

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
Department of Sociology  
Status Attainment and Social Mobility

Sociology 304H1S Winter, 2013  
Lectures: M 2-4 Room: SS 2117  
Tutorials: **One of M 12:00-1:00 FE 36 & M4:30-5:30 FE 36**  
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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social mobility continues to be the subject of political debate and educational / social policy. The course shows how "getting ahead" or becoming "downwardly mobile" are affected by social and demographic as well as economic and psychological factors. Students should plan to attend and be active participants in one of the two weekly tutorial sessions. These will help students to engage in active learning.

Starting with Malcom Gladwell's book, *Outliers: The Story of Success*, we examine cases where individuals have achieved great success. Expanding on Gladwell's perspectives we link individual and family opportunities/risks for upward and downward mobility to larger scale social change, including forced population movements and "ethnic cleansing". Special topics include: The fit between IQ and education and between education and career success; status inheritance: the mobility table, regression analysis and the life history as approaches to studying status attainment; Historical trends and international comparisons; Extreme demographic situations; Migration and settlement; Representations of social mobility in novels; Filtering and sponsoring roles of education / training; Human capital and social or cultural capital; Career mobility in formal organizations and the professions; How sociologists investigate popular representation such as the "glass ceiling" or "it's not what you know, it's who you know".

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The prerequisite to take SOC304H1, is a 200 or higher SOC course. Students without this requirement will be removed at any time discovered.

## REQUIRED TEXT & ONLINE READING MATERIALS

### Required

Gladwell, Malcom. *Outliers: The Story of Success*. Little, Brown. 2008. Various required journal articles are available online to U of T e-Resources via embedded links in this course outline.

See also various documents, including articles from the *New Yorker*, posted on Gladwell's web page <http://www.gladwell.com/index.html>

Recommended but not required

Katz, Michael B. and Stern, Mark J. *One Nation Divisible: What America was and what it is becoming*. 2006. Russell Sage Foundation. An excellent historical treatment.

Feigelman, William and Yih-Jin Young. *Hands-On Sociology*. 2006. Third or later edition. Pearson Education Inc. US oriented. See especially chapter 8.

#### Internet Access to Readings

Many course readings are journal articles that can be accessed via the U of T library system if you are logged in with your U of T identifier. The “simplelink” identifiers have been provided in this course outline.

Some other publications or serials can be accessed by anyone. This is called “Open Access”. For example articles, from Canadian Public Policy, Canadian Studies in Population and Demographic Research are available through DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals

<http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=openurl&issn=03801489&genre=journal>

There are useful articles in *Canadian Social Trends* and *The Daily*. These are published by Statistics Canada and are freely available via the internet. They can be located by standard search engines.

#### COURSE GOALS

After completing this course, students should be able to:

Explain sociological concepts such as Ascription, Achievement, Human Capital, Social Capital, Social Class and the Matthew Effect.

Understand how change from rural to industrial society generates individual and family mobility while individual social mobility also generates changes in the shape of the social stratification system.

Describe how ideas about the possibility and desirability of individual, family and group achievement (upward and downward mobility) have changed over the centuries.

Understand how social institutions such as the educational system have reduced but by no means eliminated the degree to which social origins affect achieved statuses.

Take a scholarly view of the processes by which social stratification takes place in our own and other societies.

#### RESEARCH COMPONENT (For final Paper)

Family history / occupational genealogies in a way that’s broadly similar to the research of Louise Farkas as summarized in Gladwell, pp.151-5 but also includes the scoring of occupations according to one or more of the schemes that have been proposed by sociologists. See Family Occupational Genealogy Project towards the end of this outline.

OR

Data analysis assignment on income and other differences between various social groups as shown in recent Census data. Students may use either of two web based applications: SDA or Beyond 2020. SDA can perform simple analysis of data from survey and census

data in the U of T data library at [www.chass.utoronto.ca/datalib](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/datalib) and is very well documented online as well as in the optional text by Feigelman and Young. Beyond 2020 is more difficult to use. It is an internet application that can manipulate Census tables made available by Statistics Canada in such a way as to display unequal outcomes between different social groups (e.g. visible minority groups). These techniques will be demonstrated in tutorials. Further details will be available on the Blackboard site.

## REQUIREMENTS, GRADING & DUE DATES

Multiple choice test: 20% and Short answer test: 20%

Both on Monday February 25<sup>th</sup> (as Midterm).

Outline for proposed research project: 15%: Friday February 15<sup>th</sup> (one page).

Final paper for research project or essay: 45%: Friday April 5<sup>th</sup> (15 pages)

Total 100%

See FAS Calendar for last day to drop courses with S section codes from academic record

One-page outline of your research project.

An outline indicates your research question, how it relates to the concepts and previous research in the discipline, and what data you will use in order to address that research question. In other words you need to state one or more sociological hypotheses and then show how these will be illustrated (or perhaps disconfirmed) by empirical data.

Your outline should have a title. Bear in mind that your eventual report will have sections with headings such as: Introduction; Sociological Literature; Methods and Data; Results; Discussion; Conclusion. References.

Your outline should give sufficient information that the instructor can form a judgment as to whether or not your proposal is feasible. You only have one page for this outline.

Write in complete sentences and break up your text into paragraphs.

## COURSE OUTLINE

1. Monday January 7 - Introduction to the course - What do you already know about status attainment and social mobility? What more do you want to know about it? What are politicians currently saying about it – and why? How have our current assumptions evolved from ideas debated in the English Civil War (1642-51), and the American (1776) French (1789, 1848) and Russian (1917) Revolutions?

*The Economist* (2002) “How the Elite has Changed [in Britain]”. December 7, 2002.

2. Monday January 14 - The cumulation of advantage in life (sport and other activities) Repeated practice and the “Matthew Effect”.

Gladwell. Chap. 1. The Matthew Effect: the cumulation of advantage.

Bedard, Kelly and Elizabeth Dhuey. "The Persistence of Early Childhood Maturity: International Evidence of Long-Run Age Effects." *The quarterly journal of economics* 121.4 (2006):1437-1472.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84594>

Human Capital as Repeated Practice: the Ten Thousand Hour Rule

Gladwell. Chap. 2. The 10,000 Hour Rule: acquiring high levels of skill through long hours of practice.

Ericsson, K. Anders; Krampe, Ralf Th.; Tesch-Romer, Clemens; "The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance." *Psychological review* 100.3 (1993):363-406.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84596>

### 3. Monday January 21 – Selection via Objective Tests

IQ and other standardized tests (SAT) as a means of allocating subsequent educational and occupational positions. Most of us in this class have done well out of the existing formal educational system. Are there other ways to allocate university places? Are there neighbourhood effects (“postcode lotteries”?) Can early childhood education programs increase social mobility?

Gladwell. Chapters 3 and 4. Chap. 3. The Trouble with Geniuses: part 1: limitations of IQ as a predictor: convergent and divergent thinking styles, etc.

Chap. 4. The Trouble with Geniuses: part 2.

### 4. Monday January 28 – Historical Context

Larger Scale Forces: Repression, forced population movements, ethnic cleansing  
There is a good book by Elliott Jaspin, *Buried in the Bitter Waters*. A podcast by the author is available on the Blackboard site. The book by Katz and Stern provides useful historical background.

Here are some reviews of Jaspin’s book

Tanner, Lou. "Buried in the Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America." *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 84.4 (2008):264. This is a brief review of Jaspin’s book.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84629>

Arnesen, Eric. "Buried in the Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America." *The Christian Century* 124.19 (2007):45-48.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84630>

Weinberg, Steve. "CAR pioneer uses data, news archives to trace racial cleansing in U.S. counties." Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. *The IRE Journal* 30.3 (2007):36-36.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84631>

“When Money Dies: Brother, Can you Spare a Million Marks”. *Atlantic Monthly* article summarizing Adam Ferguson’s 1975 book about Hyperinflation in 1923 Germany.

\*\* Use this opportunity to find out more about your family’s multigenerational history of occupational mobility / status attainment.

### 5. Monday February 4 - "Status Attainment": a metaphor and a model of the life course: socioeconomic and prestige scales for occupations

Boyd, Monica. "A Socioeconomic Scale for Canada: Measuring Occupational Status from the Census." *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 45.1 (2008):51-91.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84640>

Nam, Charles B.; Boyd, Monica. "Occupational Status in 2000 -- Over a Century of Census-Based Measurement." *Population Research and Policy Review* 23.4 (2004):327-358.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84639>

Tyree, Andrea et al. "The Dickensian Occupational Structure". *Sociological inquiry* 41.1 (1971):95-106.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84686>

Optional Reading:

Feigelman and Young, *Hands on Sociology*. Chapter 8, Social Stratification & Social Mobility.

Katz and Stern *One Nation Divisible: What America was and what it is becoming*.

6. Monday February 11 Documenting difference

Are different outcomes proof of discrimination? What is? Should provincial licensing authorities recognize all foreign diplomas as equivalent to those earned in Canada?

Boyd, Monica. "At a disadvantage: the occupational attainments of foreign born women in Canada." *The International Migration Review*; IMR 18.4 (1984):1091-1119.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84641>

Boyd, Monica. "Skilled Immigrant Labour: Country of Origin and the Occupational Locations of Male Engineers." *Canadian Studies in Population* 29.1 (2002):71-99.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84643>

7. Friday February 15: - DUE: Short (one page) description of final paper topic and/or research question. If have not yet chosen a single topic, you may describe two topics that you are considering (max: one page each).

Monday February 18: No class: Reading Week

Monday February 25: Mid-term test in class (on topics up to & including previous week's material)

8. Monday March 4 – Professional Careers of ethnic minorities and women.

Gladwell, Chap. 5. The three lessons of Joe Flom: Jews in the legal profession.

Kay, Fiona M. "The Persistent Glass Ceiling: Gendered Inequalities in the Earnings of Lawyers." *The British journal of sociology* 46.2 (1995):279-310.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84593>

Stewart, Penni; Ornstein, Michael; Drakich, Janice. "Gender and Promotion at Canadian Universities." *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 46.1 (2009):59-85.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84648>

9. Monday March 11 - Downward Mobility in the American Middle Class: downsizing, divorce and other contemporary hazards.

There is a good book by Newman, Katherine. *Falling From Grace: the experience of downward mobility in the American middle class*. Vintage Books. 1989. ISBN 0-679-72397-8 <http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84581>

Newman, Katherine S. "Bookfinds: Executives Who Don't Belong Anywhere." *Sales and Marketing Management* 140.13 (1988):26.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84584>

Finnie, Ross. "Women, Men, and the Economic Consequences of Divorce: Evidence from Canadian Longitudinal Data." *The Canadian review of sociology and anthropology* 30.2 (1993):205-241.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84588>

10. Monday March 18. Affirmative Action in Education: case studies under communism.

Kreidl, Martin. "Politics and Secondary School Tracking in Socialist Czechoslovakia, 1948-1989." *European Sociological Review* 20.2 (2004):123-139.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84636>

Deng, Zhong; Treiman, Donald. "The Impact of the Cultural Revolution on Trends in Educational Attainment in the People's Republic of China." *The American journal of sociology* 103.2 (1997):391-428.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84655>

11. Monday March 25 – Social Networks, social capital and social mobility.

Social Mobility via Social Networks: mentoring, nepotism, the old school tie, patronage, cronyism, strong ties, weak ties and other plausible stories. Volunteering and social / civic involvement as "Social Capital: Facebook and LinkedIn.

Lin, Nan. "Social Networks and Status Attainment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25(1999):467-487.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84591>

Solon, Gary et al. "Correlations between neighboring children in their subsequent educational attainment." *The review of economics and statistics* 82.3 (2000):383.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84633>

12. Monday April 1 - What can we learn from international comparisons?

Final paper for research project or essay: Review and Wrap-up.

Gladwell, Chap. 8: Rice Paddies and Math Tests: persistence, perseverance and “national character” (refurbishment of an old idea) now seen by some as shaped by rice culture or other means of living.

Hanley, Eric; Treiman, Donald. "Recruitment into the Eastern European Communist Elite: Dual Career Paths." *Research in social stratification and mobility* 23(2005):35-66.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84665>

Lu, Yao; Treiman, Donald. "The Effect of Sibship Size on Educational Attainment in China: Period Variations." *American Sociological Review* 73.5 (2008):813-834.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/84676>

Last day of classes is Friday April 5<sup>th</sup>. The final assignment is due on that day.

## COURSE POLICIES

Students must use Blackboard. They are encouraged to use e-Resources of the U of T Library system, including Refworks. Course Web Site: The course website prepared on the Blackboard system will contain the course syllabus, all handouts, links of interest, and course announcements. Students are responsible for the content of all course materials and for checking their official utoronto.ca email addresses regularly.

Discussion boards will be enabled on the course web site. All students using these boards are expected to behave respectfully towards their classmates and towards the professor and TA on these boards.

Some U of T resources are only available to users identified as coming from a U of T server. If you are off-campus you may have to identify yourself with your UTORID and password ID, using MYACCESS. Other resources are available to anyone. Students should consider looking for the Directory of Open Access Journals and for the Directory of Open Access Repositories. For example all articles, from the Canadian Journal of Population are available at DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals  
<http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=openurl&issn=03801489&genre=journal>

Students may wish to consider using downloading and using the Open Office suite of programs (a free, though not entirely compatible, version of Microsoft Office).

If health issues or serious personal circumstances mean that students require an accommodation for missed or late term work they must submit the U of T Medical Certificate, the U of T Health Service Form or a letter from their College Registrar. Students who miss tests will be assigned a mark of 0 unless they provide appropriate documentation.

In preparation for the possibility of an academic disruption caused by flu or some other event all students should update their contact information on ROSI and any other relevant system. They should also make sure that they have access to the following:

Contact information of one or two other students in the course

A computer that is not in a U of T lab – for example, in a residence room or at home, UToronto email (not forwarded!!), Blackboard courses, online library resources:

Information on campus health services and pandemic information

Clear writing is important to all of us. I recommend that all students take advantage of writing workshops made available by the Faculty of Arts and Science, through the library or by their college. The website "Writing at the University of Toronto" has moved to [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca)

Attendance:

Attendance at the weekly lecture and at ONE of the two tutorial sessions in FE 36 is required. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class on a given day are responsible for obtaining from their classmates notes on all material covered, as well as information regarding any administrative announcements that may have been made.

Preparation and Participation

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings in advance of the class period for which they are assigned, and to attend class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. However we will not be assigning formal credit in the grading scheme to class participation including preparation, contributions to in-class discussions, and in-class group work participation. It is likely that students who participate will also learn a lot and will therefore obtain higher marks.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism occurs when one person presents as one's own the words or ideas of another. This includes quoting sources, paraphrasing, or summarizing source materials without indicating through the use of proper citation methods that the specific material in question was quoted, paraphrased, or summarized from that source. All suspected instances of plagiarism, without exception will be reported to the university for investigation and appropriate handling.

Turning in an old paper of one's own, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second course, is also considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity. See section B.I.1.(e) of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

Use of Turnitin.com

To deter and detect plagiarism, this course will make use of the turnitin.com system. In addition to submitting a hard copy of the research proposal in class on the due date, each

student must upload the proposal to Turnitin.com. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to textual similarity review to detect plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

The unique course identification number for this course will be made available on the Blackboard Site. A 1-page document that provides the basic steps for students to set up their own accounts and submit papers is available on the following U of T web site <http://www.utoronto.ca/ota/turnitin/TurnitinGuideForStudents.pdf>.

Turnitin also incorporates a reliable means of submitting assignments electronically. Where possible, however, we also require hard copies of all assignments.

#### Reading Response

Students should write out brief speaking notes as their responses to course readings and should be prepared to present these in tutorials. These responses should not summarize the readings, but rather engage the ideas they present.

#### Submitting Assignments

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on due date provided. Except in the event of a declared academic disruption all assignments must be submitted in hard copy. If an academic disruption has been declared then assignments should be submitted to the instructor electronically. Turnitin incorporates a reliable means of accepting assignments electronically. Late papers will be penalized 10% for the first week and 5% per day thereafter. Late reading responses will not be accepted. Answers or essays which receive high marks are well-written, sociologically informed and take a scholarly view of the issues being discussed. In support of the U of T Double-Sided Printing Initiative I am happy to accept essays and other assignments that are printed double-sided.

#### Missed Tests

Students who miss tests will be assigned a mark of 0 unless they provide appropriate documentation. Students with excused absences will have the weighted mean of their two other tests used as the mark for the missed test. Students missing more than one test will write one cumulative makeup test covering material from both missed tests.

#### Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

#### Use of Writing Labs:

All students are encouraged to use their available writing labs. Writing tutors provide help you to think through your ideas, develop a thesis, organize your paper, present your

evidence effectively, argue logically, and express yourself more clearly and concisely. Proofreading and copyediting for spelling, grammar, or format are not within the primary scope of the writing labs' services.

#### Family Occupational Genealogy Project

Give a sociologically informed account of the vertical and horizontal mobility of your family and its members over as many generations as you can. For the assignment on evidence of status attainment and social mobility in your family tree, report on whatever strikes you as relevant but particularly upon:

- \* What were the main activities or jobs which occupied each of the men and women in your family tree. How do your family's past occupations score on status scales?
- \* Geographical migration: how and why it came about?
- \* Common-law relationships, marriages or remarriages. Which were within and which were across social divisions such as ethnicity, nationality, religion or social class?
- \* What serious accidents or diseases befell the men and women in your family tree?
- \* What principles were evident in mate-selection, inheritance and succession?
- \* What evidence of social barriers (discrimination on bases other than experience or ability) exists in your family tree?

You might decide to reflect upon how the succession of generations worked out in your own family tree, as well as how historical events intersected with personal biographies. It is really important to apply concepts from this course to the interpretive part of your narrative.

Collect oral histories but collect documentary evidence (e.g. certificates of birth, death, marriage) if that is possible within the short time available. Use family gatherings (Thanksgiving) as well as letters, review of family albums etc., in order to collect data. Be aware of privacy issues and use pseudonyms where it appears desirable to protect the identities of family members. You may wish to use encryption routines in order to protect confidential information stored on a computer or transmitted by email. See UT's data security and encryption standards available at:

<http://www.research.utoronto.ca/ethics/pdf/human/nonspecific/datasecurity.pdf>

[http://www.utoronto.ca/security/UTORprotect/encryption\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.utoronto.ca/security/UTORprotect/encryption_guidelines.htm)

Students who wish to create a 5-minute Utube presentation of the highlights of their project are encouraged to do so. See <http://www.utube.com>. This is optional: not required.