



The University of Western Ontario
Department of Sociology
SOCIOLOGY 1027 B - 650
Life Is Not Always Fair
Summer 2026

Delivery Method – Online lectures and In-Person exams

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

Course Description: This introductory course challenges commonly held assumptions about individual success, talent and merit. Students will be introduced to underlying patterns and important debates about the nature of power and inequality, and how they shape issues such as work, family, education, the economy, and the pursuit of justice.

Sociology is concerned with how people are socialized, how they live (in families, cities, states, etc.), how they interact, how they associate, how they mobilize, how they are governed and how they are divided. A difficult question that sociology engages with concerns the dichotomy of agency vs. structure. Do we make history or do larger processes shape us? Keeping this question in the background, this course focuses on structure and more specifically, how social and political structures generate inequality.

Prerequisite(s): None

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 1020, Sociology 1020W/X, Sociology 1021E.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define basic sociological concepts such as social norms, social roles, sociological imagination, power, class, status, modernity, and social change.
- Acquire a basic understanding of research methods used in sociological research.
- Identify sources of social inequality such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship status, and the global order.
- Apply sociological concepts to analyze everyday social and political life.
- Acquire analytical and comprehension capacities and prepare for professional communication.

Course Material:

The required textbook for this course is:

Corrigall-Brown, Catherine. 2023. *Imagining Sociology: An Introduction with Readings*. 3rd Edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

You can purchase a hard-copy (CAD 125.99) or an E-book (CAD 55.99 for 180 days). You can also buy a second-hand copy if available.

There will also be some additional readings, as listed on the detailed syllabus under relevant weeks, with access provided on Brightspace.

Technical requirements for the course:

- stable internet connection
- uninterrupted access to a computer and internet for the duration of the course

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course [OWL Brightspace](#) site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students enrolled in the course.

You can also e-mail me at hpaker@uwo.ca. I may not be able to reply to emails received outside of normal business hours (i.e., 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday) until the next business day.

Course Schedule and Readings:

The reading list and weekly schedule is available on the course Brightspace site.

Method of Evaluation:

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

In brief:

Midterm	%40	July 6
Assignment	%10	July 20
Final	%50	TBA. Scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the final exam period July 27-30 2026)

Explanations and additional information:

Midterm Exam (40%)

The midterm will be written in person on **July 6**. Students will be given 75 minutes to complete the exam. The exam will consist of 35 multiple-choice questions, with four possible responses for each question. The students will be responsible for the course material (readings and lectures) from Week 1 to Week 3. Students who are late by more than 30 minutes after the start of the test will not be admitted into the exam. No books, electronic devices, cheat sheets, or class notes are permitted during the exam.

Per university policy on academic considerations (found [here](#)), requests for academic consideration related to the midterm **must** follow the procedures enumerated in the Absence from Course Commitments section of the Course Policy Document. Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment, per course, per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course, the Midterm scheduled on July 6 has been designated as requiring supporting documentation. Students with an approved absence from the midterm exam can write a makeup exam during the departmental Midterm make-up exam period (time and location TBD).

Final exam (50%)

The final exam will be administered in person during the **Final Exam period** (scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the final exam period July 27-30 2026). The exam will consist of 40 multiple-choice questions, with four possible responses for each question. The final exam will not be cumulative. As such, the students will be responsible for the course material (readings and lectures) from Week 4 to Week 6.

Students who are late by more than 30 minutes after the start of the test will not be admitted into the exam. No books, electronic devices, cheat sheets, or class notes are permitted during the exam.

Per university policy on academic considerations (found [here](#)), requests for academic consideration related to the Final must follow the procedures enumerated in the Absence from Course Commitments section of the Course Policy Document. Please note that: “Requests for examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods . . . **ALWAYS** require formal supporting documentation.” Students with an approved absence from the Final will be required to write a makeup exam during the departmental Final make-up exam period (location and date TBA).

Assignment (%10)

There will be a mini assignment which is due at 23:59 p.m. on **July 20**. For this assignment, students will come up with a sociological research question and 2 scholarly references (e.g. articles published in academic journals, books, chapters in edited works, etc.) that they deem relevant in addressing the research question. The research question can be on any sociological topic/concept/issue that is discussed in the course. Students can be thinking about it as we go along since the deadline to hand in the assignment is towards the very end of the term. The research question and the references (no more than a single page and 300 words) should be uploaded to Brightspace by the deadline.

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 24 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 24 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 10% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. Assignments submitted after 3 days after the grace period will receive a grade of 0. Students requiring academic accommodation for late or missed assignments beyond the grace period must receive approval from Academic Counselling. Please note that because the submission deadline for the assignment already includes flexibility in the form of 24-hour submission window and grace days, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.

Students are expected to complete the assignments independently, without the aid of AI software, and to complete it using their own ideas and words.

Course Policies

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

All assignments must be completed independently, without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI).

Electronic Devices:

Use of electronic devices during the midterm and final exams is not permitted.

Lectures and Course Materials:

Course materials prepared by the instructor (e.g., slides, video and audio recordings, summaries, review sheets, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringement of copyright is an academic offence.

Academic integrity:

You must do everything to avoid academic dishonesty. It goes without saying that cheating is a serious violation of academic honesty and university regulations as well as the trust of your professor. Please also beware of plagiarism! Plagiarism is defined as borrowing or using somebody else's written work or ideas without properly acknowledging the author. It can be intentional which is no less than intellectual theft, or unintentional/accidental which is still unacceptable. For example, it is still plagiarism if students copy/repeat the exact same words of the original author and indicate the source. To avoid this, students must paraphrase, meaning that they reflect their own understanding of the work in question in their own words. Please inform yourselves thoroughly on all forms of plagiarism. To that end, please read the appropriate policy at this web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf



Department of Sociology
Revised May 29, 2026

Academic Policies

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the [Scholastic Offences](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf) 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_offences.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.

The use of cellphones or other information transmitting electronic devices are prohibited during exams. Students who are caught, regardless of intent, with an electronic device during any part of an exam will receive zero on the exam in question.

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](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf) – 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 using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html. 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 scheduled 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. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical_certificate.pdf or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Once the request and supporting documentation have been received and reviewed, appropriate academic consideration, if granted, shall be determined by the instructor in consultation with the academic advisor, in a manner consistent with the course outline. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam, unless otherwise specified in the course outline. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup text/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

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 Advising 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 advising office.

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Religious Accommodation: Students should review the policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf . 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.

Guidelines for Grades/Marks: The Department of Sociology has grade distribution guidelines that all instructors are expected to follow. Generally, and with few exceptions, this means that the number of A's in a course cannot exceed the number of B's, and class means are expected to fall within a prescribed percentage range. This means that your final grade depends on your ranking relative to your peers. Courses with grades falling outside this range may be adjusted, up or down. These guidelines do not prohibit a student achieving 95% or higher in all their courses, but it does mean that an entire course cannot be made up of students receiving 95%. This policy combats grade inflation, contributing to higher standards, and ensuring uniformity across all courses of the same level. Motivated and hard working students receive grades well above the course averages. The use of grade guidelines, including any adjustments of grades, either up or down for this purpose, cannot be used as the basis of an appeal.

Guidelines for Grades/Marks:

Sociology 1000-Level

A's not to exceed B's
Means in the range of 68-72%

Sociology 2000-Level

A's not to exceed B's
Means in the range of 70-75%

Sociology 3000-Level

Means in the range of 73-80%

Sociology 4000-Level

Means in the range of 78-82%

Code of Student Conduct: It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize themselves with its contents. The Code is available at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf . Sanctions for non compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University.

Student Responsibility: Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. 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 anti-requisite course(s) they may have taken. Students must familiarize themselves with the following policies:

Student Responsibility for Course Selection policy

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf

Registration and Progression policy

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf .

Students are responsible for the successful completion of the **Graduation Requirements** for their degree program https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf.

Support Services:

- **Office of the Registrar Services** <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
- **Faculty Academic Advising** - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters
https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html .
- **USC services** offers information about the student health/dental plan, LTC bus pass, food support services, Peer support Center etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/> .
- **Mental health** – Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](https://www.uwo.ca/health/) <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.
- **Health & Wellness Services** – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html> . Additional on-campus services are also available <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/services/index.html> .
- **Accessible Education** provides support and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. 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.
- **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 or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the Wellness and Wellbeing website
https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html
- **Western Libraries** – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html> . Research support is available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html> .
- **Writing support** – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>
- **Bookstore:** Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>