. These will be mixed format, consisting of short written answers and potentially 1-3 multiple choice questions. These are aimed at helping you refine your knowledge and application of concepts ahead of the major essay and examinations.

*If students miss greater than 1 reflection, they will receive a grade of zero on each missed quiz. Please note, because not all elements of this assessment are required in the calculation of the final course grade, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for these missed elements.*

### **Critical Essay: 25%**

**Due: November 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Specifics:** 2,500 words; APA Format, handed-in on Course Page under related assignment tab. Include 2 course citations, and minimum 5 outside citations.

**Instructions:** Select a Canadian policy or law that captures your interest. Drawing on concepts from the first two lectures, critically analyze the rationale behind the policy's creation, its beneficiaries, and those adversely affected. Examine both the manifest and latent functions of the policy and apply the sociological imagination to

understand its broader societal implications. Conclude by identifying one or two areas where there is a knowledge gap that needs to be addressed to improve the policy. Provide recommendations for future research steps and justify your suggestions. See the course page for a rubric and other information.

*For each assignment, students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 48 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 48 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 10% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, only requests for academic consideration that are supported by academic counselling to go beyond this measure will be considered.*

**Midterm Exam: 20%**

**Date: October 9, 2024 Time: 3 hours**

Mixed format exam to be completed during class time in-person. Specifics on length and topics will be given closer to examination date, but will test on lectures and readings from Week 1- Week 4.

*Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course the Midterm exam has been designated as requiring supporting documentation.*

**Final Exam: 30% Time: 3 hours**

Date: TBD

Information: Cumulative exam to be completed during final exam time period.

**Student Absences:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.”

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is

described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

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:**

[It is optional to include your weekly course schedule and readings on the Sociology website. Instead, you can include your weekly readings on a separate document posted only on OWL]

### **Artificial Intelligence:**

1. *All assignments must be completed independently, without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI).*
2. *Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, 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. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays, written assignments and/or lab reports should 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 all 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.*

### **Academic Policies:**

Please review the Department of Sociology "[Important Academic Policies](#)" document

[https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic\\_Policies.pdf](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf) for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Course Selection
- Absence from Course Commitments
- Missed Tests and Exams
- Religious Accommodations

- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health
- Gender-Based and Sexual Violence statement

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