

SOCIOLOGY 169: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES
UC Santa Cruz
Summer 2018: M/W 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Dr. Megan McNamara (*she/her*)

Office: Rachel Carson College 310

Office Hours: Wednesdays from 11:00 – 12:00 p.m., and generously by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social inequality is simultaneously one of the most intransigent and disruptive features of contemporary life. Seemingly trivial “differences” between people – on the basis of their membership in social categories – code for substantial variation in individuals’ life chances. Sociology, broadly speaking, takes a systematic approach both to understanding the roots of inequalities and to positing solutions to the social problems that they engender. In this course, we will begin by examining the discipline’s key theoretical approaches to social stratification. Then, we will use those theories as a framework through which to analyze a cross-section of prevailing social inequalities in the United States, with special emphasis on institutionalized racism.

A note about trigger warnings: Please be aware that this course addresses topics that can elicit emotional discomfort. Beyond what is in the syllabus, I will not be providing any trigger warnings during the course. I trust you to care for yourself appropriately. You do not need to ask permission if for any reason you find you need to leave the room during a particular topic. I am also available to debrief with you after class, during office hours, or by appointment should you wish to discuss any feelings or questions that arise during class or through the readings.

MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND OUR WORK TOGETHER

1. I love Sociology and I am sincerely happy to be working with you this quarter. I believe that all students have an innate capacity for learning, regardless of their age, academic background, and learning style. I am committed to facilitating an inclusive and welcoming learning environment in which each student has the opportunity to experience themselves as capable, insightful, and appreciated. I believe that each person’s life experience represents an important contribution to our classroom community. As a teacher, I assume responsibility for ensuring that each student in my classes has access to a variety of ways in which to demonstrate the knowledge of Sociology that they acquire during our time together. I promise to bring my passion for Sociology to every class session. I ask that you, too, commit to doing your best work in our class.
2. I am here to help. If you are struggling with any aspect of this class, please come talk to me. I know that some of the material is difficult, and I also do understand that things happen in life that can make it hard to succeed in school. One of my main purposes here is to be a source of support for you, but I can’t help you if I don’t know what is going on. If you are having trouble, reach out to us me soon as possible. I will do *my* very best to help you do *your* very best.

TIPS FOR SUCCEEDING IN THIS COURSE:

1. **Attend lecture and complete the assigned readings.** It will be much easier to get a grade that you will be proud of in this class if you are religious about reading and showing up. The readings are extremely important to your overall learning process. Your readings are meant to compliment the work you do in class.
2. **Set up your Canvas notifications properly:** I send out messages to the entire class using the “Announcements” feature. In order not to miss any messages from me, please go to **Account → Notifications → Course Activities** and then toggle the setting under “Announcements” to “Notify me right away.” This will ensure that you get an email copy of any announcements I send.
3. **Tell me as soon as possible if you find that you are struggling.** Keeping up on the readings is imperative to your success. If you get overwhelmed by them, come talk to me so I can work out a strategy to support your learning.

COURSE FORMAT

Our course includes two main components: our communal lectures and discussions, plus the readings, films, and written assignments that you will complete on your own. You can expect to read about 150-200 pages per week for Sociology 169. **Please bring your laptop or tablet to class every day.**

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS: Books are available at the Bay Tree

1. Desmond, Matthew. 2016. *Evicted*. New York: Crown. ISBN: 978-0-5534-4743-9 (**Note:** an excellent audio edition of this book is also available through Audible if you enjoy being read to).
2. Grusky, David B., ed. 2014. *Social Stratification* (Fourth Edition). Boulder, CO: Westview. ISBN: 978-0-8133-4671-7
3. A subscription to the online version of the New York Times or the Washington Post (available at low cost to students: \$5-7 per month). Both are also available as a smartphone app.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Lecture participation	450 points
Class presentation	100 points
Newspaper reflections	200 points
Final paper proposal	50 points
Final paper	200 points
Total	1000 points

Final course grades for the class will be calculated in accordance with the following schema:

A+: 980-1000	A: 935-979	A-: 900-934	
B+: 875-899	B: 835-874	B-: 800-834	
C+: 775-799	C: 735-774	C-: 700-734	
D+: 675-699	D: 650-674	D-: 600-649	F: 0-599

Lecture Participation (450 points; 45% of course grade) will be awarded based on your participation in daily class activities. Because summer session is super short, your presence at every single class session is mandatory. We have 9 class days; each is worth 50 points. You don't have to constantly raise your hand if you're not a person who enjoys talking in front of the group. However, you do have to talk at least occasionally, participate in small group discussions, and participate in the reading discussions that your classmates organize. If you are clearly doing your best, you'll get the points. (Conversely, points may be docked for significant early departures or late arrivals). You can make it easy for me to assess your participation generously simply by exhibiting an attentive facial expression, staying on task, and showing interest in class proceedings.

Class Presentation (2 presentations at 50 points each = 100 points; 10% of your grade) will take place for about 20 minutes during class times between Week 2 and Week 5. Twice during the course with your small group, you'll lead a presentation on one of the course readings. I will ask you to do a careful reading of your piece and prepare discussion questions for the class.

The Newspaper Reflections (200 points; 20% of course grade) consist of 2-page weekly reflections that you will write over the course of the quarter. A reflection is due each Sunday night except for the last week. Each one is worth 50 points. The purpose of these reflections is to help you cultivate the skill and habit of paying attention to what is going on in the world around you, and then relating it back to what you are learning in class. Developing this habit will – happily – also lay some solid groundwork for your final paper. You can find a link to the prompt for the reflections on our Canvas home page. Because this is a predictable, repeated assignment, no late submissions will be accepted except in cases of serious, unavoidable emergency. Unexcused late assignments can be submitted up to two days late for 50% credit; beyond that, no credit will be given.

The Final Paper Proposal (50 points, 5% of course grade) is due by midnight on Wednesday, July 18 on Canvas. You can find the proposal instructions on Canvas. Please bring a hard copy to class on July 23.

The Final Paper (200 points; 20% of course grade) is due at midnight on Friday, July 27. You will submit it on Canvas. The prompt is on Canvas under the "Assignments" tab.

Extra credit: a paper (2 pages) worth 20 points will be made available to you during the last two weeks of class. It should take no more than 3-4 hours to complete. You can find the assignment prompt and submission instructions on Canvas under "Assignments." It is due no later than Friday, July 27th at midnight.

EVALUATION OF WRITING

1. Write like you mean it! Pour your brain and your heart into everything you submit. It's more interesting to read and you'll enjoy doing it.
2. **Please maintain high standards when it comes to writing mechanics.** Contact the Westside Writing Center (<http://oakes.ucsc.edu/academics/writing-center/index.html>) or Learning Support Services (lss.ucsc.edu) and use writing tutors and other resources if you need them.

CLASS PREPARATION AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Please come to class prepared and on time. Feel free to bring drinks, snacks, etc. – whatever you need to be comfortable for the entire class session. As a courtesy to me and your classmates, and to decrease distractions during class, please take care of bathroom/texting/etc. prior to class and avoid leaving the classroom during lecture except in cases of emergency. (If you have a medical condition that requires you to leave class on occasion, it's no problem - please just let me know privately so that I will not be distracted by your departures).
2. Regular attendance and will significantly boost your grade. Although we will sometimes be discussing the ideas from the readings in class, most of the lecture material that I will present will not be in the readings, so coming to class and taking good notes for yourself is the only way for you to reliably learn the all of the course material. As with all college courses, I expect you to attend class and to submit your work on time. That said, if a serious emergency does arise, please communicate with me so that I can work with you. Naturally, I expect you to hold up your end of the “showing up” bargain, but I’m here to help you succeed and I am a very reasonable person.

MISCELLANEOUS HOUSEKEEPING

1. Do **come hang out at office hours**, even if you’re not having trouble with the class. I would love to explore whatever you’re interested in having a conversation about! If you can’t make my designated office hours, I’m always happy to meet at other times. Just get in touch and we will work something out. Office hours are a great opportunity to build relationships with people who can potentially make an impact on your educational path.
2. **I will use Canvas as an online grade book.** You can check up on your cumulative grade and the progress of your assignment grades anytime by logging in. You will also find any extra readings and written assignment prompts online. You will submit your extra credit assignment on Canvas, should you choose to complete it.
3. Feel to **be in email communication** about anything, at any time, but please allow 24 hours on weekdays for a response (weekends may take a little longer 😊). If you don’t hear back from me, just resend your email - I get a ton of emails and once in a while, I miss something. You can email me at mmcnamar@ucsc.edu or message me on Canvas, although I prefer email.
4. **Self-acknowledgement is allowed and encouraged!** If you go out on a limb and try something that’s scary to you and you’re willing to be acknowledged for it, come tell me. I will give you a high five and shout, “Yay, you!”
5. **Classroom decorum:** some of our discussions may provoke feelings of discomfort, which can and often do arise when people confront issues of social inequality. Please be attentive to communicating your opinions respectfully, and extend the same courtesy as you consider and respond to your classmates’ thoughts and experiences.
6. **Changes to the syllabus:** Sometimes, the pace of an individual course may require me to make changes to the syllabus and/or reading schedules. If I make changes, I will send post a new version electronically and notify you of its existence.
7. **No cellphones are permitted during class sessions**, unless we are using them for something related to class.

8. Unless you are directed to do so in class, **laptops should never be used for any purposes other than notetaking**. If I observe you accessing the Internet during lecture, I will ask you to revert to paper notes for the remainder of the quarter. Your Internet use during class negatively impacts not only your own learning process, but the learning process of those around you whose eyes may be drawn to your screen.

9. **Students with disabilities who need accommodations:** I am 100% committed to facilitating an inclusive classroom environment for all students. I will work with you to make sure that this class works for you. For students submitting their DRC accommodations letter, *please send it to me by email rather than handing me a hard copy in class*. Having all of the DRC letters in one central online place helps me to ensure that I am not missing anything. If you would like to talk in more detail about your accommodations, please come to office hours or set up a phone appointment so that I can make sure that your privacy is guaranteed during our conversation. Finally, if you have a disability that you think I am inadvertently discounting or not realizing the significance of, please come talk to me. I am eager to do whatever I can to learn more about the different ways that I can support every single one of my students.

10. **Cheating/dishonesty:** I consider any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating on the quizzes/exams or plagiarizing from the Web in your writing, to be a serious violation of the University’s norms of conduct. Students who commit acts of academic misconduct will receive an F in the course and will be reported to their college’s provost for further sanctions. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: in-class cheating, out-of-class cheating, plagiarism, knowingly assisting another student in cheating or plagiarism, falsifying attendance by signing in for another student or asking another student to sign in for you, and knowingly furnishing false information to college staff, faculty, administrators or other officials. Plagiarism also includes submitting writing that you produced for another class.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

All readings are in our textbook (*Social Stratification*) unless otherwise specified. All submissions for written work are due by MIDNIGHT on the date specified.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	OTHER
Monday, June 25	Introduction to the course	Grusky and Weisshaar, pp 1-16 Grusky and Szelényi, pp. 17-24	
	General explanations of inequality	Bourdieu, pp. 982-1003 (skim)	
	The consequences of social inequality		

<p>Wednesday, June 27</p>	<p>Economic and status inequality</p>	<p>Ehrenreich, pp. 330-338 Domhoff, pp. 297-302 Atkinson, Piketty, and Saez, pp. 59-73</p>	<p>Week 1 newspaper reflection due Sunday 7/1</p>
<p>Monday, July 2</p>	<p>Introduction to race The invention of race</p>	<p>Omi and Winant, pp. 682-686 Saperstein and Penner, pp. 687-695 Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” (on Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading group 1 presents</p>
<p>**JULY 4**</p>	<p>NO CLASS</p>	<p>INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY START READING <i>EVICTED</i></p>	
<p>Monday, July 9</p>	<p>Race and economics</p>	<p>Wilson, pp. 347-356 Bertrand & Mullainathan, pp. 747-751 Pager, pp. 757-764</p>	<p>Reading group 2 presents</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 11</p>	<p>Race and housing</p>	<p><i>Evicted</i> (all)</p>	<p>Reading group 3 presents Week 3 newspaper reflection due Sunday 7/15</p>

<p>Monday, July 16</p>	<p>Race and education</p>	<p>Rios (on Canvas) Steele, pp. 752-756 Laureau, pp. 1013-1021</p>	<p>Reading group 1 presents</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 18</p>	<p>Race, crime, and policing</p>	<p>Introduction to <i>The New Jim Crow</i> (on Canvas)</p> <p>Read: https:// www.dissentmagazine.org/article/ women-black-lives-matter-interview- marcia-chatelain</p> <p>Listen: https://www.npr.org/ 2018/03/09/591895426/the-mind-of- the-village-understanding-our-implicit- biases</p>	<p>Reading group 2 presents</p> <p>Week 4 newspaper reflection due Sunday 7/22</p> <p>Paper proposal due by midnight</p>
<p>Monday, July 23</p>	<p>Disability and inequality</p> <p>Gender and Inequality</p>	<p>Selections from <i>Beginning with Disability</i> (Davis et al., 2018) on Canvas</p> <p>Hochschild, pp. 803-806 Ridgeway, pp. 973-981</p> <p>Westbrook and Schilt (on Canvas) Edin (on Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading group 3 presents</p> <p>Please bring a hard copy of your paper proposal to class with you</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 25</p>	<p>Political inequality</p>	<p>Enriquez, “Undocumented and Citizen Students Unite” (On Canvas)</p> <p>PLEASE BRING YOUR LAPTOP OR TABLET TO CLASS</p>	

Finals		NO IN-PERSON FINAL EXAM (You do not need to come to class for a final exam period 😊)	Completed final paper due on Canvas on Monday, June 11 at midnight
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