

COURSE OUTLINE
Soci365-60: Social Stratification
Summer 2012

Lecture: TR 12:00 PM - 14:50 PM in ST147 (Science Theaters, Social Science Building)

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Office hours: T 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM; or by appointment

*"Whenever you feel like criticizing any one, just remember that all the people in this world
haven't had the advantages that you've had."*

F. Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*

Course Objectives

Social inequality exists in multiple forms and is the result of authority being delegated to some individuals and denied to others based upon a set of criteria deemed relevant by members of society. Over the course of the semester, we will explore forms, causes, and consequences of social inequality with focus on social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and sexuality. We will examine how forms of social inequality come into existence and are perpetuated in social institutions such as the family, the education system, government and the media. Employing a sociological framework, we will discuss both theoretical approaches seeking to explain forms of inequality as well as the lived experience of individuals facing different forms of inequality.

By the end of this course, you will be able to identify and critically discuss the different forms of social inequality using different theoretical approaches to social inequality. Furthermore, you will be able to analyze and evaluate ordinary day-to-day scenarios with respect to their underlying dimensions of social inequality. Finally, you will be able to educate others about forms of social inequality and their consequences in contemporary Canadian society.

Course Format

I will begin each class with a short lecture to cover key concepts and other pertinent information to complement the readings. The remainder of the class will be interactive. We will engage in group and class debates, do hands-on exercises, watch pertinent films and then reflect on new insights in class discussions as well as informal and formal written assignments. Reading the assigned material, an open mind, and your active participation is vital for this class to reach its fullest potential and to make it a rewarding experience for you and me. Please note that while attendance is not mandatory, you will miss material essential for your success in this course if you skip classes. If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the lecture notes from one of your class mates.

Required Texts

(available through the U of C bookstore)

- McMullin, Julie. 2010. *Understanding Social Inequality: Intersections of Class, Age, Gender, Ethnicity, and Race in Canada*. 2nd edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Walls, Jeannette. 2005. *The Glass Castle*. New York: Scribner.

Supplementary Readings

Some classes rely on supplementary readings. Electronic copies of the journal articles listed below are available through the UofC library (<http://library.ucalgary.ca/journals>).

- Benjamin, Mark. 2005. "The ex-gay agenda." *Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide* 12(6): 26-31.
- Bowditch, Christine. 1993. "Getting rid of troublemakers: High school disciplinary procedures and the production of dropouts." *Social Problems* 40(3): 493-509.
- de Leeuw, Sarah, Margo Greenwood, Emilie Cameron. 2010. "Deviant constructions: How governments preserve colonial narratives of addictions and poor mental health to intervene into the lives of indigenous children and families in Canada." *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction* 8(2): 282-295.
- Doucet, Andrea. 2004. "'It's almost like I have a job, but I don't get paid': fathers at home reconfiguring work, care, and masculinity." *Fathering* 2(3): 277-303.
- Harris, Scott R. 2003. "Critiquing and expanding the sociology of inequality: Comparing functionalist, conflict, and interactionist perspectives." *Quarterly Journal of Ideology* 25:1-21.
- West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing gender." *Gender and Society* 1(2): 125-151.

Course Requirements

Assignment Schedule and Outline

	Date due	% of final grade
Discussion questions	each class	pass/fail
Blackboard activities	announced in class	pass/fail
Midterm 1	July 10	15
Poverty Simulation reflection paper	July 26	30
Decoding gender assignment	August 7	25
Book discussion	August 16	30

Discussion questions (pass/fail)

For each class you are required to submit one discussion question based on the assigned readings. Full credit will be given to questions that sincerely engage with the readings. Please submit your discussion question prior to our class meeting time (12:00 PM) via Blackboard (a forum has been created for each class on the Discussion Board). Late questions will not be accepted. We will then discuss a selection of the submitted questions in class. You are also encouraged to continue discussing your questions on Blackboard after class.

Due prior to each class (12:00 PM)

Blackboard activities (pass/fail)

On occasion you will be required to complete small assignments at home and post the results on Blackboard. For example, when talking about gender representations in the media, I might ask you to find a commercial on YouTube and briefly discuss how it represents gender. Your clip and discussion should be posted on Blackboard: Discussion Board: Blackboard Assignment.

Blackboard activities and deadlines will be announced in class.

Midterm (15%)

There will be one mid-term exam composed of multiple-choice and short answer questions. The questions focus on the first section of the course: theoretical approaches to social stratification.

Due July 10.

Poverty Simulation reflection paper (30%)

The reflection paper is based on the United Way Poverty Simulation, which you will participate in July. Detailed paper guidelines will be provided in class and posted under Assignments on Blackboard.

Due July 26 (beginning of class).

Decoding gender assignment (25%)

For this 3-5 page essay, you will visit a grocery store, toy store or department store and examine everyday objects found therein. Chose a set of objects (e.g., a rack of greeting cards or the deodorant shelf) and identify and record patterns of gender coding. Your paper should describe your observations and analyze your observation using course material. Detailed paper guidelines will be provided in class and posted under Assignments on Blackboard.

Due August 7 (beginning of class).

Book Discussion – The Glass Castle (30%)

Detailed book discussion guidelines are will be provided in class and posted under on Blackboard: Assignments: Book Discussion.

Due August 16 (beginning of class).

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

A+	95 – 100%	B+	80 – 84%	C+	67 – 69%	D+	54 – 58%
A	90 – 94%	B	75 – 79%	C	63 – 66%	D	50 – 53%
A-	85 – 89%	B-	70 – 74%	C-	59 – 62%	F	49% or less

The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms. To receive a passing grade in this course, **ALL** course requirements (including discussion questions and Blackboard assignments) **MUST** be completed.

Contact Information

Blackboard will be used to post class outlines, assignment and test information, and general announcements, so please make sure you check Blackboard regularly. I will be available during office hours or by appointment, and it's during those times, and in person, that questions about course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with. Please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment – but please do not use e-mail as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss.

Emergency evacuations

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Food Court in the Professional Faculties Building.

Assignment Policies and Deferrals

If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for a deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while you have the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements, misreading of the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment responsibilities are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student. Late assignments are subject to a **5 percentage point deduction** for each day the assignment is late. Late assignments must be submitted within 7 days of the assignment deadline, and will **not** be accepted thereafter.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, I can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If I schedule a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department. If you have missed an assignment deadline for legitimate reason, it is your responsibility to contact me, the instructor, to discuss a new deadline.

Deferred Final Exam Form:

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar-scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

http://ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM_0.pdf

Deferred Term Work Form:

Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals

If you are unhappy with a grade you received for an assignment, please refer to the University Calendar and follow the procedures outlined therein.

Ethics Research

Please be advised that any research involving human subjects - including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, you must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing your plans with me, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Please be advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation

...disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department's main office. I will return written assignments individually during class, or during my office hours. If you are unable to pick up your assignment, you may provide me with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of your assignment.

Safewalk

The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. You can also contact Campus Security from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, phone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.

Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.) Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

Tentative Course Schedule

Subject to change. Changes will be announced and discussed in class.

The following questions should guide your reading of course material and will help you prepare for class discussions: What are the author's main arguments? What new concepts/ideas/arguments does the author introduce? How do these readings relate to my learning in previous courses and to what I experience as a member of this society? How am I reacting to these findings/arguments? Do they support or challenge my values, beliefs, knowledge? Why and how? How would I respond to the author's arguments? What questions remain unanswered? What is confusing/difficult to understand or brilliant about this reading? Bring your notes!

Date	Topic	Assigned readings
July 3	Introduction What is social stratification?	McMullin, Ch. 1
July 5	Social stratification and social inequality	McMullin, Ch. 6; Harris
	1. Social Class	
July 10	Theoretical approaches	McMullin, Ch. 2
July 12	Class and employment	McMullin, Ch. 9
July 17	Class and education	Mc Mullin, Ch. 10; Bowditch
July 19	United Way Poverty Simulation	No reading assigned
	2. Gender	
July 24	<i>Reading Day – No Class</i>	
July 26	Theoretical approaches	McMullin, Ch. 3; West & Zimmerman
July 31	Gender and the family	McMullin, Ch. 8; Doucet
August 2	Gender and the media	No reading assigned
	3. Race and Ethnicity	
August 7	Theoretical approaches	McMullin, Ch. 4
August 9	Race, ethnicity and the state	McMullin, Ch. 12; de Leeuw, Greenwood & Cameron
	4. Sexual Orientation	
August 14	Theoretical approaches	Benjamin
August 16	Sexual Orientation and society	No reading assigned