SOC 260 B1: Inequality and Social Stratification
Winter 2017
T/R 9:30-10:50

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Phone: 780 492 4527
Office hours: Thursdays 11:00-13:00
Office: 6-15 Tory Bldg
Location: Tory Bldg 95

***Please note that this syllabus may be subject to minor changes. Any such changes will be announced in class and posted on the eClass website***

Policy about course outlines can be found in Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading of the University Calendar (http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#course-requirements,-evaluation-procedures-and-grading-a.)

Prerequisite

SOC 100 or consent of instructor.

Course Description and Goals

We are surrounded by inequalities; some are apparent and some are less so. In our society, which favours individualism and emphasizes the idea that “anyone who works hard enough gets ahead,” it is easy (and sometimes convenient!) to argue that inequalities exist primarily because of individual characteristics and attributes. But, Sociology tells us that inequalities are built into larger social structures and the broader culture around us, constraining individuals in ways they may not even be aware. This course intends to develop a comprehensive understanding of what inequality and stratification mean, how they work, how they come to be and continue to be reproduced, as well as their main social consequences. Thus, it will combine lectures on theoretical and empirical discussions about the many domains of inequality and social stratification, including gender, race, class, age, education, work, health, space, and crime. With such a scope, this course was designed to supplement the professional toolkit of individuals pursuing careers in the following areas: sociology, political science, anthropology, criminology, economy, business, nursing, social work, psychology, education, and resource and environment. Lastly, this course will address inequality and social stratification as both a tool and an obstacle for governance and wellbeing, introducing some of the main Canadian and foreign social programs to mitigate inequality and promote social justice.

Course Specific Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- Identify and analyse individual, cultural, and structural-level mechanisms and elements contributing to inequality and stratification;
- Analyse processes of inequality and social stratification from multiple theoretical perspectives;
- Discuss and explain the type and trends of inequality and stratification in various social settings (e.g., family and workplace);
- Situate Canada within the global context regarding socioeconomic inequalities;
- Assess the impact of inequality and stratification on welfare and governance;
- Assess and outline policy recommendations concerned with the mitigation of inequality.

### Evaluation and Grading

**Evaluation:**
Your grade for this course will be formed by four components: three exams and one written assignment. Each component will account for 25% of your final grade. See details below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluations</th>
<th>Weights</th>
<th>Evaluation Format</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30 multiple choice questions / in class</td>
<td>February 28, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30 multiple choice questions / homework</td>
<td>Due on eclass on March 17, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2-page essay / homework</td>
<td>Due on eclass on April 12, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30 multiple choice questions / in class</td>
<td>April 18 - 29, 2017 (check Bear Tracks and eClass)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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If you face issues keeping up with coursework for any reason, notify me as soon as you start to have a problem. We will be more likely to come to an acceptable arrangement if we can attack the problem sooner rather than later. Counselling & Clinical Services is also available (https://uofa.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling).

**Exams:**
You will have three multiple choice exams, each consisting of 30 questions. While the first and the third exam will be done in class, the second one will be a homework. I will post the second exam on eClass on March 16, 2017 at noon and you will have until the next day at midnight (March 17, 2017) to complete it and submit it online. The exams are not cumulative. Detailed instructions and sample questions will be discussed in class and posted on e-class in advance of the exam.

**Written Assignment:**
Effective communication is one of the most important components of analytical work. You are likely to experience situations where your success depends on clear and concise writing in academic and other professional settings. To practice analytical writing, you will be requested to write a two-page research proposal on the topic of inequality. This exercise will be a simulation for a SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) graduate award application. My final goal is to help you practice “selling your ideas” in a scholarly manner in case you decide to go to graduate school. Detailed instructions, sample proposals, and a grading rubric will be discussed in class and posted on e-class in advance of the due date.

**Grading Policy:**
In accordance with a motion from the Faculty of Arts effective in the Fall 2015 (https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/faculty-of-arts-intranet/undergrad-student-services/policy-procedures-1), the Department of Sociology recommends through its Sociology Instructor Manual Fall2016/Winter 2017 that the class average in each undergraduate course fall in a range around the Faculty historical average grade for that course level. The effective range for a 200 course level is: 2.63 to 3.23 (the historical average is equivalent to 2.93). The grades for courses for which the average grade falls outside the recommended range may be approved by the Department if the approver believes there is adequate justification for an exception. Past experiences, however, suggest that the Department of Sociology understands the Faculty’s recommendation as a requirement. Given that instructors cannot curve grades, as per the UAPPOL Grading Policies, be advised that I may need to make it more likely that grades conform with the recommended distribution by: re-evaluating methods of assessment and the course outline, in particular, the description of how marks on individual course components are translated into final course letter grades, as suggested by the Faculty of Arts’ motion.
Grade Conversion Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>75 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>70 – 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>66 – 69</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>62 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>58 – 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor (Minimal Pass)</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>54 – 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>50 – 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Readings:
All readings marked with a letter “R” are required and will be tested (see section “Course Schedule and Readings”). These readings are available through the library system (check the URL provided in the section “Course Schedule and Readings”). If the required reading is a book chapter, the book will be available in the Reserve Room of the Rutherford Library. I kindly request you to read the texts before class, so you can fully benefit from my lectures. At the end of this syllabus you will find a selection of recommended references (not required!) organized by topics (see appendix). This list is a starting point in case you want to further research the topics covered in my lectures. You may also rely on these references as sources for your written assignment.

Lectures:
The content of my lectures will be tested. Given that I will post lecture slides on eClass immediately after each lecture for you to review, you do not need to copy their content. However, make sure to take note of my comments and explanations because they will be tested. I do not post the slides before lecture because I reserve the right to make last minute alterations to my lectures and supporting slides. Oftentimes slides will contain figures and tables that you may want to refer back to when reviewing the material; there figures and tables will be tested.

Course Policies and Other Information

Contacting the Instructor:
If you have a question that can be answered with a couple sentences, please contact me through Email (cassiano@ualberta.ca). If your question requires a more detailed or lengthy response, I suggest that you attend my office hours or make an appointment to meet with me. Please be aware that I check email most weekdays but not always on weekends. If you email me, you can expect a response within 24 hours, unless it arrives on Friday.
Email and In-Class Etiquette:
Remember that email communication for all courses should be formal and professional. Make sure to use clear and formal language. As a courtesy, please refrain from using smart phones and accessing social media in class.

eClass:
This course utilizes eClass for the posting of certain content and for discussion forums. I will also make announcements via eClass, so please check the website regularly.

Late Assignments:
Unexcused late assignments will be docked 20 percentage points for every day they are late, including weekends.

Absences:
If you are going to be absent from a lecture, you do not need to contact me unless you will be missing an exam. However, if you miss a lecture, I suggest that you contact another student in the class to copy his or her notes from that lecture.

As per the University of Alberta Calendar (http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#Attendance), excused absence for a missed exam is not automatic and is granted at the discretion of the instructor (in the case of term exams) or the student’s Faculty (in the case of final exams). Instructors and Faculties are not required to grant excused absences for unacceptable reasons that include, but are not limited to personal events such as vacations, weddings, or travel arrangements. When a student is absent from a term or final exam without acceptable excuse, a final grade will be computed using a raw score of zero for the exam missed. Any student who applies for or obtains an excused absence by making false statements will be liable under the Code of Student Behaviour.

If you are unable to complete a homework assignment by the due date, you must contact the instructor within two working days, or as soon as you are able to with regard to the circumstance. The instructor may request documentation. Acceptable documentation for an incapacitating illness is a University of Alberta Medical Statement signed by a doctor, a Medical Declaration Form for students in Arts, or a Statutory Declaration for students from other Faculties to be completed by the Registrar’s Office. You should submit appropriate documentation for other acceptable absences. This could include a copy of the death certificate for a death in the family, a letter from the church or pastor for a religious conflict, or a copy of the accident report for a car accident. For other reasons, please consult with me for appropriate documents.

Disability Accommodations:
Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, mental, or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), 1-80 Students’ Union Building, Phone: 780 492 3381. Students registered with SAS who will be using accommodations in the classroom, or who will be writing exams through SAS, are required to provide a “Letter of Introduction.”

Electronic Recording of Lectures:
Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded
material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

**Plagiarism and Cheating:**
The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University. For further information about Academic Integrity and to access the *Academic Integrity Handbook* for students, visit the Student Conduct and Accountability website at http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/en/Students.aspx

**Citing someone else’s work:**
Always cite when you use someone else’s work. The UofA Library provides you with examples of how to reference the literature you cite in your scholarly work. Please check: http://guides.library.ualberta.ca/citing

**Resources for Help with Academic Writing:**
- Student Success Centre: http://www.studentsuccess.ualberta.ca/ (paid)
- Centre for Writers: http://www.c4w.arts.ualberta.ca/ (free)
- Citation Styles Quick Guide: http://guides.library.ualberta.ca/citing

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**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

**Part I - Introduction to Inequality and Social Stratification**

**January 10 - Roadmap: Our Expectations, Rights, and Duties**
- R Course syllabus available on eClass.

**January 12 – Sensitization [32 pages]**

**January 17 – Basic Categories and Their Distinction: Poverty and Inequality [24 pages]**
January 19 – The Origins of Inequality and Social Stratification as Subjects of Study in the Social Sciences [5 pages]


Part II - Theorizing Inequality and Social Stratification

January 24 - Karl Marx on Inequality and Social Stratification [23 pages]


January 26 – Thinking “Capital” as a Multidimensional Resource [17 pages]


January 31 - Émile Durkheim’s Views on Inequality and Social Stratification [35 pages]


February 2 - Max Weber’s Views: Inequality and Social Stratification in Action [11 pages]


February 7 – Max Weber’s Perspective: Inequality as a Matter of Power [21 pages]


February 14 – Review for Exam #1 (no specific reading)

February 16 – Written Assignment Discussion: Designing a Research Proposal on Inequality to Meet SSHRC’s Expectations

- R Materials available on eClass under February 16

February 21 – No Class (Winter Term Reading Week)

February 23 – No Class (Winter Term Reading Week)

February 28 – Exam #1

Part III – Topics in Inequality and Social Stratification

March 2 – Inequality: Intersections of Class, Age, Gender, Ethnicity, and Race in Canada [17 pages]

March 7 - Inequalities Within the Most Basic Classification: Gender [20 pages]


March 9 – Gender Inequality and Patriarchy [22 pages]


March 14 - Ethnic Categories and Inequalities [13 pages]


March 16 – Inequalities: From School to the Labour Market [26 pages]


March 17 – Exam #2 Due on eClass (you have until midnight to submit it)

March 21 – Inequalities Within Canada’s Temporary Immigration Policy [24 pages]


March 23 – Crime, Criminalization, and Surveillance as a Domain of Inequality [35 pages]


March 28 – Spatial Inequalities and Geographical Mobility [16 pages]
Part IV – Inequality from the Perspective of Governance

March 30 – Inequality as a Tool of Governance [22 pages]


April 4 – Inequality as a Problem for Governance [37 pages]


April 6 – Catching Up (no specific reading)

April 11 – Review for Exam #3 (no specific reading)

April 12 – Written Assignment due on eClass (you have until midnight to submit it)

April 18-29, 2017 - Exam #3 ***Please check Bear Tracks and/or eclass to confirm the final exam date, time and location***

Deferred Final Exam Date: Saturday May 6th at 9:00 am
Location: TBD

Note: As per the “Attendance” section of the University Calendar, a deferred exam will not be approved if a student (a) has not been in regular attendance where attendance and/or participation are required, and/or, (b) excluding the final exam, has completed less than half of the assigned work. (http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#course-requirements,-evaluation-procedures-and-grading-a.)

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APPENDIX

***Recommended Readings (Not Required!)*

Categorization and Division

Gender

Race

Global Inequality

Canadian Inequality

Inequality as a Subject of Social Inquire

Division of Labour and Inequality
Distinctions Between Inequality and Social Stratification


Bureaucracy as a Tool to Normalize Inequality


Racism


Labour Market


Education


Division and Inequality as a Tool of Governance and a Problem for Governance


The Economist. “Anti-poverty programmes: Give the poor money Conditional-cash transfers are good. They could be even better,” July 29. http://www.economist.com/node/16693323