



# UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Winter 2020

FACULTY OF ARTS

Department of Sociology

Department of Sociology Website: <https://soci.ucalgary.ca/>

COURSE TITLE: The Sociology of Violence			
Course Number	SOC 425		
Pre/Co-Requisites	Sociology 313 and 325; or consent of the Department		
Instructor Name	Nestar Russell	Email	nestar.russell@ucalgary.ca
Instructor Email Policy	Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line, and include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored. All other emails will be answered within one business day. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline will not be answered. Also, please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment. Please do not use e-mail as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss. Questions about the course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in person during my office hours.		
Office Location	SS930	Office Hours	Tuesday 15.15-16.15
Telephone No.	210-9433 (email preferred)		
Class Dates	Tuesday and Thursday		
Class Times	14:00-15:15		
Class Location	SA 015		

## Course Description

This course sets out by presenting and critically evaluating a variety of popular theories on the causes and control of violence in modern society. After this theoretical survey, the course then undertakes a rather in-depth exploration into the topic of violence and Norbert Elias's Figural Sociology, where evolving networks of interdependent humans are the central unit of investigation. According to

Canadian scholar Steven Pinker (2011: 59), Elias is perhaps “the most important thinker you have never heard of...” Elias’s approach to “doing sociology” is somewhat unusual because, like some Classical sociologists, he utilizes a more long-term ‘historical’ methodological approach to better understanding contemporary society. Also, instead of solely focusing on “criminal” acts of violence, somewhat unusual is that Elias’s theoretical lens confronts (instead of avoids) the so-called illegitimate/legitimate violence divide. During the final leg of this course, students in small groups will give brief research presentations exploring any questions of their choosing stimulated by the instructor’s earlier theoretical survey.

### Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

- Undertake a largely but not exclusively sociological survey of a wide variety of theories on the topic of violence.
- Gain a long-term historical perspective on the issue of violence in modern society.
- Develop a theoretically informed view on a variety of violence-related sub topics, including homicide, issues of masculinity, organizational malevolence, intimate partner violence, warfare, and genocide (among others).

### Required Textbooks, Readings, Materials, Electronic Resources

Ray, L. (2018). *Violence and society (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)*. London: Sage. ISBN: 978-1-4739-0791-1

Additional non-required reading: Spierenburg, P. (2011). *A history of murder: Personal violence in Europe from the Middle Ages to the present*. Cambridge, UK: Polity. ISBN: 978-0-7456-4378

Impromptu readings may be added.

### Schedule of Lectures

Lecture 1 – Tues. Jan. 14: Course overview

Lecture 2— Thurs. Jan. 16: Discussion on group presentations (creativity) and definitional issues on the topic of violence

Lecture 3— Tues. Jan. 21: Common theories of violence (part 1)

Lecture 4— Thurs. Jan. 23: Common theories of violence (part 2)

Lecture 5— Tues. Jan. 28: Documentary

Lecture 6— Thurs. Jan. 30: Common theories of violence (part 3)

Lecture 7— Tues. Feb. 4: Theories on organisational violence (part 1)

Lecture 8— Thurs. Feb. 6: **Hand in your Documentary Observational Report**, class discussion/questions on the documentary, lecture on Organizational Violence (part 2), Hobbes versus Locke (Chapter 2 of textbook), and finally, tips/guidance on First Short Answer Test

Lecture 9— Tues. Feb 11: Violence and the long view: Hunter-gather versus agricultural societies (Also, Group Presentation teams list released)

Lecture 10— Thurs. Feb. 13: **First Short Answer Test**

TERM BREAK 16-22 FEB.

Lecture 11— Tues. Feb. 25: Civilizing Process (part 1)

Lecture 12— Thurs. Feb. 27: Civilizing Process (part 2)

Lecture 13— Tues. March 3: Violence and Figural Sociology (part 1)

Lecture 14— Thurs. March. 5: Violence and Figural Sociology (part 2)

Lecture 15— Tues. March 10: Violence and Figural Sociology (part 3)

Lecture 16— Thurs. March 12: Violence and Figural Sociology (part 4)

~~Lecture 17— Tues. March 17: Group formation period (presentation slots filled), topic/discussion period, and Second Short Answer Test review~~

~~Lecture 18— Thurs. March 19: **Second Short Answer Test**~~

~~Lecture 19— Tues. March 24: Documentary~~

~~Lecture 20— Thurs. March 26: Group presentations~~

~~Lecture 21— Tues. March 31: Group presentations~~

Lecture 22—Thurs. April 2:—Group presentations

Lecture 23—Tues. April 7:—Group presentations

Lecture 24—Thurs. April 9:—Group presentations

Lecture 25—Tues. April 14:—Course review

Remote class work—Tues, March 17 to Tues, April 14

02 April 2020—Documentary Review due; please submit report as a word document to [nestar.russell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:nestar.russell@ucalgary.ca) by 9:00am

17 April 2020—Group Essay *or* Individual Essay; please submit report as a word document to [nestar.russell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:nestar.russell@ucalgary.ca) by 9:00am.

### Methods of Assessment and Grading Weights

- Documentary Observational Report: 500 words long (maximum). Due date: **6 February** (worth 10% of the final grade)
- First Short Answer Test: **Thursday 13 February, 14.00**. The test will be on all lecture materials, film clips/documentary viewings, impromptu readings, and class discussions up until 15.15 on Thursday 6 February, as well as Chapters “Introduction, 1, 2, (pp. 1-48) and 4 (pp. 71-89) in the textbook (worth 30% of the final grade).
- ~~Second Short Answer Test: **Thursday 19 March, 14.00**. The test will be on all lecture materials, film clips/documentary viewings, impromptu readings, and class discussions between 14:00 on 13 February and 15.15 on 12 March, as well as Chapters 3 (pp. 49-70) and 5-11 (pp. 90-238) in the textbook (worth 35% of the final grade)~~
- Documentary review:

This assignment replaces the previously scheduled Second Short Answer Test, in order for students to have more time and space to engage with class materials remotely. For this assignment, you will watch two documentaries (*Roger & Me* (1989) and *America’s First Bareknuckle Fighting Championship* (2014). Trigger warning: each of these films contain some scenes of violence that may be difficult for some students to watch). Students must select one of the two documentaries and write a Documentary Review. The report must not exceed 750

words (excluding references). Please submit report as a word document to [neSTAR.russell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:neSTAR.russell@ucalgary.ca) by **9:00am on 2 April 2020**. This assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.

- ~~Group Presentation (20 minutes, approximately), plus a 5 minutes question period (worth 25% of the final grade)\*~~

~~\*25%: 15/25: instructor's group assessment mark; 5/25: group contribution/effort mark (decided by fellow group members\*\*), 5/25 for individual attendance at group presentations [10 groups across five lecture periods: 2 group presentations per lecture]].~~

~~\*\*If all group members give a fellow member a "0" for their group contribution/effort mark, that student will obtain an automatic "0/25%" for their overall Group Presentation mark.~~

- Group Essay or Individual Essay (two options)

This assignment replaces the previously scheduled Group Presentation assignment, in order for students to have more time and space to engage with class materials remotely. Please submit report as a word document to [neSTAR.russell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:neSTAR.russell@ucalgary.ca) by **9:00am on 17 April 2020**. For this assignment, each of you must select **one** of the following two options:

#### Option 1: Group Essay:

In your previously assigned group, students must work with the instructor to finalize a research question. The group must then write a collective essay on that research question (groups of four must write 4,000-5,000 words in length, excluding references). This assignment is worth 35% of your final grade. For this grade, 25/35 is assessed by me as the instructor. The remaining 10/35 is assessed through the average of what each member of the group marks you out of 10, which is submitted via a confidential email to the instructor upon the completion of the assignment. If all group members provide a fellow member with a 0/10 for their group contribution/effort mark, that student will receive an automatic 0/35 for their overall mark.

#### Option 2: Individual Essay

The student must work with the instructor to finalize a research question. The student must then write an essay on that research question (1,000-1,500 words in length, excluding references). This assignment is worth 35% of your final grade. If a student selects this option, their original group can disband, with all remaining members writing their own individual essays. Or the remaining three or two members can choose to write a Group Essay (three member groups: 3,000-4,000 word count; two member groups: 2,000-3,000 word count). For the grade of this Individual Essay, 35/35 is assessed by me as the instructor.

## Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 – 95.99%	4.0	Excellent performance
A-	85 – 89.99%	3.7	Approaching excellent performance
B+	80 – 84.99%	3.3	Exceeding good performance
B	75 – 79.99%	3.0	Good performance
B-	70 – 74.99%	2.7	Approaching good performance
C+	67 – 69.99%	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance
C	63 – 66.99%	2.0	Satisfactory performance
C-	59 – 62.99%	1.7	Approaching satisfactory performance
D+	55 – 58.99%	1.3	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
D	50 – 54.99%	1.0	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
F	<50%	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

## Grade Reappraisal

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

## Handing in Papers, Assignments

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. **Protection of Privacy:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they can provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

## Research Ethics

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 Faculty 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.

## Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

## Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

## Academic Misconduct

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## Absences and Deferrals

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html> |

**Deferred Final Exam Form:** Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>

**Deferred Term Work Form:** Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at:

[https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/deferred\\_termwork15\\_0.pdf](https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/deferred_termwork15_0.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 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

## Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

## Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive support when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through Student Wellness Services (Room 370 MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

## Student Success Centre

The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success>

## Student Ombuds Office

The Student Ombuds Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/) or email [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca).

## Student Union (SU) Information

The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca); Information about the SU, including elected Faculty Representatives, can be found here:

<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca>.

## Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. Assembly points are designed to establish a location for information updates from the emergency responders to the evacuees; from the evacuated population to the emergency responders. For more information, see the University of Calgary's Emergency Management website:

<https://live-risk.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points>

## Safewalk

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.