

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Spring, 2010

SOC 245
WIP: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

M/W 2:25 - 3:40pm
LWH 2109

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Email: akourvet@neiu.edu Office Hrs: T 1:30-4:30pm; W 3:45-5:45pm;
Tel.: 773.442.4774 or by appointment

****WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE****

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social Inequalities examines different sociological explanations of the causes and consequences of social inequalities, and it explores the linkages between social stratification in the United States and global inequalities. Students are introduced to social stratification by examining theoretical approaches toward understanding social inequalities, which will lay the foundation for how inequalities are structured and patterned. Students also examine how inequalities are institutionalized, legitimized, and experienced day-to-day by different groups of people. Topics in the course include, but are not limited to, how social and economic inequalities figure in jobs, income, wealth, poverty, environmental and health outcomes and how social, economic, and political inequalities intersect with race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality.

Prerequisites: SOC 100 and ENG 101 with a grade of C or higher

This course has been approved as a Writing Intensive course as part of the Writing Intensive Program (WIP). Successful completion of this course fulfills the Writing Intensive graduation requirement for Sociology majors who entered the university in Fall 2008 or later. Speak to your advisor or visit <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip> for more information.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the course is to provide you with a sociological framework through which to view critically how social inequalities exist and persist over time despite social change. To accomplish this, students will:

1. understand the major theoretical perspectives of social stratification;
2. understand the connections between U.S. and global inequalities.
3. understand different forms and levels of social inequalities (historical, institutional, ideological, and personal) with respect to class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality;

4. discuss the impact of social inequalities on personal lives, different social groups, and society as a whole;
5. analyze conventional or “popular” explanations for social inequalities and explain why inequalities persist;
6. gain awareness of social inequalities in the everyday and their solutions; and
7. develop critical thinking and writing skills in accordance with the Writing Intensive initiative across the university curriculum.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Instruction is in lecture-discussion format. Lectures and discussions may deviate from assigned readings. If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining notes from another student. I do not provide any student with notes.

COURSE READINGS

There are three required texts for the course. All books are available at Beck’s Book Store in the Student Union.

(1) Ore, Tracy E., ed. 2009. *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*. 4th ed. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill. [ISBN: 978-0-07-338008-7] [Listed as **Ore** under **Readings** in the **Class Schedule**]

(2) Rothman, Robert A. 2005. *Inequality and Stratification: Race, Class, and Gender*. 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall. [ISBN: 0-13-184968-9] [Listed as **Rothman** under **Readings** in the **Class Schedule**]

(3) The Sociology Writing Group. 2008. *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers*. 6th ed. New York: Worth Publishers. [ISBN: 978-0-7167-7626-0] [Listed as **Writing Guide** under **Readings** in the **Class Schedule**]

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

There are twenty-one assessments in the course for a total of 500 points: Attendance and Class Participation, thirteen Student Group Discussions, two Draft Papers, two Peer Evaluations, and three Final Papers.

ATTENDANCE and CLASS PARTICIPATION [30 pts.]: Attendance and participation in class discussions are critical to your success in the course. You are expected to attend every class, read the assigned readings before each class, and be prepared to participate in discussions. I will permit three excused absences during the semester. After that, however, I will subtract three points from your final grade for each absence.

STUDENT GROUP DISCUSSIONS [130 pts.]: The thirteen Student Group Discussions (SGDs) are your opportunity to write and talk about the course material with your peers, with particular emphasis on the Ore (2009) text. SGDs consist of written responses, group discussions, and discussion “minutes.” I hand out discussion questions at the beginning of each discussion day to which each student responds in writing. Students then form into randomly assigned groups and discuss the course material with each

other. Each group takes discussion “minutes,” which summarize what was discussed. Finally, at the end of class, each student hands in their written responses and each group hands in their meeting “minutes.” Student Group Discussions occur on 1/20, 1/27, 2/03, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/03, 3/10, 3/17, 3/31, 4/07, 4/14, and 4/21.

DRAFT PAPERS 1 & 2: The two Draft Papers demonstrate your ability to assimilate ideas from the course material and evaluate them critically. You are expected to make a persuasive argument in your papers, support it with evidence from the readings, use proper in-text citations, and include a comprehensive bibliography of at least five peer-reviewed sources. Each Draft Paper must be 5-6 double-spaced, typewritten pages. Students submit two hardcopies of their Draft Papers: one hardcopy to me for my feedback, and one hardcopy to the assigned Peer Evaluator. (See below under **Peer Evaluations 1 & 2.**) Topics and instructions for completing the Draft papers are posted on Blackboard on 1/20. Draft Paper 1 is due on 2/08 and Draft Paper 2 is due on 3/15.

PEER EVALUATIONS 1 & 2 [40 pts.]: The two Peer Evaluations hone the practice of critical thinking and writing as if students served as reviewers of scholarly manuscripts. Peer evaluators review hardcopies of their classmates’ Draft Papers 1 & 2 by answering the **Evaluation** questions on pp. 121-122 in The Sociology Writing Group’s *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers* (2008). Each Peer Evaluation must be 1-2 double-spaced, typewritten pages. Peer evaluators then return the hardcopy of the Draft Paper to the original author and submit two copies of the Peer Evaluation, one to the original author and one to me. Further instructions on completing the Peer Evaluations are posted on Blackboard on 1/20. Peer Evaluation 1 is due on 2/22 and Peer Evaluation 2 is due on 3/29.

FINAL PAPERS 1, 2, & 3 [300 pts.]: Final Papers 1 & 2 are revisions of Draft Papers 1 & 2, respectively. A draft is not required for Final Paper 3, but I encourage you to write a draft anyway either on your own or with the Sociology Peer Tutor. Each Final Paper must be 5-6 double-spaced, typewritten pages and draw from at least five peer-reviewed sources. Final Paper 1 is due on 3/01, Final Paper 2 is due on 4/05, and Final Paper 3 is due on 5/03.

Final Papers 1, 2, &3 must be submitted via Blackboard as Assignments. No hardcopies of Final Papers and no late assessments are accepted. No deadline extensions and no discussion make ups are given.

COURSE GRADES & GRADING POLICY

The course assessments, due dates/times, and grade distributions are summarized below:

ASSESSMENT	DUE DATES/TIMES	TOTAL POINTS
ATTENDANCE and CLASS PARTICIPATION	Throughout Semester	30

STUDENT GROUP DISCUSSIONS	1/20, 1/27, 2/03, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/03, 3/10, 3/17, 3/31, 4/07, 4/14, 4/21	130
DRAFT PAPER 1 (5-6 pages) (Two hardcopies submitted)	DUE 2/08 by 2:25pm	
PEER EVALUATION 1 (1-2 pages)	DUE 2/22 by 2:25pm	20
FINAL PAPER 1 (5-6 pages) (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard)	DUE 3/01 by 2:25pm	100
DRAFT PAPER 2 (5-6 pages) (Two hardcopies submitted)	DUE 3/15 by 2:25pm	
PEER EVALUATION 2 (1-2 pages)	DUE 3/29 by 2:25pm	20
FINAL PAPER 2 (5-6 pages) (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard)	DUE 4/05 by 2:25pm	100
FINAL PAPER 3 (5-6 pages) (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard)	DUE 5/03 by 2:25pm	100
		500

The grade scale and performance criteria for the course are the following:

A (90-100%=448 pts. or above) – Completed the assignment on time; explicitly answered all questions; provided solid support of claims with evidence from cited sources (e.g., outside sources, course texts, class lectures); used proper citations and references; addressed the audience appropriately. The assignment flowed logically, was well-organized, and was free from grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. The assignment demonstrated in-depth reflection, insight, clarity, and analysis.

B (80 – 89 % = 398 to 447 pts.) – Completed the assignment on time; answered questions; provided some support of claims with evidence from cited sources; used proper citations and references; addressed the audience. The assignment did not demonstrate the logic, organization, grammar, reflection, insight, clarity, or analysis compared to "A" above.

C (70 – 79 % = 348 to 397 pts.) – Completed the assignment on time; answers and arguments demonstrated some to little clarity or focus compared to "A" or "B" above; provided little support of claims with or without evidence from cited sources; lacked proper citations and references.

D (60 – 69 % = 298 to 347 pts.) – Submitted the assignment on time; answers and arguments demonstrated little to no clarity compared to an "A," "B," or "C" above. Work turned in was incomplete and inadequate to the assignment.

F (Below 60% = 297 pts. or below) – Either failed to submit the assignment on time or the submitted assignment reflected a poor grasp of the task or an inability to complete it; did not answer questions fully or adequately; little to no support of claims; improper or no use of citations and references.

WRITING RESOURCES

To assist your writing, I strongly recommend that you contact in advance the following resources:

--NEIU Writing Lab, LWH 2046, 773.442.5480, <http://www.neiu.edu/~ewlab/> and
 --NEIU Center for Academic Writing, 4th Floor of the NEIU Library, 773.442.4492, <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip/home.htm>. **Peer Tutors are available at the NEIU Center for Academic Writing for students enrolled in this Writing Intensive course.**

Other useful resources on writing include:

--Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press [ISBN: 978-0-226-04132-2]

--*Grammar Girl: Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing*, <http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/>

--*Indiana University Writing Tutorial Services*, <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml>

--*Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)*, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is handled in accordance with the “University Student Conduct Code,” Office of the Dean of Students. See <http://www.neiu.edu/~DeanSt/survival/conduct.pdf>.

Students who plagiarize will earn a failing grade, followed by further disciplinary action. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, see me as soon as possible.

CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Week 1 1/11 & 1/13	Introducing Social Inequalities & Theories of Stratification	(1) Rothman, Chs. 1-2 (pp. 2-42) (2) Ore, pp. 1-18
Week 2 1/18 & 1/20	Structural Patterns of Inequalities: Race & Ethnicity 1/18: NO CLASS — Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday Holiday <u>1/20: Instructions for Completing Draft Papers 1 & 2 and Peer Evaluations 1 & 2</u> (Posted on	(1) Ore, Readings 1-4 (pp. 19-74) (2) Writing Guide, pp. 1-21

	Blackboard from 1/20-5/03) 1/20: Student Group Discussion 1, Readings 1-4	
Week 3 1/25 & 1/27	Structural Patterns of Inequalities: Social Class 1/27: Student Group Discussion 2, Readings 5-8	(1) Rothman, Ch. 3 (pp. 44-67) (2) Ore, Readings 5-8 (pp. 75-111) (3) Writing Guide, pp. 30-42
Week 4 2/01 & 2/03	Structural Patterns of Inequalities: Sex & Gender 2/03: Student Group Discussion 3, Readings 9-12	(1) Ore, Readings 9-12 (pp. 111-149) (2) Writing Guide, Chs. 3-4 (pp. 45-117)
Week 5 2/08 & 2/10	Structural Patterns of Inequalities: Sexuality <u>2/08: Draft Paper 1 DUE by 2:25pm</u> 2/10: Student Group Discussion 4, Readings 13-16 & 58	(1) Ore, Readings 13-16 (pp. 150-212) & 58 (pp. 703-707) (2) Writing Guide, Ch. 5 (pp. 118-141)
Week 6 2/15 & 2/17	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Family 2/17: Student Group Discussion 5, Readings 17-20	(1) Rothman, Ch. 4 (pp. 68-96) (2) Ore, pp. 213-238 (3) Ore, Readings 17-20 (pp. 239-304)
Week 7 2/22 & 2/24	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Educational Attainment and (Im)mobility <u>2/22: Peer Evaluation 1 DUE by 2:25pm</u> 2/24: Student Group Discussion 6, Readings 21-25	(1) Rothman, Ch. 11 (pp. 222-241) (2) Ore, Readings 21-25 (pp. 305-353) (3) Writing Guide, pp. 215-221
Week 8 3/01 & 3/03	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Work, Income, & the Economy <u>3/01: Final Paper 1 DUE by 2:25pm</u> (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard) 3/03: Student Group Discussion 7, Readings 26-29	(1) Rothman, Ch.5 (pp. 98-119) (2) Ore, Readings 26-29 (pp. 354-391)
Week 9 3/08 & 3/10	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Elites, Political Participation, & Public Policy 3/10: Student Group Discussion 8, Readings 30-34 & 56	(1) Rothman, Ch. 7 (pp. 140-163) (2) Ore, Readings 30-34 (pp. 354-391) & 56 (pp. 695-696)
Week 10 3/15 & 3/17	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Media <u>3/15: Draft Paper 2 DUE by 2:25pm</u>	Ore, Readings 35-38 (pp. 444-523)

	3/17: Student Group Discussion 9, Readings 35-38	
Week 11 3/22 & 3/24	NO CLASSES — Spring Break	
Week 12 3/29 & 3/31	Institutionalizing & Legitimizing Inequalities: Language & Culture <u>3/29: Peer Evaluation 2 DUE by 2:25pm</u> 3/31: Student Group Discussion 10, Readings 39-42	Ore, Readings 39-42 (pp. 524-565)
Week 13 4/05 & 4/07	Institutionalizing, Legitimizing, and Experiencing Inequalities: Violence & Social Control <u>4/05: Final Paper 2 DUE by 2:25pm</u> (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard) 4/07: Student Group Discussion 11, Readings 43-46 & 57	(1) Rothman, Ch. 8 (pp. 165-186) (2) Ore, Readings 43-46 (pp. 566-610) & 57 (pp. 697-702)
Week 14 4/12 & 4/14	Experiencing Inequalities: Privilege, Lifestyles, & Constructed Differences in the Everyday 4/14: Student Group Discussion 12, Readings 47-54	(1) Rothman, Ch. 9 (pp. 187-205) (2) Ore, Readings 47-54 (pp. 615-680) (3) Writing Guide, Ch. 7 (pp. 180-213)
Week 15 4/19 & 4/21	Experiencing Inequalities: Awareness, Action, & Change 4/21: Student Group Discussion 13, Readings 59-65	(1) Rothman, Ch. 10 (pp. 206-220) (2) Ore, Readings 59-65 (pp. 708-786)
Week 16 4/26 & 4/28	Experiencing Inequalities: Awareness, Action, & Change (cont.)	
Week 17 5/03	Conclusion <u>5/03: Final Paper 3 DUE by 2:25pm</u> (Submitted as an "Assignment" in Blackboard)	