



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4472G-200

**Health Inequalities: The Social Determinants of Health
Winter 2025**

Delivery Method: Blended

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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. Technical requirements for the course: stable internet connection, computer with working microphone and/or webcam.

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. The professor will also email course information using the email address provided in OWL Brightspace.

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 February 12, 11:59 p.m.
Term paper	45%	Due March 26, 11:59 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 Brightspace course website by 9 a.m. on the day of class. You are not required to submit questions on the day of your presentation, and you may skip two submissions.

NOTE: Because flexibility is built into this assessment and reflections are tied to weekly class discussions, due dates and times listed are firm and requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

3. Class presentation (15%)

Each student will be required to present orally and lead discussion 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. Within a week after the presentation, the student will submit a written version for grading.

NOTE: Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course, the class presentation component has been designated as requiring supporting documentation. This is an important component of the class, and an absence will impact the learning of the other students in the class. Presentation dates are chosen by students at the beginning of the term, and as a result, this assignment cannot be rescheduled. Those with approved medical accommodation for absence will be required to present to the instructor at a later time scheduled outside of class meeting in order to make-up this assignment.

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 important for the final term paper. Due February 12 at 11:59 p.m. Submitted in Brightspace course site.

NOTE: Because the submission deadline for this assessment, February 12, includes flexibility in the form of 3 grace days, academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility will be denied. Students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, or if students have accommodation for flexible deadlines through Accessible Education, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assignment beyond 72 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade.

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 March 26 at 11:59 p.m. The assignment will be submitted in the Brightspace course site, including Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking.

NOTE: Because the submission deadline for this assessment, March 26, includes flexibility in the form of 3 grace days, academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility will be denied. Students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, or if students have accommodation for flexible deadlines through Accessible Education, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assignment beyond 72 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. Assignments submitted after the grace period will receive no written feedback.

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.

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.

Artificial Intelligence:

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. Written assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. These assessments are designed to evaluate your individual understanding of the course material and your ability to engage in sociological reasoning independently. 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 allow 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:

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

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.

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/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

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 in the course outline. 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

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

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 Academic Counselling Office.

Missed Tests and Exams: Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a make-up test. 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 professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test/exam slots.

Students with an approved absence from a final exam in December or April will be required to write a makeup exam known as a Special Examination. Permission to write a Special Examination may be granted on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documentation provided to the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Religious Accommodation: Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) .

Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the

examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

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 Brightspace 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.

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: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf . Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html .

Mental Health: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website 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 .

Additional resources:

Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <http://westernusc.ca/services>

Course Selection: Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite courses they may have taken.

If a student enrolls in a course for which they do not have the prerequisites, they may be removed from the course and have it deleted from their record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to their fees in the event that they are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

If a student takes a course that is antirequisite to a course previously taken, they will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Please visit your Home Faculty Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html .

Bookstore: Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>

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