

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY – SOCIAL INEQUALITIES
SOC102H1F
Summer 2015
University of Toronto, St. George Campus

Course Director: Jasmin Hristov

Class Time and Location: Mon and Wed, 6-8pm, LM 159

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Office Hours: Friday 12-3pm; Room 389, Department of Sociology, 725 Spadina St.

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the discipline of sociology. The course begins with the question of what it means to think sociologically and briefly looks at the major theoretical perspectives. Throughout the rest of the course, students explore social inequality as a major field of sociological inquiry. We take a historical and global approach to look at major forces/institutions that have generated social inequality (such as colonialism, slavery, and the global economy) and major forms of social inequality that characterize our society (such as those based on race/ethnicity, gender, and class).

Learning Objectives

- 1) Understand the ways in which social inequalities have been historically produced and reinforced.
- 2) Demonstrate knowledge of key theories and concepts that seek to explain social inequalities.
- 3) Identify different manifestations of social inequalities in Canadian society and the forces that sustain them, from the micro to the macro level.
- 4) Explain the interrelatedness of racial, gender and class inequalities and how this is evident in people's lived experiences

Course Format

Lecture

The lecture will consist of an interactive presentation by the instructor. The first 10 minutes of lecture will be devoted for clarification questions and a brief review. Students are expected to engage seriously with the assigned readings before attending lecture.

Tutorials

The pedagogical approach of this course rests on the idea that learning is a collective process and thus, the classroom should be a community of learners. Tutorials are offered with the purpose of enriching your learning experience and facilitating the understanding of readings and lecture content by offering a space for discussion. Tutorial attendance is optional.

Tutorials will take place every Wednesday and are scheduled as follows:

TUT 5101A WED 5-6pm SS 1084
TUT 5101B WED 5-6pm SS 1088
TUT 5101C WED 8-9pm SS 1084
TUT 5101D WED 8-9pm SS 1088

Please note that while you are free to choose on a weekly basis which tutorial to attend, the rooms have a seating capacity of 50 people maximum. This means that if you arrive to a room that is already full, you may be asked to go next door and attend the other tutorial running at the same time.

Required Texts

- Course-pack of selected readings available online on Blackboard at NO COST for students enrolled in the course.

Video Documentaries

Documentaries shown in class form an integral part of the course material and will be covered by the test and exam.

E-mail /Online Communication

E-mail communication is for providing short answers to any clarification questions regarding the course content and/or organization and should be directed to your TA. Your emails will be responded within 48 hours. If you require help with course material, please use tutorial time to bring up these questions or arrange to see me during office hours. ***Please check Blackboard three times a week for important course announcements.***

Attendance

Regular attendance at lectures is required in order for you to do well in the course. Lectures explain ***as well as supplement*** the readings. One does not substitute for the other. If you need to miss lecture, you will not be penalized, however you should ensure that you know someone in the class from whom you can borrow lecture notes. Lecture ***power-points*** will be posted on Blackboard. Keep in mind that these ***do not contain all lecture content or explanations*** but rather constitute an outline/point-form organization of the content, including some key definitions.

Use of Electronic Devices in Class

The use of electronic devices for purposes other than note-taking / course-related work is not allowed. It inhibits learning and is also disruptive and disrespectful.

Taping / Recording / Photographing Lectures

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are the instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted. This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Blackboard materials, etc. Once obtained, such permission is only for that individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in other form without formal permission.

Talking during Lecture

Talking to your classmates during lecture (even if you are whispering) is disturbing. Please refrain from talking unless you have been invited to do so by the instructor. If you are unclear about something that was said by the instructor, please put up your hand instead of asking your classmates. This will ensure that you or your classmates do not miss anything important and fall behind during lecture.

Blackboard

Announcements, handouts, lecture power-points, and any additional learning aids will be posted here, so *please check the website at least three times a week.*

Evaluation

Type of Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
5 CRITICAL COMMENTARIES	30%	Every week starting May 20 th –see list of dates below
MID-TERM TEST	30%	JUNE 1
FINAL EXAM	40%	Held during official examination period

Weekly Critical Commentaries (CCs)

Students are required to submit every week in lecture, starting May 20, a critical commentary (2 pages double-space, 12 point font, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins all around) on any one (or more) of the assigned readings for that week (including the Mon and/or Wed).

The commentary should provide:

- **a succinct summary of what you think are the most important points from the chapter;**
- **a personal argument about / opinion of those;**
- **at the end of the commentary, a question for discussion (based on the reading) which does not have a right or wrong answer, does not ask for clarification or factual information, but instead invites us to think critically and creatively.**

Each commentary will serve as a record of your attendance and preparedness and is worth 2% of your final grade. Commentaries **can only be submitted in person in class**. You will be submitting 5 commentaries for the entire course. The total weekly submission of commentaries is worth 10%. The content quality of these will be evaluated cumulatively at the end of the course and is worth an additional 20% (for a total of 30% of the final grade). Only the first commentary will be returned to students with feedback.

Critical Commentaries will be evaluated based on:

- Coverage of material
- Application of concepts to everyday reality
- Clarity / style
- Discussion question degree of creativity

Critical Commentaries submission dates are as follows:

CC 1 due May 20
CC 2 due May 25 or May 27
CC 3 due June 3
CC 4 due June 8 or June 10
CC 5 due June 15 or June 17

Policy on Disputing Term Test Grades

If you disagree with the grade you were given on your test, you must present your argument in writing and schedule a meeting with your TA **within two weeks** after the test was returned. Your letter must take into consideration the answers that were taken-up in class as well as the comments you received on the test and explain why despite of these, you are still convinced that your grade should have been higher.

Policy on Missed Test and/or Critical Commentaries

Students who miss a test will receive a mark of zero.

If you miss a test or an assignment deadline, do not contact the instructor or a TA unless you have followed the steps described below. Telling the professor or TA why you missed a deadline or a test will not be considered.

Students who miss a test for legitimate reasons will be given the opportunity to write a make-up test if **within three days** they provide the instructor with a written request for special consideration which explains why the test was missed, **accompanied by proper documentation from a physician or college registrar**. A request should be accompanied by contact information (the student's telephone number and email address) so the date, time and place of the make-up test can be communicated to the student. **In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed *Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form* (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca).** A doctor's note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her. If a personal or

family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar. The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her.

If you are unable to submit a CC on time for a legitimate reason, please provide the instructor with the above documentation. She will then communicate with the TA to accept a late submission from you. Note that a proper documentation entitles you to a late submission of a commentary, but not to miss a commentary altogether. Failure to submit a commentary will lead to losing 2% for submission and it will also affect to some extent the quality of content grade that you will receive at the end.

Accessibility Needs

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978-8060 or visit:

<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the U of T. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your U of T degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. ***You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document.*** Potential offences include but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
 - lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone;
- Looking at someone else's answers;
- Letting someone else look at your answers;

- Misrepresenting your identity;
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

**Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND COURSE WORK

PART I: THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF STRUCTURES OF INEQUALITY: THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

MAY 11 Introduction

- Introduction to course objectives, expectations, organization and analytical framework.
- Mills, C.W. (1959). *The Promise*. In *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.3-9.

MAY 13 Why Sociology? Questions and Perspectives

- Brym, R. (2008). Introduction to Sociology. In *New Society* 5th ed. Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd., pp.2-18.
- Tutorials Held

MAY 18 HOLIDAY

MAY 20 Social Stratification

- Brym, R. (2013). Social Stratification. In *Sociology: My Compass for a New World*. Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd., pp.201-207.
- Tutorials Held

May 25 Theorizing Class Inequality

- Mooers, C. (2014). The Birth of the Liberal Subject: Commodities, Money, and Citizenship. In *Imperial Subjects: Citizenship in an Age of Crisis and Empire*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, Inc., pp. 17-27 and 36-41.

MAY 27 Colonialism, Slavery, and Racism

- McNally, D. (2002). The Colour of Money: Race, Gender, and the Many Oppressions of Global Capital. In *Another World is Possible*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, pp. 105-128.
- Tutorials Held

JUNE 1 MID-TERM TEST IN CLASS

PART II: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL INEQUALITY

JUNE 3 Neoliberalism and the Transnational Capitalist Class

- George, S. (1999). A Short History of Neoliberalism: Twenty Years of Elite Economics and Emerging Opportunities for Structural Change. Conference on Economic Sovereignty in a Globalising World. Bangkok, 24-26 March, 1999.
- Robinson, W. (2003). The Dialectics of Globalization and Development. In *Transnational Conflicts: Central America, Social Change and Globalization*. London: Verso, pp. 13-17.
- No Tutorials Held

JUNE 8 Neoliberalism and the Global Working Class

- McNally, D. (2011). Debt, Discipline and Dispossession: Race, Class and the Global Slump. In *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, pp. 113-145.

PART III: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN CANADA AND U.S.

JUNE 10 Poverty

- Silver, J. (2012). Persistent Poverty in Canada. In Samuelson, L. and Antony, W. (Eds.). *Power and Resistance: Critical Thinking about Canadian Social Issues*. Toronto: Fernwood Publishing.
- Brym, R. (2013). Social Stratification. In *Sociology: My Compass for a New World*. Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd., pp.192-199.
- Tutorials Held

JUNE 15 Race and Ethnicity

- Brym, R. (2015). Race and Ethnicity. In *Soc+ 2nd Ed.* Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd., pp. 138-160.
- Brym, R. (2015). Hurricane Katrina and the Myth of Natural Disasters. *Sociology as a Life or Death Issue*. Nelson Education, pp. 53-75.

JUNE 17 Racial, Class, and Gender Inequalities: Intersectionality Theory

- Hill Collins, P. (1993). Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection. *Race, Sex and Class* 1(1): 25-45.
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (2014). Progress on Women's Rights: Missing in Action – A Shadow Report on Canada's Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, pp.8-20.
- Tutorials held