

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
(<http://soci.ucalgary.ca>)

**Course Outline: Sociology 425 - Sociology of Violence**  
**Winter 2017**

**Instructor:** Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot  
**Time:** MWF, 1 – 1:50 pm  
**Classroom:** SS 541  
**Office:** SS 954  
**Contact:** Phone: 403-220-3218  
Email: [begibbsv@ucalgary.ca](mailto:begibbsv@ucalgary.ca)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment: MW, 2 – 3 pm

**Required Readings:**

Selected readings identified below on “Course Schedule” and available through D2L.

**Course Description:**

While we tend to think of violent behaviour as primarily interpersonal, and we look to the law as a means by which violent behaviour is identified, there is a range of violent behaviour that is untouched by law and is not merely interpersonal. Violent behaviour comes in many shapes and forms. As sociologists, we know that institutional and organizational contexts matters – the identification of, reaction to, and management of violence depends upon the contexts in which the behaviour occurs. We know that our responses to violence are often inconsistent: for example, we identify fighting in a hockey game as legitimate while fighting on the street is defined as assault. Those who kill in mass shootings are pursued vigorously by the law and socially condemned, while those who kill slowly through exposing workers to deadly toxins in the workplace are largely ignored. As noted by Jackman, “there is wide variation in both the frequency of occurrence and the social acceptance of the diverse acts of violence that marks social life” (2002 403).

Although we may be exposed to certain forms of violence, references to violence and threats of violence, our understanding of violence is limited by the experiences that we have had, the experiences our friends and families have had, and our media exposure. Rarely do we pay careful attention to violence that is not part of our more immediate environments. In this course, we will consider violence in its varied forms in order to gain a better understanding of how and why violent conduct occurs locally and globally.

**Course Outcomes:**

The goal of this course is to investigate the theoretical and practical underpinnings of violent behaviour broadly conceived. At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define violent behaviour;
2. Identify why the concept of violence is often nebulous;
3. Identify how individual and public institutional factors impact violent behaviour;
4. Define factors influencing institutional, state-level and interpersonal violence and provide examples of each.

**Course Schedule:** Our schedule and readings may be subject to change – changes will be announced in class.

WEEK:	DATE:	TOPIC/DESCRIPTION:	READINGS:
		<b>Part One: Introduction to Violence</b>	
1	Jan. 9, 11, <b>13</b>	<b>What is violence? Explanations and Definitions of Violence</b>	Uses of Violence - Eisner
2	Jan. 16, 18, <b>20</b>		Macro and Micro Causes of Violence – Collins Non-State Societies – Nivette
		<b>Part Two: Political and Institutional Violence</b>	
3	Jan. 23, 25, <b>27</b>	<b>How do institutional arrangements facilitate the commission of violence?</b>	Antebellum New York – Follis Prison Torture - Scalia
4	Jan. 30, Feb. 1, <b>3</b> <b>Feb. 3 – Exam #1</b>	<b>Nationalism</b>	Ethnic and Nationalist Violence - Brubaker & Laitin State and Criminal Violence - Cruz
5	Feb. 6, 8, <b>10</b>	<b>State Support</b>	Citizen Detachment – Schedler Honour-Related Killings - Grzyb
6	Feb. 13, 15, <b>17</b> <b>Feb. 13 - Discussion Summaries Due</b>	<b>Terrorism</b>	Terrorism and Social Capital - Arvanitidis et al Explaining Terrorism - Oberschall
Feb. 20-24		<b>READING WEEK: NO CLASSES</b>	
7	Feb. 27, Mar. 1, <b>3</b> <b>March 3 – Project Proposal Due</b>	<b>Intergroup Violence</b>	Group Entitlement – Claassen Contemporary Hate Crimes - King, Messner & Baller
8	March 6, 8, <b>10</b> <b>March 10 – Exam #2</b>	<b>Gender</b>	College Party Subcultures - Boyle & Walker Conversations about Violence – Hollander

WEEK:	DATE:	TOPIC/DESCRIPTION:	READINGS:
		<b>Part Three: Interpersonal Violence</b>	
9	March 13, 15, 17	<b>Explaining Interpersonal Violence</b>	Micro-Sociology of Violence – Collins SES, Subcultural Definitions and Violent Delinquency - Heimer
10	March 20, 22, 24	<b>Intent</b>	To Kill or Not to Kill? Felson & Messner Situational Action – Wikstrom & Treiber
11	March 27, 29, 31 March 27 - Discussion Summaries Due	<b>Age</b>	Violence in Later Life – Mysyuk et al Violent Youth Offenders – Richardson et al
12	April 3, 5, 7	<b>Marginalization</b>	Masculinity, Marginalization and Violence – Treadwell and Garland
13	April 10, 12 April 10 – Exam #3 April 12 - Discussion Summaries Due	<b>What to do?</b>	Public Criminology Activism – Kramer
		<b>April 21<sup>st</sup>: Term projects due by 4:30 pm</b>	

### Details about this Course:

#### 1. **Evaluation:**

Participation in class discussion is expected and is central to success in this class. Formal evaluation for this course will consist of three components: (1) in-class essay-format examinations (three exams); (2) a major project; and (3) discussion summaries.

Evaluation Summary	% of Grade
Midterm 1 (Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	15%
Midterm 2 (Mar. 10 <sup>th</sup> )	15%
Final Exam (April 10 <sup>th</sup> )	10%
Discussion summaries	30%
Term Project	30%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

- A. Midterm and final examinations:** All exams will be in class and will consist of essay questions derived from the materials presented in class and from the assigned readings. The exams are scheduled for February 3<sup>rd</sup>, March 10<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. Together these are worth 40% of your final grade (15% + 15% + 10% = 40%).
- B. Discussion Summaries:** Students are expected to write ten discussion summaries following the discussions that they have on most Fridays. In class, specific questions will be provided that are the topics of discussion for that day. Groups will be identified in advance and will vary weekly. The discussion summaries will be a reflection of your interpretation of that discussion. Your summaries of the discussion must be between 400-500 words each – unless explicit instruction is given otherwise.
- Discussion summaries for Jan. 13, 20, 27, and Feb. 10 are due **February 13<sup>th</sup>**.
- Discussion summaries for Feb. 17, Mar. 3, 17, 24 are due **March 27<sup>th</sup>**.
- Discussion summaries for March 31 and April 7 are due **April 12<sup>th</sup>**.
- The value of these 10 discussion summaries is 30%. Failing to provide ten summaries and/or failing to provide the summaries on time will result in a mark of 0, without exception. Hardcopies of your discussion summaries are expected on the due dates listed above. A 'Discussion Summary Rubric' is provided below.
- C. Term project:** Term projects will consist of an in-depth examination of a specific violence-related subject and you will have the flexibility of working to your own personal strength. What this means is that you may choose to write a term paper, create a poster, or develop a visual project. For example, you may want to examine how social capital figures into the use of violence at the interpersonal-level, or how group entitlement seemingly justifies violent action toward particular groups. Your projects must typically include a review of the literature, a theoretical examination of the topic at hand, as well as, where possible, empirical evidence. You may work individually or in groups. A 1-2 page project proposal is due March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Further information with respect to the term projects will be provided in class. Term projects are due April 21<sup>st</sup>, and are worth 30% of your final grade.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Midterm #1	February 3
<b>Discussion Summaries</b> 1 – 4 (from Jan. 13, 20, 27, Feb. 10)	February 13
<b>Project Proposal</b>	March 3
<b>Midterm #2</b>	March 10
<b>Discussion Summaries</b> 5 - 8 (from Feb. 17, Mar. 3, 17, 24)	March 27
<b>Final Exam</b>	April 10
<b>Discussion Summaries</b> 9-10 (from March 31, April 7)	April 12
<b>Term Project</b>	April 21

## 2. Grade Reappraisal

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

## 3. Percentage Conversions:

Final Percentage Score	Final Grade	Final Percentage Score	Final Grade
97-100 %	A+	70-74 %	C+
90-96 %	A	65-69 %	C
85-89 %	A-	60-64 %	C-
81-84 %	B+	55-59 %	D+
78-80 %	B	50-54 %	D
75-77 %	B-	< 49.9 %	F

## 4. Technology Use

Please note that the use of laptops, tablets, cell phones or other electronic devices is **NOT** permitted during lectures. Students who require the use of electronic devices for academic accommodation purposes are exempt from this policy, but must provide documentation from Student Accessibility Services to the instructor. Please be sure to mute your cell phone and refrain from using it during class.

## 5. Email

When contacting me over email please put your course number and section in your email's subject line, and 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 and D2L. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline or D2L 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 or as a replacement to attending lectures. 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.

## 6. Handing in Papers, Assignments

- a. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
- b. **Protection of Privacy:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.
- c. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

## 7. Ethics Research

Students are advised that any research with 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, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

## 8. 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>

## 9. Deferrals

When possible, please provide advance notice if you are unable to write an exam or complete/turn-in assignments on time. 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 the student has the health issue rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements, misreading the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment 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.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor 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 the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

**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:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/fall-2016-deferred-application-form.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

[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).

## 10. Student Representation

The 2016-17 Students’ Union VP Academic is Alicia Lunz ([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>

## 11. Emergency Evacuations

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom, please proceed to the assembly point at **Professional Faculties Food Court**. Please check these assembly point locations for all of your classes at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

## 12. 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. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.

## 13. Academic Accommodation

Students needing accommodation based on disability or medical concerns 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.

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### Discussion Summary Rubric

Each summary will be marked out of 10 points.

#### Format/Mechanics: (x/3)

- 3 Correct spelling and grammar
- 2 Some spelling and grammatical errors
- 1 Many spelling and grammatical errors
- 0 Rife with spelling and grammatical errors

#### Summarizes Question/Task: (x/2)

- 2 Addresses question(s) fully
- 1 Partially addresses question(s)
- 0 Does not address question(s)

#### Insight/Thought/Creativity: (x/5)

- 5 Outstanding: i.e. demonstrates critical thinking/insight, rich content, personal reflection
- 4 Proficient: i.e. substantial information, evidence of connections made regarding discussion
- 3 Basic: i.e. satisfactory but basic insight, adequate depth
- 2 Below expectations: i.e. information is thin and commonplace; limited insight, no depth
- 1 Below expectations: superficial attempt
- 0 Nothing going on