

St. Francis Xavier University
[Department of Sociology](#)

Sociology 328.20

Social Inequality

Winter 2018

Professor: Norine Verberg
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Office Location: Annex 111A
Office hours: Tuesday, 1:30-3:30
Wednesday, 9-10; Thursdays 9-12

Calendar Course Description

Students will explore the distribution of social, political and economic resources in Canadian society, and the unequal access to these resources based on social class, race, ethnicity, gender, age and region. Using a central theme based upon concepts of class and power, the course examines specific issues such as the socio-economic bases of social inequality, ascription and the consequences of poverty. 3 credits

Required Reading

Grabb, Edward, Jeffery G. Reitz, and Monica Hwang. 2017. *Social Inequality in Canada: Dimensions of Disadvantage*, 6th ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Grading Scheme

Midterm	30%	Tuesday, February 13
Assignment ~ two choices	30%	Tuesday, March 20, beginning of class Indicate choice by January 18, see below
Final examination	40%	TBA

Class Attendance and Participation

You are encouraged to attend and participate in class by asking questions or contributing to class discussion. Strive to learn and integrate key concepts and address core substantive issues when you ask questions. Class attendance will be taken; multiple unexplained class absences will be reported to the Dean. *Failure to attend class is likely to impact your performance on exams and the assignment.*

If you miss class, *you are responsible to find out what you missed* (e.g., lectures, announcements, presentations, videos). Please do not send me an email to report a class absence; mention it to me in class instead. I use powerpoint, but I do not share my slides.

Communication and Office Hours

You are encouraged to see me during office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. If my office hours don't work, schedule an appointment. For email, please use proper email etiquette, including a proper salutation and sign your name, student ID #, and course #.

Assignment: The lived experience of social inequality: You have **TWO OPTIONS**

Option A: The experience of social inequality in neo-liberal times

You will write a five page (1000 word) *critical analysis* on a topic related to this course. You select your topic by exploring recent news reports (e.g., in Globe and Mail, CBC, National Post, Toronto Star, Maclean's) for stories about the socio-economic circumstance faced by Canadians experiencing social inequality. The topic must have a socio-economic and policy dimension. Begin by finding *a couple news stories* on how certain people are experiencing unequal access (e.g., to health care, post-secondary education, Internet, food) or social exclusion (e.g., individuals living with mental illness, circumstance, identity, or disability). Once you have done so, find *and employ five academic references from scholarly journals* to help you develop a critical understanding of your topic: most of your references should be written by sociologists focused on Canadian life and social policy. In this course, we learn about changes in social policy that have been coined "neo-liberal". One goal of this paper is to gain a better understanding of this policy shift, while also considering perspectives on how policy can limit or enhance one's access to resources or opportunities. At least *one* of your references should be on the significance of *social policy* for the fate of certain marginalized individuals/populations. *Alert:* Do not confuse media sources with academic, peer-reviewed journal articles. Length: 5 pages (1000 words)

Option B: Learning about the experience of social inequality through [Service Learning](#)

The Service Learning option involves providing 20 hours of service to a community or school program and using course-based material to develop a critical understanding of the experience. In this case, students will write a sociological account about what was learned about living with social inequality through their service work. If you choose this option, a placement will be set up and monitored by Megan Turner from the Service Learning Department. You will write a reflexive journal, then select three-four peer-reviewed Canadian Sociology journal articles to develop your analysis of the experiences or issues you identified through your volunteer service. The essay will be 5-pages (1000 word).

Please Note: Students who choose the Service Learning option are required to meet with Megan Turner. Megan will visit class to explain how to register for Service Learning and select a placement (e.g., Food Bank, Breakfast program, working in a sheltered workshop, etc). To be sure this works for you, you will agree to a set of scheduled hours that works in your course schedule. In other words, the scheduled service learning hours will be known in advance of accepting the placement. Individuals and programs will be counting on your service. ***Please do not sign up for Service Learning if you cannot fulfill the mandate.***

Please Note: Students who do not sign up for Service Learning do Option A by default. Students who sign on for Service Learning must meet with Megan Turner and complete the sign-up process by **January 18**. Megan's email address is: mpturner@stfx.ca After January 18 you are locked into your choice. *Again, if you have reason to believe you will not able to complete the Service Learning placement, choose Option A.* On the extremely rare chance that a student is dismissed from their Service Learning placement due to absences or inappropriate engagement or if the student quits, *the professor will assign an Option A topic* to the student, and the paper will be due on the regular due date. There will be an automatic 20% penalty applied.

Not sure how to pick a topic or develop your paper?

Whether you choose Option A or B, you may want guidance on how to develop your paper. Some class time will be spent discussing possible topics for the assignment and *how to select suitable references*. You are welcome to visit me in office hours with your ideas for papers or feedback on your reference selection. I may be able to suggest “key words” (e.g., depersonalization, stigma, habitus) to include your key word search. The librarians are helpful: They are available on the Reference Desk from 1:00-4:00.

You are strongly recommended to start your paper by the 3rd week of the term. You are strongly recommended to have started your library research by the 4th week of the term. Seeking feedback on your topic choice or reference selection early is recommended.

Policies concerning course assignments

1) Please follow these instructions on the submission of the paper:

- use **1.5” line spacing**
- use **1” margins**
- provide **the word count** for the essay (not reference page) on the title page.
- Submit the paper at the beginning of class: late papers must be signed by the professor or the Sociology Administrative Assistance in the Annex (during their office hours). If not, late penalties will reflect when I receive it.

2) Extensions and late papers

A penalty of 10% per day (i.e., papers are marked out of 100) applies to late papers; starting when class starts. If your circumstances warrant an extension without penalty, please see me to make a formal request.

3) Respect standard essay conventions

Edit your paper: did you use proper grammar and spelling? Do you have an introduction with a thesis statement, a body and a conclusion? Did you remember to provide page numbering.

4) Required Citation Style

For this course, please use American Sociological Association Style (ASA). Please Note: You are required to document the *page number* of paraphrased points as well as direct quotes. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a 10% grade penalty.

- The librarians recommend OWL~ Online Writing Lab:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/01/>

5) Avoiding plagiarism

Section 3.8.2 of the Academic Calendar defines *plagiarism* as “the misrepresentation of another’s work – whether ideas or words, intellectual or creative works, images or data – published or unpublished, as one’s own”. It includes representing someone else’s sentence(s), paragraph(s), or entire essay as *your work*, regardless of whether the true author was a classmate or a published author. All forms of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Arts.

The following are two important ways students can avoid plagiarism.

a. Non-collaboration

It is in your best interest not to lend, borrow or use another student's written work related to the book review or term paper assigned in this course. Any submission with "copied" material will result in a grade of 0. Violations of the university's *Academic Integrity Policy* are report to the Department Chair and to the Dean of Arts.

b. Proper referencing of source material

Documenting source material in scholarly papers is imperative to 1) avoid plagiarism, and 2) show the reader how writers have influenced your ideas or analysis. Be sure to reference passages that are direct quotes (word for word) AND to reference facts or opinions drawn from the same source (which are paraphrased, not word for word).

6) RefWorks bonus

If you use RefWorks to complete your assignments, you will receive 3 bonus marks. Specifically, if your grade was 75%, you would receive a grade of 78%. In order to demonstrate that you used RefWorks, email me your reference list from RefWorks, and attach an ASA **and** Chicago style list to your paper. **You must edit the output generated in RefWorks for full bonus marks.** This will be explained in class.

Resources Available to Students

Libraries and Librarians

The library resources are excellent. Suzanne van den Hoogen is the Sociology Liaison Librarian, but all Reference Librarians are pleased to provide valuable, friendly assistance. If you drop by, take your syllabus to help the librarian help you. <http://library.stfx.ca/>

The Student Success Centre

If you use the SSC, please take the syllabus to your meetings. Always see the professor if you feel unsure about whether you are following the instructions. <http://sites.stfx.ca/ssc/>

The Tramble Rooms – Centre for Accessible Learning

Students who have documented disabilities can access student-centred support at the Tramble Rooms, Centre for Accessible Learning. http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy spelled out in the university calendar. <http://www.stfx.ca/services/registrar/academic-integrity-document.pdf>

Schedule of Readings*

Week	Chapter	Topic
Jan. 5	pp. xi-xxv	Course Introduction
Jan. 9/12	pp.1-2, 1, 2	<u>Power and Class</u> Power and Class
Jan. 16	2, 3	Corporate power/Class Formation
Jan. 19/23/26	4, 5, 22	<u>Socio-Economic Bases of Social Inequality</u> Income, Wealth, and Poverty, Homelessness <i>Four Feet Up</i> , NFB documentary
Jan. 30/Feb. 2	6 & 7	Occupation
Feb. 6/9	8 & 9	Education
February 13	midterm	Covers lectures and readings up to Chapter 9
Feb. 16	10 & 11	<u>Social Justice and Inequality</u> First Nations / French Canada
Feb 19-23	---	<i>Winter Term Recess – no classes</i>
Feb. 26/March 2	12 & 13	Immigration /Racial Inequality
March 6/9	14, 15 16	Gender
March 13/16	17 & 18	Sexual Orientation / Age
March 20/23	19 & 20	Disability and Region
March 27	21 & 23	<u>Some Consequences of Social Inequality</u> Health / / Beliefs
March 30	---	<i>Good Friday, No class</i>
April 3/6	24 & 25	Tolerance / Immigrant Labour Market Experience

* The professor reserves the right to make minor alterations to the dates material will be covered or to bring in other significant material, such as a video or guest speaker.
