

SOC351H1F: New Topics in Sociology
Gender Inequality in the Knowledge Economy
University of Toronto
Fall 2021

Instructor: Catherine Yeh

Email: catherine.yeh@mail.utoronto.ca

Class Time & Location: Mondays 12:10-3pm at SS1088

Office Hours: Mondays 10am-11am on Zoom (meeting password: soc351)

TA: Jaime Nikolaou

Email: j.nikolaou@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: TBA throughout the term

*Please email the TA or the instructor directly, **not** through Quercus

Course Description and Objectives

Despite increased awareness of gender issues in the workplace and workplace diversity initiatives, gender inequality in the workplace remains. This course situates this ongoing discussion of why gender inequality persists in our current “knowledge-based” economy. We begin the course by discussing what a “knowledge economy” means and examining how this type of economy has transformed the way people work. After establishing how work is organized in a knowledge economy, we then introduce theories of gender and work to engage in a critical discussion of why gender inequality persists in this new kind of work culture. Then, we discuss the consequences gender inequality for knowledge production and evaluate potential solutions.

In this course, you will:

- Gain familiarity with some of the key questions regarding gender and work in the new knowledge economy such as: How does workplace culture reproduce gender inequality? Is flexible work good for women? How does workplace diversity shape the production of knowledge?
- Develop important reading and writing skills (i.e. developing an argument, analysing, and synthesizing).

- Begin to think critically about how the cultural norms and practices of the “new knowledge economy” reproduce gender inequality.

Prerequisites

The prerequisites for this course are: SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 plus two of the following (1.0 FCE): SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1.

Students without these prerequisites will be removed at any time they are discovered.

Important Information on the First Two Weeks

Per A&S policy, students will be allowed to attend the first two weeks of class online. To make it simpler for everyone, our class will only meet online for the first two weeks on Zoom. I will provide the Zoom link in an announcement/email. To protect the privacy of all students, these classes will not be recorded.

Course Assignments

- 5% - 10 Discussion Board Posts – worth 0.5% each
- 20% - 10 Reflection Questions – worth 2% each
- 25% - Essay 1 (1000-1200 words) due Sunday October 17th 11:59pm
- 20% - Essay 2 (1000-1200 words) due Sunday November 7th 11:59pm
- 30% - *Lean In* Book Review Essay (1200-1500 words) due Friday December 10th 11:59pm

Discussion Board Posts

Due before each class on Sundays 11:59pm

I will be posting a set of questions on a Quercus discussion board every week. You will select **one** of the questions and write a response of about 100-150 words. These questions are designed to prepare you for class discussion. Even though you are asked to respond to only one question, it will be worth thinking about the other questions as well.

Reflection Questions

Due after each class on Mondays 11:59pm

During class each week, I will release **one** reflection question. You will write a 200-word response to that question. You will be given time during class to discuss the question and write. However, you will have until midnight to submit your response if you need.

Essay 1

Due Sunday October 17th 11:59pm

Instructions will be provided during class.

Essay 2

Due Sunday November 7th 11:59pm

Instructions will be provided during class.

Lean In Book Review

Due Friday December 10th 11:59pm

More instructions will be provided later in the term but here is some important information.

At the end of the term, you will be asked to write a 1200-1500 scholarly book review of the popular book *Lean In* by Sheryl Sandberg. In your review, you will be asked to evaluate the merits of Sandberg's argument using concepts and materials from our class. We will use Week 8 of our class as a check-in, but you are encouraged to start reading *Lean In* on your own time.

When borrowing or buying *Lean In*, I would suggest that you get the original version (see citation information below). There is also a newer version called *Lean In: For Graduates*. You may find this version interesting for personal reasons and you are welcome to get that version instead; the only difference is that it contains a few extra chapters. If you have *Lean In: For Graduates*, please come talk to me about which chapters you should focus on for our class.

Original version of *Lean In*:

Sandberg, Sheryl. 2013. *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

New version "for graduates:

Sandberg, Sheryl. 2014. *Lean In: For Graduates*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Late Assignments

Late Assignment Penalty

Unless submitted with proper documentation (see section below for the proper procedure), late papers will incur a 5% penalty for each day it is late. The highest possible grade for a paper submitted a day late would be 95%, 90% for papers 2 days late, 85% for papers 3 days late, etc. Papers submitted after 7 days (without an approved extension) will not be accepted.

48-hour Life Happens Policy

Life happens. You will be given one 48-hour "life happens" extension this term. If you want to utilize this policy, please email the instructor.

Procedure for Late Submissions

1. If you miss assignments for **medical reasons**, you do not need to submit the usual documentation (i.e. medical notes or verification of illness forms). Instead, please email the instructor AND declare you absence on ACORN.
2. If you miss assignments for **non-medical reasons** (i.e. family or personal reasons), you will need to have your college registrar contact the instructor by email.

Email Policy

Both the instructor and TA will reserve a 48-hour rule when it comes to email. We aim to answer emails from students on weekdays within 48 hours, with the exception of weekends and holidays. When communicating via email to the instructor or the TA, please put "SOC351" in the subject line and use your official UofT email. Please be clear, polite, and succinct in your emails. Emails are meant for **quick communication and simple questions**. If you would like to discuss an assignment, please come to office hours.

Office Hours

All instructor and TA office hours will be held virtually. There will be a recurring Zoom link for instructor hours and the TA will post information of their office hours on Quercus. If you can, please email us before you plan on coming to office hours so we can allocate the time appropriately if there are multiple students.

Before each assignment is due, there will also be class time dedicated to assignment Q&A. If you would like to meet outside of scheduled office hours times, please contact the instructor.

Regrading Policy

Instructors and TAs do our best to grade fairly, consistently, and accurately. Nevertheless, mistakes can sometimes happen.

- For simple mathematical errors, simply alert your TA of the mistake

For substantive appeals, please adhere to the following policies:

- You must contact the TA to start a substantive appeal. Please **wait for 24 hours** after the assignment has been returned to the class and submit your request **within two weeks of that date**. Requests submitted outside of this time frame will not be considered.
- In your email to the TA, you should include a memo that contains specific reasons to justify the request and backs up these reasons with evidence from your assignment. Explain your justification and reasoning clearly and please be polite to your TA.
- If the student is not satisfied with this re-evaluation, they may appeal to the course instructor in charge of the course. When appealing to the course instructor, please also include your communications with the TA.
- Please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up.

Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Plagiarism

Be careful to avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the "Code of Behavior on Academic Matters"). If you are using someone else's ideas, do not present them as your own. Give proper references if you are using somebody else's ideas, and use quotation marks if you are quoting. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference -- you are not going to be punished for that. Please also be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred off to the Office of Academic Integrity. Here are some tips for avoiding plagiarism: <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/>

You can find the University of Toronto *Code of Behavior on Academic Matters* here: <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>

Accessibility Needs

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/> as soon as possible. Students must make needed and appropriate arrangements at the beginning of the semester and obtain proper documentation. This documentation must be provided to the instructor at the beginning of the semester

There are no tests/exams in this class. However, you should contact Accommodated Testing Services <https://ism.utoronto.ca/ats/> whenever necessary.

Class Schedule and Readings

*All articles posted on Quercus, book chapters can be found online through the library

*Students are to acquire their own copy of *Lean In*. If you run into issues, please contact me.

	Date	Lecture Topic and Assigned Readings
1	09/13	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wynn, Allison T. 2019. "Why Tech's Approach to Fixing Its Gender Inequality Isn't Working". HBR. https://hbr.org/2019/10/why-techs-approach-to-fixing-its-gender-inequality-isnt-working
2	09/20	What is the "new" knowledge economy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosenblat, Alex. 2019. <i>Uberland</i>. Oakland: University of California Press. Introduction, Chapter 1, 3, 6 (available online at UofT library)
3	09/27	Gender and Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." <i>Gender & Society</i> 4(2):139-58. Williams, Christine L., Chandra Muller, and Kristine Kilanski. 2012. "Gendered Organizations in the New Economy." <i>Gender & Society</i> 26(4):549-73.
4	10/04	Doing what you love? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neely, Megan Tobias. 2020. "The Portfolio Ideal Worker: Insecurity and Inequality in the New Economy." <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> 43:271-296. Listen to podcast: https://www.thedigradio.com/podcast/work-wont-love-you-back-with-sarah-jaffe/
5	10/11	HAPPY THANKSGIVING! (NO CLASS)
Essay 1 Due Sunday October 17th 11:59pm		
6	10/18	Parenting in the New Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooper, Marianne. 2000. "Being the 'Go-To' Guy: Fatherhood, Masculinity, and the Organization of Work in Silicon Valley." <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> 23(4):379-405. Hochschild, Arlie R. 1989. <i>The Second Shift</i>. New York: Penguin Books. Chapter 1-2(available through Hathi Trust at the UofT library)
7	10/25	Workplace Flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wynn, Alison T. and Aliya Hamid Rao. 2019. "Failures of Flexibility: How Perceived Control Motivates the Individualization of Work-Life Conflict." <i>ILR Review</i> 73(1):61-90. Blair-Loy, Mary. 2009. "Work Without End?: Scheduling Flexibility and Work-to-Family Conflict Among Stockbrokers." <i>Work and Occupations</i> 36(4):279-317.
8	11/01	Preliminary Reflections on Lean In <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read at least 5 chapters of <i>Lean In</i>.
Essay 2 Due Sunday November 7th 11:59pm		

	Date	Lecture Topic and Assigned Readings
Fall Drop Date: November 8th		
	11/08	HAPPY READING WEEK! (NO CLASS)
9	11/15	Gender and Artificial Intelligence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noble, Safiya Umoja. 2018. Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism. New York: New York University Press. Introduction, Chapter 2 (available online at the UofT library) Rosenblat, Alex. 2019. Uberland. Oakland: University of California Press. Chapter 5 (available online at the UofT library)
10	11/22	Gender and Race in the Knowledge Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alegria, Sharla. 2019. "Glass escalator or step stool? Gendered labor and token processes in tech work." <i>Gender and Society</i> 33(5):722-745. Vu, Viet, Creig Lamb, and Asher Zafar. 2019. "Who are Canada's Tech Workers?" Brookfield Institute. https://brookfieldinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-Tech-Workers-ONLINE.pdf
11	11/29	Policies for Addressing Gender Inequality in Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dobbin, Frank and Alexandra Kalev. 2016. "Why Diversity Programs Fail." HBR. https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail Castilla, Emilio J. 2008. "Gender, Race, and Meritocracy in Organizational Careers." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 113(6):1479-1526.
12	12/06	Can women have it all? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mickey, Ethel L. 2018. "'Eat, Pray, Love' Bullshit": Women's Empowerment through Wellness at an Elite Professional Conference." <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i> 48(1):103-127. Stainback, Kevin, Sibyl Kleiner, and Sheryl Skaggs. 2015. "Women in Power: Undoing or Redoing the Gendered Organization." <i>Gender and Society</i> 30(1):109-135.
Lean In Book Review Due Friday December 10th 11:59pm		