

Sociology 24: Introduction to Social Inequality Spring 2014

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Course Requirements

- Participation in class discussion (10%)
- Reading responses due at beginning of each lecture (40%) [Note: you can miss 3 of these.]
- Midterm exam (20%) [or paper]
- Final exam (30%) [or paper]

Section Basics

There will be 10 weekly sections, the purpose of which will be to clarify the lectures and to discuss the assigned readings. Students are **required** to attend all sections. Section participation counts for **10% of your grade**. **Students who miss more than two sections risk failing the course.**

Section is a place for us to better understand the important works of the sociologists we will read throughout the term. Together, we will learn to evaluate the research design of the pieces we read, to discuss the benefits and disadvantages to the methodological choices authors make, and to be able to articulate what makes a compelling argument about the social world. These skills will help you to be a better consumer of sociology and to prepare you to think about the design of your own future projects, especially as they relate to issues of social inequality. They will also help you be a more active and critical reader, which will be useful in your other sociology classes, as well as your coursework more generally.

You should expect me to be engaged, available, and helpful. As section leader, I see my job as helping to shape discussions that result in further insight about the readings and an improved understanding of the discipline of sociology and how it relates to issues of social inequality. You should also expect me to provide feedback to your work that can help you sharpen your analytical skills and rigor. Ideally, section will provide you with both content knowledge and broader skills that are useful outside our classroom.

I will be available to meet with you by appointment, as no one time will work for everyone. I am usually highly responsive to messages, so just email me to let me know that you'd like to meet. List a few times that work for you, as well as what you'd like to discuss, and I will confirm a time and place that works well for the both of us. I promise to be prepared for our meeting, and I expect you to be the same. Office hours are a particularly useful time to discuss your work and my feedback on it; if you do not understand how you are being evaluated, it is your right and

responsibility to come talk to me about it. I like getting to know students, so consider this an open invitation to stop by to chat about anything or nothing in particular.

I will answer emails sent Monday-Friday within 24 hours, but if you write me after 5PM on Friday, I reserve the right to respond on Monday morning.

Student Expectations and Section Policy

Please come to section on time, with questions and opinions about the readings. I will plan sections to be active and engaging, but this format only works well if you are present, both physically and mentally. Most weeks, section will include at least some small-group discussion, which means that you will depend on one-another to be properly prepared.

Attendance is mandatory, and I will be taking attendance at all section meetings. Students only get credit if they are present at section for the entire hour. There is no way to make up the credit for missed sections. If you are unable to make it to our section, I appreciate an email letting me know, but absences will only be excused for extraordinary circumstances. I will upload all section materials to my website (linked above) after all weekly sections have been held.

We will negotiate the use of laptop computers during section meetings. As someone who takes notes faster on the computer, I understand the benefit in using them. However, this is not a lecture-based section, and if the presence of laptops is stifling our discussion, then removing them from the equation will likely create a better teaching and learning environment for all of us.

Assignments must be turned in on time. Late assignments will be penalized. If you are sick or otherwise absent, you will need to contact me explaining the reason. Please be prepared to provide a doctor's note for medical reasons.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to email Professor Beckfield or me. I look forward to a great semester with you all!