

SOCI 361 / Social Inequality

Class Time and Room: MWF 11-12 @ ANSO 207

Lecturer: neil.armitage@ubc.ca

Office Hours: Wednesday 12 – 1 PM in ANSO 123
and Wednesday 2 - 4 pm in IKB.

TA – teala.volkamer@alumni.ubc.ca.

Office Hours: TBA

I would like to acknowledge that our learning on this course takes place on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Musqueam People, where learning and the sharing of knowledge has taken place for millennia.

Course Summary

This course offers an in-depth exploration into the multiple ways that social inequality manifests itself and the consequences thereof on individuals, groups and society. It will cover theories of social inequality relating to class, gender and race. This framework will be used to explore social inequality in education, work, family, health, etc. in Canada and other societies. Through discussing cases from different regional, national and international contexts, the course will also critically explore comparative welfare and public policy ideologies and approaches to social inequality.

The lectures, discussions and assignments will equip you with an understanding of various conceptual models which will help you understand social inequality and different approaches to tackling it. The skills and knowledge developed from this course will be useful to your further studies and your future professional lives.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Critically analyse the various manifestations and consequences of social inequality in society
2. Define, compare and contrast sociological perspectives and theories of social inequality
3. Identify how social inequality is approached and tackled in different socio-cultural contexts
4. Apply theoretical knowledge to case study material
5. Develop academic research and writing skills
6. Produce an infographic
7. Consider how the study of social inequality is shaped by the political economy

Course Materials & Work Load

Book: Understanding Social Inequality – 3rd Edition (McMullin & Curtis 2017)

All the other required readings in the *Course Outline* (p.3-5) below can be accessed free of charge from the library website or from other websites, otherwise they will be made available on Canvas via Selected Readings. Aim to complete the readings BEFORE class as this will make for more enriching discussions and learning.

To succeed on the course you will need to allocate at least two hours per week to complete the required readings and be prepared for class.

Course and Weekly Structure

After introducing the course syllabus and discussing ‘What is social inequality?’ in the first week, the course is structured around the axes of **class, gender and race**. Three weeks are dedicated to each axis:

Wk1: Theoretical underpinnings and critiques

Wk2: Canada in focus

Wk3: International focus

Each week is structured similarly to ease the flow and hence your engagement with the course:

Mondays will entail a lecture based on the weeks’ axis and focus (E.g. Class – Canada in focus)

Wednesdays will be half lecture and half discussion based on the required readings.

Fridays will entail a review and discussion of the week.

Class time when appropriate will be dedicated to discussing, planning and doing assignments and tests.

Assessment

Social Inequality Case Study:	45%	
- <i>Infographic</i>	15%	Due 23.59 Sunday 27 th January
- <i>Research Paper OR Magazine Article</i>	30%	Due 23.59 Sunday 24 th March
Midterm (<i>Take-Home</i>)	25%	Due 23.59 Friday 1 st March
Final Exam (<i>Take-Home</i>)	30%	Due 23.59 Sunday 14 th April

Late Submission penalty is 5% per day. Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than 10 days late. **Please approach Neil in person for extension requests** (see *Academic Concessions & Accommodations* below).

Social Inequality Case Study (45%): For this assignment you are to apply a concept/theory/framework from the readings to a case of social inequality of interest to you and that is not covered in the course. Following the format used in the course, your case will *a)* focus on one axis (e.g. class or gender) or an intersection of axes (e.g. age and disability) of social inequality in, *b)* one domain (e.g. health, education, politics) within *c)* a specific context. This may be an institution, a city, a province or a country.

You will first present your case in an infographic, and then in an academic research paper **OR** a magazine article. The production of the infographic will help you think through and research the case for the paper or article.

- **Infographic (15%):** 1 page infographic that visually presents your analysis to a popular audience.
 - **Research Paper (30%):** A 2500 word academic research paper that outlines your analysis in greater depth. This is intended for an academic audience. You may include figures from the infographic.
- OR**
- **Magazine Article (30%):** A 2500 word article for a magazine (e.g. [Walrus](#)) that informs and/or persuades the reader. This is intended for a popular audience and should include figures & graphs.

Take Home Mid-Term (25%): This will test your knowledge of lecture material and the required readings from the first seven weeks of the course via short answer questions and a short essay.

Take Home Final Exam (30%): This will test your knowledge of material from the entire course, with greater emphasis on content from the second half of the course. It will consist of short answer questions and an essay.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Topic	Readings
1 2 nd & 4 th Jan	Introduction: Course Rationale & 'What is Social Inequality'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 1: <i>Introduction</i>
CLASS		
2 7 th , 9 th & 11 th Jan	<i>Theoretical underpinnings and critique</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 2: <i>Class and Inequality</i> Collins & Bilge (2016) 1. What is Intersectionality? <i>Intersectionality</i>. Polity Press (<i>Available on Canvas as an eBook</i>)
3 14 th , 16 th & 18 th Jan	<i>Canada in focus – Work and Income</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 9: <i>CAGE(s) and Paid Work</i> Sutton Lutz (2009) 'Making the Lazy Indian' in <i>Makúk – A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations</i>. (<i>Available Online</i>)
4 21 st , 23 rd & 25 th Jan	<i>International focus – China</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yu Xie (2016) Understanding inequality in China, <i>Chinese Journal of Sociology</i>, 2(3): 327-347 Lu Rachel (2014) China's New Class Hierarchy: A Guide, <i>Foreign Policy</i> (<i>Available online</i>) Goodman, David (2016) Locating China's Middle Classes: social intermediaries and the Party-state, <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i>, 25(97): 1-13 OR Sun Wanning (2013) Inequality and culture. A new pathway to understanding social inequality. In Sun & Gou (Eds.) <i>Unequal China: The political economy and cultural politics of inequality</i>. Routledge: New York. (<i>Available on Canvas OR via Library Search</i>) <p style="text-align: right;">Submit Social Inequality Project INFOGRAPHIC by 23.59 Sunday the 27th of January</p>
GENDER		
5 28 th & 30 th Jan & 1 st Feb	<i>Theoretical underpinnings and critique</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 3: <i>Gender and Inequality</i>
6 4 th , 6 th & 8 th Feb	<i>Canada in focus – Health inequalities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 11: <i>CAGE(s) and Health</i> Halseth, R. (2013) <i>Aboriginal Women in Canada: Gender, socio-economic determinants of health, and initiatives to close the wellness-gap</i>. Prince George, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. (<i>Available Online</i>)

<p>7 11th, 13th & 15th Feb</p>	<p>International Focus – Europe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laia Palència et al. (2016) Gender Policies and Gender Inequalities in Health in Europe, <i>International Journal of Health Services</i>, 47(1): 61-8 • Scott Samuel et.al (2015) “Men Behaving Badly” Patriarchy, Public Policy and Health Inequalities, <i>International Journal of Men’s Health</i>, 14(3): 250-258
<p>Reading Week (18th – 22nd Feb)</p>		
<p>8 25th, 27th Feb & 1st March</p>	<p>Take Home Mid-Term: Released on Canvas 09.00 Monday the 25th February for submission on Canvas by 23.59 Friday the 1st March. Note: There are no classes this week. Class time is set aside to assist you complete the mid-term.</p>	
<p>RACE</p>		
<p>9 4th, 6th & 8th March</p>	<p>Theoretical underpinnings and critique</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 4: <i>Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality</i>
<p>10 11th, 13th & 15th March</p>	<p>Canada in focus - Inequalities in Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McMullin & Curtis (2017) Chapter 10: <i>CAGE(s) and Education</i> • Sweet et al. (2017) Ethnicity and Effectively Maintained Inequality in BC Universities, <i>Canadian Review of Sociology</i>, 54(4): 497-518 OR • Victor Thiessen (2009) The pursuit of post-secondary education: A comparison of First Nations, African, Asian, and European Canadian youth, <i>Canadian Review of Sociology</i>, 46(1): 5-37
<p>11 18th, 20th & 22nd March</p>	<p>International focus – South Africa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OECD (2015) South Africa Policy Brief – Education and skills https://www.oecd.org/southafrica/south-africa-improving-quality-and-relevance-of-skills.pdf • Patricia Kubow (2018) Schooling Inequality in South Africa: Productive Capacities and the Epistemological Divide, <i>International Perspectives on Education and Society</i>, 34(2018): 161-185 <p style="text-align: center;">Submit RESEARCH PAPER or MAGAZINE ARTICLE by 23.59 Sunday the 24th of March</p>
<p>INTERSECTIONALITY</p>		
<p>12 25th, 27th & 29th March</p>	<p>Gentrification and Change in the Downtown Eastside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collins & Bilge (2016) 6. Intersectionality, Social Protest and Neoliberalism. <i>Intersectionality</i>. Polity Press (Available on Canvas as an eBook)
<p>13 1st, 3rd & 5th April</p>	<p>Course Review & Evaluation</p>	<p>TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM due 23.59 Sunday the 14th of April</p>

Office Hours

- *Wednesdays 12 till 1 pm in ANSO 123*
- *Wednesdays 2 till 4 pm in the Learning Lounge in IKB*

Please make use of my office hours to discuss assignments, course material, future academic and career goals, or on simply how best to thrive at UBC. Also attend if you have [a legitimate grade query](#).

Academic Concessions and Accommodations

If for accentuating circumstances you are unable to fulfil course requirements you may seek [academic concession](#). The University accommodates students [with disabilities](#) registered with The Centre for Accessibility in Brock Hall on East Mall. UBC recognises the religious diversity of the UBC community, if class or assignments conflict with holy days then please inform the instructor in writing at least two weeks in advance.

Things that don't qualify for extensions include very mild health problems (a minor headache), poor time management (you have a lot of assignments and you ran out of time), going on holiday or other recreational travel during term time, or minor technical problems (please remember to back up your work regularly!). In these cases, you will need to accept the late penalty that the professor has set out in their syllabus.

If you are unsure whether your issue is serious enough, you may still ask your professors. The worst that can happen is that they politely say no, and even if they say no, they may offer you advice on how to get the assignment in on time (or as soon as possible). Please note it is only the lecturer and not the TA who has the power to grant extensions.

Classroom Etiquette & Engagement

Please arrive on time. If you arrive late do not disrupt the class. Sociology is dependent on debate and reflection, thus focus on understanding your own as well as others perspectives. Sometimes students (and the lecturer) will express ideas which aren't necessarily their opinion, but a reflection of thinking through a concept, or even playing devil's advocate. Don't assume what someone says is their opinion or judge them for expressing an idea. Students should feel safe to express and explore ideas without fear of being judged or reprimanded. **During large class discussions, when a peer is talking, please listen respectfully.** If something is expressed that upsets you, then raise this with the lecturer/TA so we can follow up appropriately. **Use of digital devices** - we will discuss this and come to an agreement as a class on an appropriate policy. Please note that at all times respect that what you do in class impacts on others learning environment.

Professional Communication

I am happy to be referred to as Neil in class and by email, i.e. Dear Neil or Hello Neil. Most answers to questions you have will be in the syllabus, or on Canvas. Check to see if the information you require is already available before sending an email. If not, be clear and concise in terms of the information you require. **Please include your full name and student number in correspondence with Neil and your TA.** I generally do not respond to emails on evenings or weekends, and I don't expect you to either!

Academic Integrity

One can think of there being two sides to Academic Integrity, the **Why** and the **How**.

Why – the core purpose of any university is to question, challenge and produce knowledge, and as a scholar you are at university to learn the scientific method through which this purpose is achieved. The scientific method is collaborative by nature, hence we cite and reference to show the academic community from where our questions arise, and elaborate on the challenges we are making, which in turn legitimates the knowledge we produce. This is so that other scholars may take up the gauntlet and continue to further knowledge.

How – therefore think of citing and referencing as a language through which scholars communicate their process of questioning, challenging and producing knowledge. Learning any new language requires practice, and at times you are going to make mistakes. However, you need to demonstrate a willingness to use and learn this language, otherwise you are undermining the core purpose of the university. This is why academic integrity is important and why plagiarism is taken seriously. There are numerous resources on campus and [online via the Chapman Learning Commons to help you cite and reference correctly.](#)

Copying material from other students is considered plagiarism and comes under UBC's [Academic Misconduct policy](#).

FURTHER READINGS

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Dorling, Danny (2012), *No-nonsense guide to inequality*, (Oxford: New Internationalist)
Grabb, Edward (2007) *Theories of Social Inequality*, (Canada: Nelson)
Piketty, Thomas (2014), *Capital in the twenty-first century*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press)

CLASS, WEALTH & POVERTY

Burrows, Roger (2013) *The New Gilded Ghettos: The geo-demographics of the super-rich*, Discover Society:
www.discoversociety.org
Dorling, Danny (2014), *Inequality and the 1 per cent*, (London: Verso)
Menzies, Charles and Hwang, Monica (2017) *First Nations, Inequality, and the legacy of Colonialism*, in Grabb, Reitz & Hwang (Eds) in *Social Inequality in Canada (6th edition)*, (Canada: Oxford University Press)
Skeggs, Bev (2015), 'Stratification or exploitation, domination, dispossession and devaluation?', *The Sociological Review*, 63(2):205-222.

GENDER

Acker, Joan (2006), 'Inequality regimes: gender, class and race in organisations', *Gender and Society*, 20(4):441-464.
Boje, Thomas and Leira, Arnlaug (2012), *Gender, welfare state and the market: towards a new division of labour*, (Hoboken: Taylor Francis)
Bradley, Harriet (2013) *Gender (2nd Edition)*, (Cambridge: Polity Press)
Tepperman, Lorne and Curtis, Josh (2017) *Sexual Orientation and Social Inequality*, in Grabb, Reitz & Hwang (Eds) in *Social Inequality in Canada (6th edition)*, (Canada: Oxford University Press)

RACE

Meer, Nasar (2014), *Key concepts in race and ethnicity*, (London: Sage)

Reitz, Jeffrey and Banerjee, Rupa (2017) *Racial Inequality, Social Cohesion and Policy Issues in Canada*, in Grabb, Reitz & Hwang (Eds) in *Social Inequality in Canada (6th edition)*, (Canada: Oxford University Press)

Winant, Howard (2004), *New politics of race: globalization, difference and justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press)

Williams, Charlotte (2010), *Race and ethnicity in a welfare society*, (Maidenhead: Open University Press)