MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY 2RR3

Winter 2016

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Denis
Phone: 905-525-9140, ext. 23612
Office: KTH 624
Email: denisj@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours: Friday 11:30 – 13:00

Lecture Days and Times: Lecture Location:
C01 Tuesday 19:00 – 21:00 ITB AB102

Tutorial Locations:
T01 Tuesday 18:00 – 19:00 BSB 119 Kerry Bailey baileka@mcmaster.ca
T02 Tuesday 21:00 – 22:00 BSB 119 Kerry Bailey baileka@mcmaster.ca

Course website: http://avenue.mcmaster.ca

CASE STUDIES IN SOCIAL INEQUALITY

This course will provide an overview of sociological theories and research on social inequality in Canada, with an emphasis on critical/conflict, interactionist, and intersectional approaches. After reviewing some major theories of class, gender, racial/ethnic, and age/generational inequality, we will examine how these cross-cutting forms of inequality play out in various domains of Canadian social life, including family, work, education, health, and politics. Throughout the course, the settler-colonial foundations of Canada, and the perennial tensions between social structure and human agency, will be emphasized. We will also consider approaches to reducing structural inequities and pursuing social justice.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, you will:

- Be familiar with a range of structuralist and interactionist theories of social inequality and appreciate their strengths and limitations
- Know how these theories have been applied to various domains of social life in Canada
- Understand class, gender, race, ethnicity, and age as sets of power relations that structure social life and shape life-chances, while also being reproduced and challenged through the daily interactions of groups and individuals
- Appreciate how these structured sets of social relations are embedded in and, in turn, perpetuate large-scale systems such as capitalism, heteropatriarchy, racism, and settler-colonialism
- Be aware of some of the major types of social inequality in Canada today, including their extent, likely causes and consequences, and potential solutions
- Enhance your critical thinking, writing, and organizational skills through tests and essays
- Enhance your oral communication skills by discussing and debating theories and research in class and tutorials
Required Textbook


** The textbook may be purchased at the Campus Bookstore. Supplemental readings will be posted on Avenue and/or may be found through the McMaster Library System (http://library.mcmaster.ca/). **

Evaluation

1. Mid-term test (30%)

The mid-term test will cover lectures, readings, and tutorials from Weeks #1 through 6. It will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and will take place in class on Tuesday, **February 23**.

2. Short essays (30%)

At two points during the semester, you will write a 1200-word essay (4-5 pages, double-spaced) reflecting on a specific issue raised in class and/or the readings. For example, you might be asked to compare and contrast sociological theories of social inequality, consider the strengths and limitations of a given theory for understanding a specific case of inequality, or apply your sociological imagination to explain the causes, consequences, or strategies for reducing unjust inequalities. A question will be assigned at the end of class on the following dates: January 26 and March 15. Each paper will be due before class the week after it is assigned (February 2 and March 22, respectively).

3. Final take-home assignment (30%)

The final take-home assignment will consist of a set of short-answer questions based on lectures, readings, and tutorials from the entire course, with an emphasis on Weeks #7 through 13. The questions will be assigned during our last class (April 5) and will be due on Tuesday, **April 12**.

4. Attendance and participation (10%)

The quality of this course depends, in part, on your participation. As such, you will receive credit for excellent attendance, thoughtful questions, and insightful comments. This portion of your grade will be assigned primarily by your TA, but may be adjusted based on lecture attendance and contributions.
PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING POINTS CAREFULLY:

Assignments, Exams, and Late Policies

All assignments, tests, and exams must be completed in order to pass the course.

Please submit your assignments via the course website before class on the day they are due.

Faxed assignments will not be accepted.

Please do not bring assignments to the main Sociology office. The Sociology staff do not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers. Assignments will be returned to you in class or via e-mail or Avenue to Learn.

Your assignments should be typed in 12-point font and double-spaced.

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work” (http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=2208#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work). Please note that these regulations have changed as of Fall 2015.

The McMaster Student Absence Form is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note that this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or miss academic work worth 25% or more of your final grade, you MUST visit the Associate Dean of Social Sciences. You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Unless I receive this form or notification from the Associate Dean, there will be a 5% per day deduction for all late assignments.

If you miss an exam, you will have to inform the Associate Dean of Social Sciences, who will in turn notify me. Unless I receive this notification, writing a deferred exam will not be possible.

If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean’s office.
Review of Grades

All assignments, tests, and exams will be graded carefully. On occasion, students may disagree with the mark they receive. If this occurs, I would be happy to review the mark, provided the request is serious and the following procedure is followed.

Write a one-page statement describing in detail why you think a marking error was made. The statement should be submitted, along with the marked assignment or test, to me during my office hours. You may submit the request for a re-mark no sooner than one week and no later than one month after the assignment or test was returned. I will review your mark and get back to you with written feedback.

Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.

Additional Information

Your final mark will be converted to a letter grade according to the scale used by the Registrar and available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

If you would like to explore strategies for successful learning, please consult the Student Success Centre, which provides useful services and information about time management, note-taking, keeping up with readings, and taking tests, among other skills: http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students.html

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, balloting, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

McMaster University is an institution that takes academic integrity seriously and believes that any form of academic dishonesty is destructive to the values of the University. Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.

2. Improper collaboration in group work.

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)
**TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE**

The following schedule is meant to provide a sense of order and direction. We may modify it slightly as we move through the material. Announcements about any such changes will be made in class.

*Note: ON = Online/Course Website; T = Textbook*

**PART I – SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #1: January 5</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS SOCIAL INEQUALITY, AND HOW AND WHY SHOULD WE STUDY IT?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Readings:</td>
<td>McMullin: Chapter 1: Introduction [T]</td>
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<th>Week #2: January 12</th>
<th>CLASS AND INEQUALITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Required Readings:</td>
<td>McMullin: Chapter 2: Class and Inequality [T]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>McKenna: “What Growing Income Inequality is Costing Canada’s Future Generations” [ON]</td>
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<td>Yalnizyan: “Study of Income Inequality in Canada” [ON]</td>
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<td>Recommended:</td>
<td>McNally: “The Invisible Hand is a Closed Fist: Inequality, Alienation, and the Capitalist Market Economy”</td>
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**TUTORIAL #1**

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<th>Week #3: January 19</th>
<th>GENDER AND INEQUALITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Required Readings:</td>
<td>McMullin: Chapter 3: Gender and Inequality [T]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thorne: “Gender Play” [ON]</td>
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<td>Recommended Film:</td>
<td><em>Finding Dawn</em></td>
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**TUTORIAL #2**

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<th>Week #4: January 26</th>
<th>RACISM, COLONIZATION, AND INEQUALITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Required Readings:</td>
<td>McMullin: Chapter 4: Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality [T]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>RCAP: <em>People to People, Nation to Nation</em> (excerpts) [ON]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>McIntosh: “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” [ON]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gilmore: “Canada’s Racism Problem? It’s even worse than America’s.” [ON]</td>
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**TUTORIAL #3**
Week #5: February 2  AGE AND INEQUALITY

Required Readings:  McMullin: Chapter 5: Age and Inequality [T]
Foner: “Age Integration or Age Conflict?” [ON]
Langille: “Millenials’ Job Plight” [ON]

TUTORIAL #4

Week #6: February 9  ACTORS, AGENCY, AND INTERSECTIONALITY: CAGES

Required Readings:  McMullin: Chapter 6: Actors and Agency [T]
McMullin: Chapter 7: Actors and CAGE(s) [T]
Smith: “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy” [ON]


TUTORIAL #5

------------------------  February 15-20 – MID-TERM RECESS – NO CLASSES  ------------------------

Week #7: February 23  TEST #1

NO READINGS, NO TUTORIAL

PART II – SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN FIVE DOMAINS OF CANADIAN SOCIETY

Week #8: March 1  CAGES, FAMILIES, DOMESTIC LABOUR, AND REPRODUCTION

Required Readings:  McMullin: Chapter 8: CAGE(s), Families, and Domestic Labour, and the Processes of Reproduction [T]
Hochschild: The Second Shift (excerpts) [ON]

TUTORIAL #6

Week #9: March 8  CAGES AND PAID WORK

Required Readings:  McMullin: Chapter 9: CAGE(s) and Paid Work [T]

Required Film:  The Corporation [ON]
TUTORIAL #7

Week #10: March 15          CAGES AND EDUCATION

Required Readings: McMullin: Chapter 10: CAGE(s) and Education [T]

TRC: What We Have Learned (Introduction: pp. 3-8) [ON]

Angus: Children of the Broken Treaty (pp. 91-106, 121-129, 189, 208-213, 284-290) [ON]

Recommended Film: Muffins for Granny

TUTORIAL #8

Week #11: March 22          CAGES AND HEALTH

Required Readings: McMullin: Chapter 11: CAGE(s) and Health [T]

Mikkonen & Raphael: Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts [ON]

Recommended Film: Unnatural Causes

TUTORIAL #9

Week #12: March 29          CAGES AND THE (SETTLER-COLONIAL) STATE:
CHALLENGING INEQUALITY, ENACTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Required Readings: McMullin: Chapter 12: CAGE(s) and the State [T]


Walia: “Decolonizing Together” [ON]

Recommended: TRC: Calls to Action

TUTORIAL #10

Week #13: April 5           WRAP-UP AND REVIEW

NO READINGS, NO TUTORIALS

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE ON APRIL 12
REFERENCES


*The Corporation*. 2004. Film directed by Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott, and Joel Bakan. Zeitgeist Films. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4ou9rOssPg]


