

COURSE OUTLINE

Soci401-02: The Sociology of Poverty and Homelessness

Winter 2011

MW 4:00 PM - 5:15 PM

Location: ST125

University of Calgary - Department of Sociology

Instructor: Annette Tézli, M.A.

Office: SS952

Email: atezli@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: MW 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM; or by appointment

This syllabus is a contract between you and me and lays out the terms of our collaboration for this semester. Please read it carefully and feel free at any time to ask any questions you may have regarding its content.

Course Objectives

Despite decades of research, poverty and homelessness remain persistent features of even the most affluent societies. Over the course of the semester, we will explore poverty and homelessness as social problems and moral issues in contemporary Canadian society. We will discuss different ways of defining and measuring poverty and homelessness as well as causes and consequences of poverty and homelessness. Employing a sociological framework, we will discuss different theoretical approaches seeking to explain poverty and homelessness. We will conclude by exploring different measures suggested to alleviate poverty and homelessness in our society. To offer as broad a perspective as possible, we will read, analyze, and discuss both quantitative and qualitative research articles on the subject matter. A sound understanding of sociological research methods is beneficial. Part of the course will also touch on the lived experience of those living in poverty and/or those who are homeless and you will be required to volunteer at one of the city's homeless shelters. You will engage with the subject matter thoroughly through various group activities, dialogue with guest speakers and different writing assignments.

The goal of this course is to examine poverty and homelessness through a sociological lens. By the end of this course, you will be able to identify and critically discuss issues pertaining to poverty and homelessness drawing on different theoretical and methodological approaches. Furthermore, you will be familiar with major research findings and common controversies related to poverty and homelessness. That knowledge will enable you to critically discuss various perspectives on poverty and homelessness and to evaluate different programs and policies seeking to alleviate poverty and homelessness. Finally, you will be able to educate others about poverty and homelessness in contemporary Canadian society as well as their respective consequences.

Please note: Reading the assigned material, an open mind, and your active participation is required for this class to reach its fullest potential and to make it a rewarding experience for you and me. Please try to keep up with the assigned readings. Furthermore, attendance is important in any class. If you miss a class, you will miss material relevant to your success in this course. To attend classes regularly is your responsibility. If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the covered material from one of your class mates.

Required Readings and Materials

- course pack (required readings are available as a course pack at **Bound & Copied** and on BlackBoard under Course Documents; recommended readings on BlackBoard only)

Course Requirements

Assignment Schedule and Outline

	Date due	% of final grade
2 pop quizzes	TBD	5 each
academic article review	TBD	20
volunteer reflection paper (extra credit option available)	March 21	35
term paper	April 13	35

pop quiz (5% each)

There will be two unannounced ten-point, ten minute quizzes over the reading assigned for the day of the quiz. (TBD)

academic article review (20%)

This is a writing assignment in which you are asked to summarize and critically evaluate an academic journal article or assigned text drawing on course material. Detailed guidelines for the assignment are available on BlackBoard (under Assignments). For the article review, pick **one** of the assigned required or recommended texts **marked with an asterisk (*)** on the reading list and write a critical review. Reviews are due at that **beginning** of the class for which the text was assigned. Since we will be discussing the assigned text during class, late papers will **not** be accepted under any circumstances. (**due dates vary, depending on the date for which the article you select was assigned**)

volunteer reflection paper (35%)

The reflection paper is based on your experience volunteering for about three hours at a downtown homeless shelter (DI, The Mustard Seed **OR** Inn from the Cold). Due to the nature of the volunteer engagement, this assignment requires outside class time as all volunteer engagements have been scheduled for the evening. You will have several options to choose from over a 6-day period and no class will be held during that week. Please sign up for your preferred volunteer engagement by January 19, 2010. The number of spots for each date/location is limited; sign up on a first come first serve basis. Detailed reflection paper guidelines are available on BlackBoard (under Assignments).

alternate-credit option: The volunteering exercise is not mandatory but strongly recommended. If you are unable or unwilling to participate in the volunteer exercise, you are required to write a critical book review of Mitchell Duneier's *Sidewalk*, an ethnographic study of the life of homeless street vendors in NYC. The book will give you the opportunity to learn more about the day-to-day life of the homeless. Detailed paper guidelines will be made available to you upon request. (**Due March 21**)

term paper (35%)

Drawing on course material, critically discuss (providing arguments in favor of and against) the following statement: "Don't give money to Panhandlers. If you want to help the homeless, give money to charities that provide services to the homeless population." Detailed term paper guidelines are available on BlackBoard (under Assignments). (**Due April 13**)

Grading Scale

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

A+	96 – 100%	B+	80 – 85%	C+	67 – 69%	D+	57 – 59%	F	0 – 49%
A	91 – 95%	B	74 – 79%	C	63 – 66%	D	53 – 56%		
A-	86 – 90%	B-	70 – 73%	C-	60 – 62%	D-	50 – 52%		

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 must be completed.**

Assignment Policies

If you are unable to pass in an assignment on time, you must notify me in advance, if at all possible. All requests for 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 and misreading of the syllabus 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. Assignments handed in late without good cause as defined above are subject to a 5 percentage point deduction per day past the due date. You will not be able to make up assignments not handed in. There are absolutely NO EXCEPTIONS!

Please note that requests to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U of C Calendar. You can find the forms you need online:

Deferred Final Exam Application:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Winter2008DEFERREDFINALEXAMINATIONONS.pdf>

Deferred Term Work Form: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit these deferral forms to the Faculty of Arts Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre. Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions. To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

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

1. When you are unable to submit papers in class, you should make arrangements to hand in your paper directly to me. 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.

Academic Accommodation

If you have a disability and require academic accommodation, you need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). It is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required. Please provide me with your academic accommodation letter no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. Please submit the Instructor Confirmation Sheet for signature. It is your responsibility to book accommodated exams at the Disability Resource Centre.

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.

Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals

If you chose to challenge a grade you received for an exam or assignment, please refer to the Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals section of 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.

Protection of Privacy

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.

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.

Campus Safety

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.

Tentative Course Schedule

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

Week 1 - Introduction

January 10 – Introduction, final paper discussion

January 12 – poverty and homelessness in Canada, an overview

Required reading: Duffy and Mandell (2010), Peressini (2009)

Week 2 - Review

January 17 – some theoretical and methodological considerations

Required reading: Sewell (1992), Bryman and Teevan (2005)

January 19 – group exercise, exercise debrief

Week 3 – Defining Poverty, Poverty Measures and Demographic Profiles

January 24 – quantitative approaches

Required reading: Ross, Scott and Smith (2000)

Recommended reading: Schechter and Paquet (1999), Selick (1995), Sarlo (2001)

January 26 – qualitative approaches

Required reading: McIntyre, Officer and Robinson (2003)

Recommended reading: Sarlo (2008), Sarlo (1996), CCSD (2007)

Week 4 – Defining Homelessness, Homeless Enumerations and Demographic Profiles

January 31 – quantitative approaches

Required reading: Echenberg and Jensen (2008), The City of Calgary: Definitions Related to Homelessness (2008), The City of Calgary: Estimating Street Homelessness in Calgary (2008)

Recommended reading: Wenger (2004), Stroick, Hubac and Richter-Salomons (2008)

February 2 – qualitative approaches

Required reading: Averitt (2003)

Recommended reading: Hulchanski (2009)

Week 5 – Poverty and Homelessness: Causes, Pathways, Theories and Discourses

February 7 - quantitative

Required reading: Fleury and Fortin (2006)

Recommended reading: Corcoran et al. (1985)

February 9 - qualitative

Required reading: Reutter et al. (2009)

Recommended reading: Beresford and Croft (1995), Dean (1992)

Week 6 - Poverty and Homelessness: Causes, Pathways, Theories and Discourses

February 14

Required reading: Gardiner and Cairns (2002)

Recommended reading: Main (1998), Fischer and Breakey (1991)

February 16

Required reading: Morell-Ballai and Goering (2000)

Recommended reading: Blasi (1994), Boydell, Goering and Morell-Ballai (2000)

Week 7 – Reading Week

February 21/23

Week 8 – The Social, Psychological, Emotional and Physical Costs of Poverty and Homelessness

February 28 – individual costs

Required reading: Albanese (2010)

Recommended reading: Pagani (2007), Reutter et al. (2005)

March 2 – societal costs

Required reading: Shiell and Zhang (2004), CHF (2003)

Week 9 – Responses to Poverty and Homelessness: The Shelter Industry

March 7/9 – volunteer week, no class

Required reading: Hurtubise, Babin and Grimard (2007), Stark (1994),

Marvasti (2002), Davidson and Jenkins (1989)

The Sociology of Poverty and Homelessness

Week 10 - Responses to Poverty and Homelessness: The Shelter Industry

March 14 – Three Days/Three Nights, a multimedia presentation by the DI
no reading

March 16 – DI debrief, volunteer week debrief
no reading

Week 11 - Responses to Poverty and Homelessness: The Government

March 21 – the dismantling of the Canadian welfare state

Required reading: Lightman and Riches (2000), Boessenkool (1997)

Recommended reading: Chunn and Gavigan (2004)

March 23 – government responses to poverty

Required reading: National Council of Welfare (2006)

Recommended reading: LeRoy and Clemens (2003), Gazso (2007)

Week 12 – Responses to Poverty and Homelessness: The Government

March 28 – government responses to homelessness

Required reading: Gaetz (2010), Snow (2008)

March 30 – 10 Year plans to end homelessness: What's all the Rage?

Required reading: CCEH (2008)

Week 13 – Reconsidering Poverty and Homelessness as Social Problems

April 4 – Canada's poverty policies in international comparison

Required reading: Valletta (2006)

Recommended reading: UN (May 1 2006), UN (May 8 2006), UN (November 1 2007)

April 6 – Individual problem or public responsibility?

Required reading: The City of Calgary (2004), Kingfisher (2005)

Week 14 – Is There Room for Social Change and Social Justice

April 11 – Why should we care?

Required reading: Scott (2005)

April 13 – final class discussion