

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
(www.soci.ucalgary.ca)**

SOCIOLOGY 365 (Social Stratification)

Course Outline, Fall 2014

Safewalk/Campus Security: 220-5333, ANYTIME

This course makes use of Desire2Learn to communicate information to students. To access D2L go to: d2l.ucalgary.ca OR my.ucalgary.ca

Instructor: Tom Langford langford@ucalgary.ca Office: SS 924

Office Hours between September 9 and December 4:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, immediately after class, 17:15 - 17:45

Monday afternoons by appointment (please send me an email to set a time)

NOTE: Office hours are cancelled on Thanksgiving (Oct. 13) and during Reading Days (November 10 and 11).

Email guidelines: Please use email to inform me of something important (e.g., you are sick and will be missing the mid-term test), to ask a question that I can answer with a simple Yes or No (e.g., Are functionalist explanations of inequality covered on the mid-term test?) or to book an appointment on Monday afternoons. For more complicated questions and discussions, please speak to me in person.

Classroom Decorum: We should all conduct ourselves in ways that are respectful of everyone else in our learning environment. How this general principle applies to coming to class late, using electronic devices during lectures, chit chatting with the person next to you, attempting to multitask during lectures, etc., will be discussed at our first class and whenever needed throughout the term. As the lecturer, I will let you know (often right on the spot) if something you are doing disrupts my concentration. In addition, since you should be paying attention to lecture material at all times, I will not hesitate to ask you a question coming out of the flow of the lecture, whether you seem to be paying attention or not! Always be prepared to participate since you never know when I will call upon you.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In *Power and Inequality*, Gregg Olsen defines social stratification as “the hierarchical arrangement or ordering of groups or strata in society” (p. 14). One approach to conceptualizing and studying social stratification is to take a valued resource (e.g., income, wealth or health), rank order a population in terms of that resource and then use a conventional method for dividing the rank ordering into hierarchical strata. This approach results in the study of social strata such as income deciles or wealth percentiles (e.g., the 1% versus the 99%). A second approach to conceptualizing and studying social stratification begins by identifying relationally connected social groups of interest (e.g., economic classes, genders, generations or racialized groups) and then studies whether there are patterned inequalities among these social groups that are sustained over time. In line with this second approach, social stratification refers to a situation of patterned inequalities among particular social groups that are sustained over time – it leads to the study of gender stratification, ethnic stratification, class stratification, etc. In Sociology 365 we will move back and forth between these two conceptual approaches in order to gain the widest possible understanding of the different ways that contemporary societies are stratified. We will also study and critically evaluate some of the prominent theoretical explanations for the existence of social stratification.

REQUIRED BOOKS (available in the bookstore)

(1) Olsen, Gregg M. 2011. *Power & Inequality: A Comparative Introduction*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

(2) Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett. 2010. *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*, with a new postscript. London: Penguin.

OTHER READINGS & ASSIGNMENT OF READINGS

A few additional readings will be assigned throughout the term. Each of the additional readings will be available in digital form. Please check the “Assigned Readings” section on D2L throughout the term to keep on top of what you should be reading at each point in Soci 365. I expect you to read the assigned material very carefully and be prepared to discuss each reading during our lecture periods. To make sure you are keeping up on your reading, there will be periodic surprise quizzes at the beginning of lecture periods based on the assigned material for that class. (For more details please see below.) Therefore keeping up with the assigned readings is important to your success in this course.

STUDENT EVALUATION

(1) Mid-Term Test, Thursday 23 October at 4:00 p.m.

- (A) Format: A mix of short answer, short essay, T/F and multiple-choice questions.
- (B) Content: All course material covered between September 9 and October 23
- (C) Value: 25% or 30%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(2) Short Essay, due Tuesday 25 November at 10:00 a.m. in the D2L Drop Box

(A) Topic: You must write on one of the essay topics provided by the instructor and you must answer all parts of the assigned essay topic. If you do not follow this instruction you will be assigned a mark of zero for the essay. A list of essay topics will be available during the 3rd week of classes.

(B) References: Your key references for the essay must be academic books and/or academic journal articles.

(C) Style: You must follow the ASA (American Sociological Association) style of referencing sources. This means that page numbers should be included in the in-text citations.

(D) Length: Between 1250 and 1500 words, excluding references. You must indicate the word count for your essay at the top of the first page. Essays that exceed the word count will be penalized 10 per cent of the assigned grade for every 100 words, or part thereof, over 1500 words.

(E) Submission: Please submit an electronic version of your essay in the Drop Box available on D2L no later than 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 25 November.

(F) Value: 25% or 30%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(3) Surprise Quizzes based on the assigned reading on a particular day

(A) When: On a number of occasions during the term there will be a surprise quiz in a class which will test how carefully you have read that day's assigned reading. These quizzes will usually (but not necessarily always) be at the beginning of a class, so be sure to get to class on time.

(B) Format: Some combination of short answer, fill in the blank, T/F and multiple choice questions.

(C) Total Value: 15% (with each quiz equally weighted).

(D) Number of Quizzes. I'm not sure. There could be as few as 5 or as many as 10 or 12 over the course of the term. Stay tuned!

(E) Valid Reasons for Missing a Surprise Quiz (you need to communicate with me)
1) Documented illness. 2) A compassionate reason. 3) An important commitment, scheduled before the beginning of classes, which you let me know about during the first couple of weeks of classes.

(4) Registrar-Scheduled Final Examination

(A) When: To be scheduled by the registrar in the December 8-18 exam period. Please do not book your vacation airline seat until after you see when the Soci 365 final is scheduled.

(B) Format: A mix of short answer, short essay, T/F and multiple-choice questions.

(C) Content: The final will emphasize material covered between October 24 and December 5. However it will also include a few questions taken from the mid-term and a few other questions taken from surprise quizzes held prior to October 24.

(D) Value: 25% or 30% or 35%, whichever is most favourable to you.

LETTER GRADES

At the end of the term numerical marks are totalled and a final letter grade is assigned on the following basis:

Percentage Range	Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Letter Grade
Less than 50	F	72-75	B-
50-53	D	76-79	B
54-58	D+	80-84	B+
59-62	C-	85-89	A-
63-66	C	90-94	A
67-71	C+	95 and higher	A+

IMPORTANT NOTES

(1) Late Penalty. Except in the cases of documented illness, or extenuating circumstances brought to the instructor's attention before the due date of the short essay, a penalty of 5% of the assigned mark per day will be assessed a late essay.

(2) A student who has a legitimate reason for being unable to write the mid-term test must discuss an alternative course of action with the instructor. At his discretion, the instructor will transfer the percentage weight to another component of the course, or (most likely) set a make-up test. Make-up tests must be written as soon as possible at a scheduled Department of Sociology make-up test session.

(3) *Deferred Term Work Form:*

Deferral of term work past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out. It's available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 102) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

(4) The quality of a student's writing is a factor in the evaluation of a student's work in this course.

(5) "Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge" (*Calendar 2014-15*, p. 52). Please review the University of Calgary's policies for dealing with student misconduct, particularly plagiarism and cheating (see pp. 52-55 of the *Calendar*).

(6) The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. You must contact me if you have any questions about evaluation of your work, etc.

(7) Your mid-term test will be returned in class, as will your surprise quizzes. You can also make an appointment to pick them up from my office.

(8) Your essay must be submitted through the D2L Drop Box. No paper copy please. Your marked essay will be returned by email.

(9) Ethics Research: Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

(10) Academic Accommodation

Students who require academic accommodation need to register with Student Accessibility Services (MSC 452, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with Student Accessibility Services and to request academic accommodation, if required**

(11) The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

(12) **Emergency evacuations.** In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of the lecture classroom (SS 113), please proceed to the assembly point in the Professional Faculties Food Court. The back-up assembly point is the Education Block Food Court(13)

(13) **Student Representation.** The 2014-15 Students' Union VP Academic is Hana Kadri suypaca@ucalgary.ca. The Faculty of Arts has four SU representatives who may be contacted at any of the following email addresses: arts1@ucalgary.ca, arts2@ucalgary.ca, arts3@ucalgary.ca, and arts4@ucalgary.ca. You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>