

St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology
Social Inequality: Sociology 290

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~ Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:30-10:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores 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 on the 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 in Canada.

REQUIRED READING

1. Grabb, Edward. 2007. *Theories of Social Inequality*. 5th ed. Toronto: Nelson.
2. Grabb, Edward and Neil Guppy. 2009. *Social Inequality in Canada: Patterns, Problems, and Policies*, 5th ed. Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.

GRADING SCHEME

October quiz	10%	Thursday, October 13
December exam	20%	~ covers all fall term content
Optional theory paper	15%	Thursday, November 24, beginning of class
February exam	10%	Thursday, February 16
Library research paper	25%	Thursday, March 15, beginning of class
Final examination	20%	~ covers all winter term content

EXAMS

All exams include short-answer and essay questions. In the winter term, the exams also include multiple choice questions and a question with a table (You are encouraged to be able to describe and interpret the tables in the textbook). All material discussed in class, including videos, guest lectures, and assigned readings, will be covered on the exams.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Cell phones: Please turn cell phones off and put them away during class.

Laptops: No laptops allowed. If you require the use of a laptop for note taking during class, you are required to make an appointment to discuss your request.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

You are encouraged to attend class and participate. Please feel free to ask questions. Your questions are valuable! Use them to ensure that you understand key concepts, ideas and the studies introduced in this course.

If you miss a class, you are responsible to find out what you missed (e.g., lecture, video, announcements, presentation). If you wish to report a class absence, please do so through the Dean's Office or in person (no email notices please).

You are strongly encouraged to come to see me during office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. If my office hours conflict with your schedule, please ask for an appointment.

FALL TERM THEORY PAPER (due November 24, beginning of class)

Instructions for the optional fall term paper will be provided in a separate handout and introduced in class on September 19. If you choose not to write the optional fall term paper, your grade for the other course material will be converted from $x/85$ to $x/100$. Late fall term papers will not be accepted.

WINTER TERM RESEARCH PAPER (Thursday, March 15, beginning of class)

Students are required to write a 10 page (i.e., 2000 word) library research paper focused on one specific aspect of social inequality *in Canada*. You may choose any topic that pertains to social inequality in Canada, but *your analysis must integrate one or more of the key concepts learned in this course: social class, power, and political and ideological control*. In other words, if your topic pertains to, say, gender inequality, your examination of the topic must incorporate the concept class, power, ideological control. Strive to incorporate both the theory and empirical research on your topic.

Select reference material thoughtfully. Use at least eight references *drawn primarily from social science journals* (i.e., you may include some books and government publications). Your references should help you to reflect upon the *Canadian situation*, with at least five of your references written by Canadian Sociologists or social scientists in related fields of study. You may use one chapter from the course textbooks as one of your eight references. If you wish to use more than one, treat it as an "extra" reference. Avoid using non-scholarly references, unless used analytically in your essay. If you cannot find adequate reference material, consider changing your topic. I suggest you see me first to help you with your library search.

American Sociological Association style is required (if needed, see the Sociology Department website or the Writing Centre website for guidelines). Strive to ensure that your paper is properly referenced. Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy spelled out in Section 3.8 of the St. Francis Xavier University academic calendar.

Late papers will be docked 1 mark per day, beginning when class starts.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS FOR FALL TERM

Date	Chapter from Grabb	Topic
Sept 8	1	Introduction
Sept 12-22	2	Karl Marx; video 12,000 men
Sept 26-Oct 6	3	Max Weber
October 13	----	Midterm (Pp. 1-65, plus class material)
October 17-24	4	Durkheim
Oct 27-31	5	Structural-functionalism
Nov 3-10	6	Dahrendorf, Lenski, Poulantzas, Olin Wright
Nov 14-17	6	Parkin, Giddens
Nov 21-24	6	Theories of gender and racial inequality
Nov 24	---	paper due at beginning of class
Nov 28 – Dec 1	7	Review and evaluation of perspectives

SCHEDULE OF READINGS FOR WINTER TERM

Date	Chapter from Grabb & Guppy	Topic
Jan 5	pp. 1-16	General introduction
Jan 9	1 + 2	Corporate concentration and economic power
Jan 12	3	Working class formation
Jan 16	4	Labour relations in post-industrial Canada
Jan 19	5	Changing income inequality
Jan 23	6	Distribution of wealth and economic inequality
Jan 26	7	Poverty; video Four Feet Up
Jan 30	8	Occupation and social mobility
Feb 2	9	Labour markets and the future of work
Feb 6	10	Change & stability in educational inequality
Feb 9	11	Explaining persistence in educational inequality
Feb 13	12 + 28	Extra-curricular education; post-secondary education
Feb 16	----	Midterm (Chapters 1-12 and 28, plus class material)
Feb 20-24	----	Winter term recess
Feb 27	13	Theory on class and gender
March 1	14	Gender, family and work
March 5	15	Gender equality and social policy
March 8	16	Immigration and social inequality
March 12	17	Economic integration of immigrants
March 15	18	Racial inequality; paper due beginning of class
March 19	19	First nations
March 22	20 + 21	Age-based inequality + generational influences
March 26	22	Regional inequality
March 29	23	Health inequalities
April 2	24	Homelessness
April 5	25 + 26	Social and political beliefs
April 9	27	Political and civic involvement