

St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology

Social Inequality: Sociology 328
Winter 2021

Professor: Norine Verberg

Office Location: NT606 & Teams

Class times: Tuesdays, 11:15-12:30
& Fridays, 12:30-2:00

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30
Tues. & Thurs.; 2:30-4:30; by appointment

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	25%	Friday, February 26
Assignment ~ two choices	30%	Friday, March 26, <i>beginning of class</i> <i>decide on Option B by Jan. 29 @ noon; see below</i>
Dr. Calliste Forum	10%	Discussion board responses: Dr. Agnes Calliste Student Voices Circle (Feb 11) and Dr. Agnes Calliste African Heritage Lecture (Feb 24)
Final examination	35%	TBA

Class Attendance and Participation

Do your best to attend all classes and complete the assigned readings on time. Doing the readings prior to class introduces you to the new material discussed in class.

You are encouraged to ask questions or make comments in class. If you miss class, *you are responsible to find out what you missed* (e.g., lectures, videos, etc.).

Attendance is taken; multiple unexplained class absences are reported to the Dean.

Please do not email me about missing class.

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, ask for an appointment. For email correspondence, note the course number.

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

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

You will write a five-six page (1200-1300 word) *critical analysis* on a topic related to this course. 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 a *policy* dimension. Begin by finding *a couple news stories* on how certain groups are *experiencing unequal access* (e.g., to health care, post-secondary education, Internet, *housing*, *food*, *financial assistance*, etc.) or *social exclusion* (e.g., individuals living with mental illness; identity discrimination).

With your topic in mind, find and employ six peer-reviewed journal articles to develop a critical analysis of your topic. *Your references should be written by sociologists and focus on Canadian social life and policy.* In this course, we learn about changes in social policy that have been coined “neo-liberal”. To gain a better understanding of this policy shift, at least one reference should be on the significance of *social policy* for the fate of certain marginalized people or groups.

In Sum: Use *media sources* to identify a topic: Use *peer-reviewed journal articles* to analyse it.

Option B: Learning about the experience of social inequality through Service Learning

The Service Learning option involves volunteering for 20 hours with a community partner and using course-based material to develop a critical understanding of the experiences addressed by the service group. In this case, students will write a sociological account of what was learned about living with social inequalities through their service work. If you choose this option, a placement will be set up and monitored by the Service Learning Department. Consider keeping a journal to help you pick a topic, then select *three peer-reviewed Canadian Sociology journal articles* to develop your analysis of the experiences or issue you identified through your volunteer work. Length: Four pages (900-1000 words).

If you sign up for Service Learning, you will agree to a **schedule** that fits in your course schedule. **Individuals and programs will be counting on your service. Please do not sign up for Service Learning if you cannot fulfill the mandate.** Though *exceptional*, if a student is dismissed from their Service Learning placement due to absenteeism or inappropriate engagement *or* if the student quits, the professor will re-assign the student to Option A and select the student's research topic: the regular due date will apply as will an automatic 20% penalty for the placement disruption.

Option A is the **default option**: No need to tell me. If you choose Option B (Service Learning), follow the instructions sent by email to sign up and select your placement by January 29 at noon.

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 and *how to select suitable references*. We will discuss how to find *suitable peer-reviewed journal articles*. For instance, to find articles written by Canadian sociologists include the words *sociology Canada* as key words in your library search. To find statistical information, try ‘prevalence’; to find qualitative studies, try ‘experience’. The Reference librarians are available online.

You are strongly recommended to start looking for topics for your paper right away and to start your library research by the 3rd week of classes. If you have questions, you are encouraged to seek feedback on your topic choice and reference selection early. Doing so allows time to develop your library skills, evaluate your references, and develop your thesis.

Discussion Forum: Dr. Agnes Calliste Black Student Voices Circle & African Heritage Lecture

Students will attend two online events: the *Dr. Agnes Calliste Black Student Voices Circle on Thursday, February 11th (7-8:30)* led by DeRico Symonds and the *Dr. Agnes Calliste African Heritage Lecture by Dr. Rachel Zellars on Wednesday, February 24th (7-8:30)*. A recording will be shared with students who have to work. Students will be assigned to discussion groups to discuss these presentations on Moodle. The grade for this section is based on your Moodle discussion board work. We will also give some time in class to discussing these topics and research initiatives related to promoting racial equity, justice and inclusion. The topic of racial inequality is addressed in this course. This course provides an ideal opportunity to discuss the Black Lives Matters Movement and how it is has started important conversations in 2020. Here is some information about these events from the Department of Sociology's Calliste Committee.

Mr. DeRico Symonds, a community leader in social justice issues from Halifax, Nova Scotia will deliver a public keynote address titled, "Liberation, Agitation & Collective Resistance" as part of the inaugural the Department of Sociology's *Dr. Agnes Calliste Black Student Voices Circle*. The keynote will guide a panel discussion on racial justice and resilience in university communities with participants from local African Nova Scotian, Black Canadian, and International Black communities, at various stages in their academic journeys. Tara Reddick will chair the circle, which will also include Henderson Cartwright, Rebecca Mesay, and Marcel Desmond. The *Dr. Agnes Calliste Black Student Voices Circle* will be an engaging dialogue delivered online using a webinar forum. All are welcome! For more information on the keynote speaker visit www.dericosymonds.ca

In association with the *Dr. Agnes Calliste African Heritage Lecture Series*, we are pleased to welcome **Dr. Rachel Zellars**, Lawyer and Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Justice and Community Studies at Saint Mary's University. Dr. Zellars is a nationally recognized expert in implicit bias who researches the relationship between bias and anti-blackness. She is also a co-founder of the African Nova Scotian Freedom School and founding organizer of the Black Lives Matter Solidarity Fund Nova Scotia. The Lecture will be delivered online using a webinar forum. All are welcome! For more information on the keynote speaker visit <https://www.smu.ca/academics/departments/sjcs-faculty-rachel-zellars.html>

Policies concerning course assignments

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

- **1.5" line spacing**
- **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 should be emailed.

2) Extensions and late papers

A penalty of 5% per day (i.e., papers are marked out of 100) applies to late papers; late points apply when class starts. If your circumstances warrant an extension without penalty, please contact me to make a formal request.

3) Respect standard essay conventions

Edit your paper: Do you have a strong, relevant, on-point first sentence? Does your introduction include a thesis statement? Does the body of the paper develop your thesis? Did you provide a conclusion? Did you edit your paper for grammar and spelling? Did you insert page numbers?

4) Required Citation Style: American Sociological Association Style (ASA).

- A concise ASA guide can be found at OWL Purdue (online) and other places.
- For the “References” page, **do not provide DOIs**. Cite journal articles as follows:

Author1 (Last name inverted), **Author2** (including full surname, last name is not inverted), and **Author3**. **Year of publication**. “**Title of Article**.” *Name of Publication* (italicized) **Volume Number (Issue Number):Page numbers of article**. (NB: hanging indentation)

Verberg, Norine and Christopher G. Davis. 2011. “Counter-memory Activism in the Aftermath of Tragedy: A Case Study of the Westray Families Group.” *Canadian Review of Sociology* 48(1): 23-43.

Cite newspaper stories as follows (for more detail, look up ASA guidelines):

Author (Last, First). **Year of publication**. “**Title of Article**.” *Name of Publication* (italicized): **Page number(s) of the news story if print copy used**. (NB: hanging indentation)

Paddon, Dave. 2018. Federal government has no plan to improve Internet access to rural Canadians: Auditor General. *Globe and Mail*, November 20.

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 are reported to the Dean.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy spelled out in the university academic calendar. Violations of the university’s *Academic Integrity Policy* are report to the Department Chair and the Dean.

Schedule of Readings*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Jan. 13		Course Introduction & Social Inequality in the news
		<u>Power and Class</u>
Jan. 19/22	1, 2	Corporate Ownership and Corporate Power
Jan. 26/29	2, 3	Food Inc, Social class
		<u>Socio-Economic Bases of Social Inequality</u>
Feb 2/5	4, 5, 22	Income / Wealth / Poverty / <i>Four Feet Up</i>
Feb. 9/12	6-7	Income / Occupation
<i>Feb. 16</i>	--	<i>No classes today</i>
Feb. 19/23	8-9	Education
<i>February 26</i>	<i>midterm</i>	<i>Covers lectures, film & readings (Chapters 1-9; videos)</i>
		<u>Social Justice and Inequality</u>
March 2/5	10, 12	First Nations / Immigration
March 9/12	13, 24	Racial Inequality /Acceptance
March 16/19	14, 15, 16	Gender
March 23	17	Sexual Orientation
<i>March 26</i>	18	Age <i>Papers are due at the beginning of class.</i>
March 30	19	Disability
<i>April 2</i>	---	<i>No classes today</i>
April 6/9	20, 21	Regional Inequalities / Health Inequalities
<i>TBA</i>	<i>final</i>	<i>Covers lectures & readings: primarily since midterm</i>

<p>* 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.</p>
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