



FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

**Soci401-03**

**Sociology of Homelessness**

**Winter 2017**

MWF 9:00 - 9:50 AM, in EDC287 (Education Classroom Block)

Instructor: Dr. Annette Tézli

Office: SS950

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Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM,

Thursdays 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM; and by appointment

**Course Description**

Despite economic prosperity and decades of research, extreme poverty and homelessness remain persistent features of even the most affluent societies, including Canada. Calgary, for example, is marked by great wealth and yet has to contend with a sizeable homeless population. Over the course of the semester, we will explore homelessness as a social, political, human rights, and moral issue in Canadian society. Most of us have little personal experience of or exposure to homelessness and much of our knowledge is derived from media representations, public discourses and perhaps academic research. Consequently, most of us have specific images, ideas and understandings of homelessness and “the homeless”. Those understandings we will critically examine in this course using a sociological perspective.

We will begin our discussion with an examination of the prevalence of homelessness in contemporary Canadian society followed by a discussion of the different ways of defining and measuring homelessness, which shapes who is considered homeless in our society in the first place. Employing a sociological framework, we will then critically discuss different theoretical approaches seeking to explain homelessness. However, homelessness in Canada is not randomly distributed, so we will explore which social groups are most vulnerable to experiencing homelessness. We will consider the lived experience of those affected by homelessness as well as the consequences of homelessness for the individual and society at large. We will conclude by exploring different measures to alleviate homelessness in our society, both by various levels of government as well as different NGOs. We will engage with the subject matter through various group activities, class discussions, dialogue with guest speakers and written assignments. In addition, you are required to engage in community service regularly throughout the semester.

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

- examine homelessness through a sociological lens,
- retrieve, read and discuss a collection of empirical research pertaining to homelessness,
- summarize central research findings and common controversies related to homelessness,
- critically discuss diverging explanations of homelessness,
- evaluate competing programs and policies seeking to alleviate homelessness,
- communicate effectively in writing,
- contribute to their community in a meaningful way,
- independently develop research questions and devise a research program to answer those questions, and
- educate others about homelessness.

## Course Format

I view class time as an opportunity for us to interactively engage with course material. I will enter each class period assuming that every student will be on time and has read all of the assigned texts. I will begin each class with a short lecture to cover key concepts and other pertinent information that will complement but not summarize the assigned readings. The remainder of the class will be interactive and devoted to hands-on exercises, group work, class discussions, and films. After each activity, we will reflect on insights gained through discussions and various formal and informal writing assignments.

## Required Readings and Materials

Links to all required readings are provided on D2L.

## Methods of Evaluation

### *Assignment Schedule and Outline*

Please note that all assignments have to be submitted at the beginning of class (9:00 am) on the day they are due. Any papers submitted thereafter without due cause as defined in the course outline will be considered late and penalties will apply.

Assessments		Date due	% of final grade
<b>Knowledge/Skills</b>	<b>Raising Awareness</b>		
3 Volunteer reflections		varies	35
Reading summary & discussion		varies	15
	Research topic proposal	February 10	10
	Poster outline	March 10	5
	Poster presentation	March 31	10
	Research paper	April 12	25

Assignments for this course will revolve around two core semester-long projects: your own knowledge gain and your contribution to raising public awareness for issues pertaining to homelessness. However, the two cannot be neatly separated as you must first learn about social issues yourself before you can educate others. Working on two projects simultaneously requires a high level of organization and time management on your part, valuable skills to have when entering the labor force.

### **Knowledge/Skills (50% total)**

*3 Volunteer reflection (35% - 5%, 10%, and 20% respectively)*

This course will explore the issue of homelessness through a service-learning component. All students are required to complete at least three 3-hour service engagements in the community over the course of the semester. The volunteer engagements require outside class time as all community service will take place in the evening, both during the week and on weekends. I arranged different volunteer opportunities with various service providers, such as the Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre, The Mustard Seed, Alpha House, the Calgary Dream Centre and CUPS. Time slots and a detailed description of each service provider will be provided during the first week of class and on D2L. You can sign up for all volunteer engagements on a first-come-first-served basis after the course drop deadline.

After each volunteer engagement, you will reflect on your experience volunteering and insights gained. The you will link your reflection to what you have learned about homelessness up to that point in the semester, drawing on assigned course material and additional sources. I will provide detailed feedback on each reflection and expect you to incorporate that feedback into subsequent submission. The goal of this sequenced assignment is to strengthen your analytic and writing skills throughout the semester. Reflection papers should be no longer than 4 pages. Please refer to the detailed paper guidelines and writing resources provided on D2L.

### *Reading summary & discussion (15%)*

The Conference Board of Canada identified being able to work with others, participating in projects and tasks and adaptability as key employability skills. To develop these skills further, you will work in groups of 2 to prepare a short, 10-minute reading summary during the semester. I will assign teams randomly using the D2L group formation tool after the class drop deadline. Each group will be randomly assigned a class for which to prepare a reading summary. Your team's task is to summarize the key information provided in your assigned text. Further, you will present a discussion question to the class and facilitate a 10-minute discussion in a format of your choosing (team, small group, or class discussion). You will be evaluated by me for your presentation and discussion facilitation, your team mate for your contribution to the project and the rest of the class for the quality of your presentation. For more information, please refer to the grading rubric posted on D2L.

### **Raising Awareness (50% total)**

For this project we will work together as a class to raise awareness for issues pertaining to homelessness. To that end, we will collectively work on a poster presentation that we will display publicly on campus for one day at the end of the semester. We will seek out funding to pay for materials, organize a venue to display our posters, collaborate with campus organizations, and advertise our display. In addition, you will each individually contribute to the overall project as discussed below.

### *Research topic proposal (10%)*

First, we have to decide what information will be included in the poster display. Each of you will be in charge of one particular aspect of homelessness, which will give you the opportunity to pursue a topic of special interest to you in more depth. In your topic proposal you will identify one issue pertaining to homelessness that you would like to investigate in more depth throughout the semester and provide a list of 10 research articles in your area of investigation. More detailed information and additional resources will be provided in class and on D2L.

### *Poster outline (5%)*

Based on your topic proposals, I will form groups of students working on similar topics. Together, you will produce a poster display presenting key information on your chosen research topic. I will provide some class time for groups to touch base regularly and make sure each team member's research is progressing. Together, you will develop a poster outline, which will specify what kind of information you will include in your display, and what each group member will contribute to the final product.

### *Poster presentation (10%)*

We will present our posters to the UofC community on Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. You will be evaluated on the quality of the substantive content of your poster and your presentation of its content to me and the public. Your grade will also reflect your overall contribution to the realization of this project. More detailed grading criteria and resources will be provided in class and on D2L. More detailed information will be provided in class and on D2L.

### *Research paper (30%)*

Your research paper you will be based on the existing empirical literature pertaining to your chosen topic under investigation and should be no longer than 10 pages. More information and relevant resources will be provided on D2L.

## ***Grading Scale***

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

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percent range</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>A+</b>	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
<b>A</b>	90 – 95%	4.0	Excellent-superior performance
<b>A-</b>	85 – 89%	3.7	
<b>B+</b>	80 – 84%	3.3	
<b>B</b>	75 – 79%	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance
<b>B-</b>	70 – 74%	2.7	
<b>C+</b>	67 – 69%	2.3	
<b>C</b>	63 – 66%	2.0	Satisfactory - basic understanding
<b>C-</b>	59 – 62%	1.7	
<b>D+</b>	55 – 58%	1.3	
<b>D</b>	50 – 54%	1.0	Minimal pass - marginal performance
<b>F</b>	<50%	0	unsatisfactory performance

The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

## **Emergency evacuations**

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Scurfield Hall - Atrium.

## **Course Policies**

### Technology Use

You are welcome to use your laptop/tablet in class. If you are using a laptop/tablet in class, I would kindly ask you to sit in the back of the class so that other students are not distracted. Please use your laptop/tablet for course-related purposes only (i.e. to access course presentations, take notes). Bear in mind that using your computer/tablet/phone to surf the net, shop, email, check Facebook, update your tweets, etc. is distracting to your classmates. It is also a waste of your tuition fees. Permission to use laptops/tablets may be withdrawn if they are not used appropriately. Please mute your cell phone and refrain from using it during class.

### Attendance & Participation

Regular attendance and reading the assigned material, an open mind, as well as your active and meaningful participation is required for this class to reach its fullest potential and to make it a rewarding experience for you and me. I expect you to have critically read the assigned texts prior to the session in which they will be discussed, that you are an active participant in class discussions and group exercises, and that your contributions are generally informed by the assigned reading. I expect you to be on time so that other students in the class are not interrupted by your late arrival. If you miss a class, you will miss material relevant to your success in this course. If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the covered material from one of your class mates. If you come late or need to leave class early, it is courteous to sit somewhere that will allow you to settle down or leave without disrupting others.

### E-mail

Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please send emails through D2L or from your ucalgary account. I will not answer any emails sent from personal email accounts. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line. Also, it is courteous to include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored. All other emails will be answered within one business day. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline will not be answered. Also, please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment. Please do not use e-mail as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss. Questions about the course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in person during my office hours.

### Assignments and Deferrals

It is your responsibility to complete and submit all assignments outlined in this course outline. 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 on time. All requests for a deferral of an exam or assignment 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. There are absolutely **NO EXCEPTIONS**.

Assignments submitted late (as of the beginning of class on the dates indicated in the assignment schedule) without due cause are subject to a **5 percentage points deduction** (i.e. 80% instead of 85%) for each day past the due date. Assignments not submitted within 7 calendar days of the due date without approval for extension will automatically receive a grade of 0.

Deferred Term Work Form:

Requests to defer a final paper are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. More information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

[https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred\\_termwork15\\_0.pdf](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15_0.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).

### 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. Electronic submissions via email or D2L, papers placed under the instructor's door, or those submitted to the administrative assistants in the department's main office will **NOT** be accepted.
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.

### **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 Faculty 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**

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:  
(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>).

### **Integrity in Scholarly Activity**

In addition to its regulations dealing with student academic misconduct, the University has a policy and procedures governing the scholarly integrity of members of the University's faculty and persons holding postdoctoral fellowships or their equivalent. The policy and procedures are titled Integrity in Scholarly Activity and apply to both teaching and research. For more information see: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/l.html>

### **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.

### **Student Representation**

The 2016-17 Students' Union VP Academic is Alicia Lunz; email: [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca). The Faculty of Arts has four SU representatives who may be contacted at any of the following email addresses: [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@ucalgary.ca), [arts2@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@ucalgary.ca), [arts3@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@ucalgary.ca), and [arts4@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@ucalgary.ca). You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds/role>

### **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 needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should contact Student Accessibility Services (MC 293, phone 403-220-8237) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>. Please provide academic accommodation letters to the instructor as early in the semester as possible and no later than two weeks after the course begins.

### **Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals**

If you chose to challenge a grade you received for an assignment, please refer to the UofC Calendar for more information and follow the procedures outlined therein:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>.

## Thrive Priority Support Network

Your academic success and personal well-being is important to me. Please feel free to contact me at any time you need academic or personal support and I will help you identify the appropriate resources. Please note that I am working closely with the Thrive Priority Support Network, which seeks to identify students who are facing academic challenges and provide appropriate support services early. This tool monitors this course's D2L gradebook for sudden changes in a student's academic performance and alerts academic development specialists, who will then reach out to the student to touch base. Engagement with the academic development specialist is entirely voluntary and all information is confidential. More information is provided here: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/advising/thrive>.

## 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?

### **Week 1 (January 9-13) – Introduction & Homelessness in Canada: An Overview**

#### Introduction

Required reading: Scott and Sturk (2000)

#### Homelessness in Canada

Required reading: Peressini (2009), Gaetz, Donaldson, Richter & Gulliver (2013)

### **Week 2 (January 16-20) – Defining, Measuring & Explaining Homelessness**

#### Defining & Measuring Homelessness

Required reading: Echenberg & Jensen (2008), Peressini, McDonald & Hulchanski (2009)

#### Pathways Into Homelessness

Required reading: Main (1998), Morrell-Bellai, Goering & Boydell (2000)

### **Week 3 (January 23-27) – Homelessness as a Social Problem**

#### Academic Social Problem Constructions

Required reading: Stern (1984), Pomeroy (2005)

#### Individual and Mediated Social Problem Constructions

Required reading: Remillard & Schneider (2012), Boydell, Goering & Morell-Ballai (2000)

### **Week 4 (January 30-February 3) – Homeless Populations**

#### Physical Health & Disabilities

Required reading: Frankish, Hwang & Quantz (2009), Street Health Report 2007 (2009)

#### Gendered Homelessness

Required reading: Klodawasky (2006), Wenzel, Koegel & Gelberg (2000)

### **Week 5 (February 6-10) – Homeless Populations, cont'd**

#### Mental Health

Required reading: CPHI (2009), Snow, Baker, Anderson & Martin (1986)

#### Addictions & Dual Diagnosis

Required reading: Strehlau et al. (2012), Fisher & Breakey (1991)

**Week 6 (February 13-17) – Homeless Populations, cont'd**

Parenting While Homeless

Required reading: Cosgrove & Flynn (2005), Schindler & Coley (2007)

Impact on Children

Required reading: Schinn et al. (2008), Barrow & Lawinski (2009)

**Week 7 – (February 20-24) READING BREAK, NO CLASS**

**Week 8 (February 27-March 3) – Homeless Populations, cont'd**

Youth: Pathways and Exits

Required reading: Chau & Galiuk (2009), Karabanow (2009)

Youth: Select Challenges

Required reading: Gaetz (2009), May (2014)

**Week 9 (March 6-10) – Homeless Populations, cont'd**

Immigrants & Indigenous Peoples

Required reading: Hiebert, D'Addario, Sherrell (2009), Kingfisher (2007)

Indigenous Peoples

Required reading: Culhane (2003), Menzies (2009)

**Week 10 (March 13-17) – Responses to Homelessness**

Canadian Housing Policies

Required reading: Fallis (2010), Gaetz (2010)

Calgary Committee to End Homelessness

Required reading: *Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*, McLean (2008)

**Week 11 (March 20-24) – Responses to Homelessness, cont'd**

Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness

Required Reading: *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*

The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness

Required Reading: *A Plan, Not a Dream: How to End Homelessness in 10 Years*

**Week 12 (March 27-31) - Contributing to Change Through Awareness Raising**

March 27&29 – Poster preparation (in-class)

March 31 – Poster presentation (all day)

**Week 13 (April 3-7) – The Shelter Industry**

The Shelter System

Required reading: Hurtubise, Babin & Grimard (2009), Hoffman & Coffey (2008)

Service Provision

Required reading: Armaline (2005), Sager & Stephens (2005)

**Week 14 (April 10-12) – Conclusion**

Ending Homelessness as a Social Justice Issue