

**Social Inequality**  
**SOC 3300:002 CRN #16111**  
Fall 2016



**Instructor:** Dr. Michelle R. Jacobs  
**Office:** 2263 Faculty / Administration Building (FAB)  
**Office Hours:** 9:30 – 11:30 am Thursday, or by appointment  
**Phone:** 313 – 577 – 2930 (main office)  
**E-mail:** [michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu](mailto:michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu) *\*best way to communicate with me*

*You are responsible for the information in this syllabus. Read it carefully & ask questions if necessary.*

<i>Course</i>	<i>CRN</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
3300	16111	002	Monday	3:00 – 6:40 pm	0208 STATE

**Course Description**

We will explore key categories of difference – race, ethnicity, social class, sex, gender, sexuality, and (dis)ability – and investigate how these categories are constructed and transformed into systems of inequality. Using sociological theories and intersectional analysis, we will examine how social structures maintain institutions that create unequal access to resources for different groups of people. We will look at individual experiences of inequality in the United States and across the globe, and use a social justice framework to understand strategies for resisting oppression and creating more equitable societies.

**Learning Outcomes**

*This course is designed to introduce you to the basic concepts in sociology and their fundamental theoretical interrelations. At the conclusion of the course, you will be able to define, give examples, and demonstrate the relevance of culture; social change; socialization; stratification; social structure; institutions; and differentiations by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and class.*

**Course Materials**

Textbook: *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, by Tracy Ore. ISBN 10: 0078026903. ISBN 13: 9780078026904. **YES, the textbook is REQUIRED.**

\*Additional readings and assignments will be available on *Blackboard*. You are expected to log in to Blackboard regularly to access course materials, check email, and review announcements.

## Teaching Philosophy & Course Expectations

This course emphasizes knowledge and skills that are relevant to daily life. Learner initiative and self-direction are key. The instructor occupies the role of a more informed and experienced co-learner with leadership responsibilities. Participants in this course are expected to be active and engaged learners: pursuing questions of interest; contributing to class and group discussions; supporting and challenging each other in the learning process; welcoming challenges as opportunities for reflection and growth; coming to class each week, on time and prepared; and seeking additional support outside class as needed (e.g. help from the WSU Writing Center, located in room 2310 of the Undergraduate Library, 313-577-2544). In light of the emotionally evocative topics that we will discuss in this course, participants are expected to demonstrate respect for themselves and others. Additional mutual expectations will be negotiated in class.

## Course Requirements

Assessment	Due Date	%
Attendance, Preparation, Participation (APP)	-----	10
Reading Q & A	-----	10
Quiz I	Monday, 10/31 at 3 pm	15
Group Presentation	... to be assigned	15
Final Paper: What in the World?!	part 1: Monday, 11/14 at 2 pm part 2: Monday, 12/12 at 2 pm	30
Quiz II (cumulative)	Friday, 12/16 at 1:20 pm	20
		100

### *Attendance, Preparation, Participation (APP) | 10%*

1) *Attendance is mandatory* because in-class interactions are built into the course design and critical to the learning experience. I will take attendance at the beginning of every class – meaning, Monday at 3pm *sharp*. We meet only 15 times during the semester, so more than two absences will result in a reduced grade and each subsequent absence will reduce your grade further. Chronically arriving late for class and/or leaving class early also will have a negative impact on your attendance grade. Arriving late and/or leaving early three times will count as *one absence*. If you arrive late and miss roll call, it is *your responsibility* to ensure that I have recorded you as present. You should do so during a break or after class. Please note that I do not make arbitrary judgments regarding “excused” or “unexcused” absences. (You get two freebies.) In the case of an emergency that will result in more than two absences, please contact me immediately.

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If you miss class for any reason, *you are responsible* for the following: submitting homework assignments on time; obtaining class notes from a classmate; continuing with the reading; and scheduling a meeting with me if you have specific questions about the materials you missed.

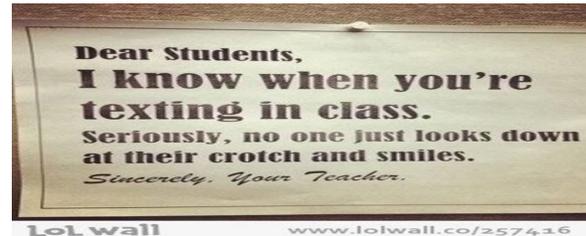
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2) *Preparation*: Come to class prepared and ready to learn. Complete the assigned readings before class and **bring copies of the assigned readings (paper or electronic) with you to class**. You will need them for in-class activities.

3) *Participation*: Spend the class period focused on this class only. Take notes by hand with a pen or pencil. (Read: “Why you should take notes by hand.”) Ask questions. Raise your hand to participate in class discussions. Engage in civil dialogue with me (the instructor) and your classmates. Always *listen respectfully* when others are speaking and use *inclusive language* when it is your turn to speak. Inclusive language is language that does not marginalize any person or group in class or in the broader community. And **PLEASE, FOR THE LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE**, save the texting/tweeting/snapchatting and other social media for *after* class. You might have something interesting to post because you learned something new 😊.

### **Reading Q & A | 10%**

This assignment requires you to write *good* examination questions that will be considered for use on course examinations or “quizzes.” Answers to the questions are also required. Each course reading or group of readings correlates with a possible due date. As such, there are twelve possible due dates (i.e., any day for which readings are assigned). You are expected to submit a minimum of six Q & A assignments over the course of the semester, but will receive extra credit for extra submissions. You may not submit more than one Q & A per week. You may choose the readings and due dates that suit your needs, but *everyone is required to submit a Q & A on 09/19 (week 2)*. Q & As must be deposited into our shared Dropbox folder by 2:00 pm on the Monday they are due. You must attend class on the day of your submission to receive points. Late assignments will *not* be accepted. If you do not submit your Q & A on time, you will have to submit a different Q & A some other time. More detailed instructions will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.



### **Group Presentation | 15%**

You will choose presentation topics and groups within the first few weeks of the semester. Each group is responsible for teaching one assigned reading. (Reading options are denoted by this symbol  on the course schedule.) In short, each group will deliver an interactive, approximately 30 minute presentation that highlights main ideas presented in the reading and relates them to key sociological concepts discussed in class. Some class time will be set aside for groups to work on their presentations. Group members, however, will need to work individually and/or collectively outside of class, too. More detailed instructions and a grading rubric are posted to Blackboard and will be discussed in class.

### **Final Paper: What in the World?! | 30%**

You will write a final, five page (maximum) research paper that analyzes some aspect of inequality currently being reported in the news. You will use a minimum of three scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles to analyze the phenomenon or event *sociologically*. The written portions of this assignment will be submitted in two parts. You are also expected to share your newsworthy topic on the first due date (11/14) and sociological insights on the phenomenon or event on the second due date (12/12).

- i. Brief summary of the news article *and* an annotated bibliography with a minimum of five relevant and scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles *due Monday, November 14 at 2 pm*.
- ii. Final paper *due Monday, December 12 at 2 pm*.

More detailed instructions will be posted to Blackboard and discussed in class.

**Quizzes I and II | 15% and 20%, respectively**

Quizzes I and II will cover key sociological ideas from course readings, videos, activities, and classroom discussions. In other words, any course content is fair game. Quiz II will be cumulative. Both quizzes will be comprised of objective (multiple choice, fill-in) and subjective (essay) questions, some of which will be student-generated. In addition, quizzes will be timed (60 minutes).

*Please note:* Clear and concise writing is an essential aspect of college-level work. All written work should be properly punctuated, grammatically correct, and clearly written. If you need writing assistance, please contact the WSU Writing Center (2310 Undergraduate Library, 313-577-2544). For more information about the Writing Center, visit <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/writing>.

**Grades** | the following grading scale will be used in this course:

Grade	Percentage
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	60 – 66
F	59 and below

**Final grades are FINAL!** No points will be added to any student’s grade at the end of the semester. *Do not ask me to make an exception on your behalf.*

**Additional Student & Instructor Responsibilities**

**Student Responsibilities:**

- I (the instructor) reserve the right to make adjustments to the syllabus. As such, you (the student) are responsible for keeping up with any changes that are announced in class, on Blackboard, or in email communications. Not attending class, not checking Blackboard, and/or not checking your WSU email account are not legitimate excuses for missing assignments and other information pertinent to this course.
- You are *strongly encouraged* to communicate with me (the instructor) through email and/or in person if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. I cannot assist you if you do not let me know that you need assistance. *Please schedule an appointment to meet with me*, whether you would like to meet during office hours or at another designated time.
- *Emails* should have an informative subject line that includes your name and the name of our course. Emails without this information in the subject line will be promptly returned to sender. Also, please send emails that are appropriate for the university setting, meaning that they should have a salutation and should be written in complete sentences with real words – i.e., “you” instead of “u.” (Read: “Your recent email to your professor.”)

- *Religious holidays:* “It is University policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students with classes or examinations that conflict with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that mutually agreeable alternatives may be worked out.”
- *Accommodative services:* "If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.” *Please refer to the SDS website for further information:* <http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/>
- *Academic dishonesty,* which includes cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of unethical academic behavior, *will not be tolerated.* Cheating and plagiarism are forms of academic theft that destroy the integrity of academic communities. It is expected that all students enrolled in this class support the letter and the spirit of the Student Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to review the Code of Conduct, which is available for download at the Dean of Students Office website: <http://www.doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct-services.html>. Ignorance is not a viable defense against allegations of student conduct violations.

***My policy on academic dishonesty:*** Suspected academic dishonesty will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students suspected of academic dishonesty may receive a score of 0 on the assignment or a score of 0 in the course, depending on the magnitude of the offense. Moreover, *I am obligated to report all instances of suspected academic dishonesty to university administrators.*

### **Instructor Responsibilities:**

- I will come to class prepared to facilitate the educational process.
- I will be available to answer questions you have about course materials during class times, office hours, independently scheduled meetings, or by email. I will do my best to answer emails received Monday through Thursday within 48 hours. I will also make every effort to respond to emails received Friday through Sunday by the following Monday. If you do not receive a response from me within these time frames, you should assume that I did not receive your email and resend it.
- I will explain class assignments and outline my expectations for graded work.
- I will grade your work as consistently and fairly as possible.
- I will grade and return your written assignments in a timely fashion.
- I will treat all students with respect.
- I will acknowledge and correct my mistakes.

**Important Dates:**

- Mon, August 31: Classes begin
- Mon, September 5: Labor Day (university closed)
- Wed, September 14: Last day to add a course or drop a course with full tuition reimbursement
- Wed, September 28: Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no tuition reimbursement)
- Fri, September 30: Degree applications due
- Tues, October 11: Early assessment period ends
- Sun, November 13: Last day to withdraw from a class with instructor permission
- Wed, November 23 through Sat, November 26: Fall Break (no classes, university closed)
- Mon, December 12: Classes end
- Tues, December 13: Study day
- Wed, December 14 through Tues, December 20: Final Exams

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

*The course schedule is tentative and (inevitably) will be adjusted throughout the semester.*

Key: (O) → Ore textbook; (B) → Blackboard; ☐ → Option for group presentation

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>
09/12	Welcome ☺; introductions; rules of engagement	
09/19	Constructing differences and maintaining inequalities	(O) Part I (p. 1-18) and Part II (p. 211-236)
09/26	Race, class, and the matrix of domination	(O) Racial Formations (p. 19-29); (B) Capitalism, Class, and the Matrix of Domination; (O) Doubly Divided: The Racial Wealth Gap (p. 100-107)
10/03	Library instruction day + projects	<i>Attendance is mandatory. A make-up assignment must be completed if you miss this class (see Blackboard).</i>
10/10	Race, class, and the matrix of domination	(B) The Case for Reparations (or <i>Driving Detroit</i> )
10/17	Sex, gender, and sexuality	(O) The Social Construction of Gender (p. 112-120); (O) The Five Sexes, Revisited (p. 120-127); (O) Naming All the Parts (p. 157-169); (O) Square Pegs: Affronting Reason (p. 685-698)
10/24	Sex, gender, and sexuality	(O) Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence (p. 554-570); (O) Getting Off and Getting Intimate: ... Fraternity Men’s Approaches toward Women (p. 188-210)

10/31	<b>QUIZ I +</b> Theorizing the intersections	<p><b>(B)</b> Mapping the Margins</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Everyone reads the Introduction (1242-1245), Conclusion (1296-1299), and <i>one</i> of the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Structural intersectionality (1245-1251)</li> <li>· Political intersectionality &amp; domestic violence (1251-1265)</li> <li>· Political intersectionality &amp; rape (1265-1275)</li> <li>· Political intersectionality &amp; social science (1275-1282)</li> <li>· Representational intersectionality (1282-1296)</li> </ul>
11/07	Media, language, and culture	<p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media Magic: Making Class Invisible (p. 91-100);</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Prime-Time Plight of Arab Americans after 9/11 (p. 443-463);</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self, Identity, and the Naming Question ... Language of Disability (p. 500-512);</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Names, Logos, Mascots, and Flags (p. 512-525)</p>
11/14	Work and family	<p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences ... (p. 363-380);</p> <p><b>(B)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maid in LA;</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Why Won’t African Americans Get (&amp; Stay) Married? Why Should They? (p. 237-253);</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Families on the Fault Line: America’s Working Class... (p. 253-263)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>*Final Paper (i) DUE at 2 pm</i></b></p>
11/21	The state: criminal justice	<p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality (p. 400-407)</p> <p><b>(B)</b> <i>additional readings to be announced</i></p>
11/28	The state: immigration policy	<p><b>(B)</b> The Real Hispanic Challenge;</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair ... (p. 490-500);</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Treacherous Triangle: Justice, Immigration ... (p. 407-418);</p> <p><b>(B)</b> “My parents were deported”;</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate of Fear (p. 525-531)</p>
12/05	Global perspectives	<p><b>(B)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> India’s Reproductive Assembly Line;</p> <p><b>(B)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Sexual Trafficking of Women and Children;</p> <p><b>(B)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poisoning the Planet</p>

12/12	Resistance and social change	<p>(O) Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, &amp; Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection (p. 711-725);  (B) <i>additional readings to be announced</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*FINAL PAPER (ii) DUE at 2 pm</i></p>
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**QUIZ II:**

→ FRIDAY, December 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:20 to 3:50 pm

**Reading tips** – Engaged reading is *active* reading. You should take notes as you read and reread an author’s work, paying careful attention to the author’s arguments. Doing so will help you judge the strength of the author’s claims.

Think about the following questions as you read:

- What is the author’s primary focus &/or primary research question?
- What key terms contribute to your understanding of this work? How are these terms defined by the author?
- What are the author’s key claims &/or findings?
- What evidence is used to support the author’s claims/findings?
  - Which theory/theories does the author use?
  - Are data used to support the author’s claims?
  - If so, what are the data and how are they analyzed?
- Does the author acknowledge arguments that contradict her claims? What are they?
- What are the strengths of this piece?
- What are the weaknesses of this piece?
- What is the most interesting part of the author’s work?
- What assumptions / life experiences do you bring to this process that lead to your unique interpretations?

Tips for highlighting and annotating during the active reading process:

- A pencil works as well as a pen or marker; try both and see which you like best.
- Underline each claim an author makes.
- Circle or box definitions or essential terms.
- Use arrows or lines to show connections.
- Use vertical lines in the margins to mark entire passages.
- Star the most important items.
- Use question marks for confusing places.
- Use the margins to:
  - Summarize key terms, sections, or ideas in your own words.
  - Articulate disagreements with the author’s arguments.