**Social Inequality**

**SOC 3300:001 CRN #23688**

**SOC 3300:501 CRN #26535**

Winter 2018

**Instructor:** Dr. Michelle R. Jacobs

**Office:** 2263 Faculty / Administration Building (FAB)

**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 2 – 4 pm, or by appointment

**E-mail:** [michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu](mailto:michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu)

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Course*** | ***CRN(s)*** | ***Section(s)*** | ***Days*** | ***Time*** | ***Location*** |
| 3300 | 23688 & 26535 | 001 & 501 | M, W | 2:30 – 4:10 pm | 0204 Education Building |

**Course Description**

We will explore key categories of difference – race, ethnicity, social class, sex, gender, and sexuality – and investigate how these categories are constructed and transformed into systems of inequality. Using sociological theories and intersectional analyses, we will examine how the social structure maintains institutions that create unequal access to resources for different groups of people. We will look at 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.

**Course Objectives**

* Learn theories and concepts used by sociologists to understand and study social inequalities.
* Understand the complexity of contemporary inequalities through exposure to empirical research.
* Apply sociological perspectives to current events and debates about inequalities of race, ethnicity, class, sex, gender, and sexuality.
* Learn effective communication skills through meaningful participation in small- and large-group discussions.
* Demonstrate problem solving skills through the development of creative strategies for transforming systems of privilege and oppression.

**Course Materials**

Textbook: *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality, 6th edition,* by Tracy Ore. ISBN 10: 0078026903. ISBN 13: 9780078026904.

***YES, the textbook is REQUIRED.***

\*Additional readings and assignments are posted on *Canvas* (canvas.wayne.edu). You will need to visit Canvas frequently to access course materials, check email, and review class 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 | – – – – – | 10 |
| Participation | 2x: midterm, end-of-semester | 10 |
| Midterm Exam | Monday, 2/19 | 30 |
| Media Briefings | 3x: 3/07, 3/28, 4/16 | 30 |
| Final “Exam” | Wednesday, 4/25 at 2:45 pm | 20 |
|  |  | 100 |

***Attendance & Preparation (AP)* | *10%***

Regular attendance is a requirement for this course. You are expected to 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. Our class is too large (~50) for daily attendance taking, so the bulk of your AP grade will be determined by your performance on ***unannounced READING QUIZZES***. If you are late to class and the quiz is already underway, you will not be permitted to take it. There will be no make-up quizzes (even if you have a really good excuse for missing class and/or being late). I will drop your lowest quiz score before calculating final grades at the end of the semester. Please inform me *immediately* if a situation arises that will cause you to miss multiple, successive classes.

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.

***Participation | 10%***

Participation is required. In-class discussions are critical to the learning experience, and as such, are built into the course design. Please see me *immediately* if you have concerns about meeting this requirement.

*Positive* participatory behaviors that will earn you points include (but are not limited to):

* asking relevant, thoughtful questions about course materials
* answering questions posed by the instructor or another student in class
* commenting on course materials
* constructively disagreeing with course materials, the instructor, or another student in class
* sharing *relevant* experiences that inform class discussions

*Negative* behaviors that will cost you points include (but are not limited to):

* not listening
* texting, tweeting, snapchatting, surfing the internet, etc.
* participating in side conversations while the instructor or another student is talking
* speaking out of turn (without being called on); interrupting another speaker
* being disrespectful and/or dismissive of the instructor’s or another student’s comments
* using language that is *not* inclusive, meaning that it marginalizes someone in class or in the broader community

Documentation and your participation grade: I will take notes about who is doing what in class. ***You also need to keep a record of your participation*** – questions asked, answers given, comments made, etc. Your participation notes should be detailed enough to answer the following questions:

* What participation score do you believe you have earned at this point in the semester, assessed on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)?
* Why do you believe you have earned this score? Describe (in detail) your participation and reflect on ways to improve the quality of your class contributions.

Twice during the semester – Wed., February 14th and Wed., April 18th – you will submit your answers to these questions via Canvas. I will compare your notes with mine and assign an appropriate grade. Failure to submit documentation of your participation will result in a score of zero. Late assessments will not be accepted.

***Midterm Exam | 30%***

The midterm exam will cover key sociological concepts and ideas from course readings, videos, activities, and classroom discussions. In other words, any course content is fair game. The exam will be on Monday, February 19th and it will be comprised of multiple choice and/or short answer essay questions. You will need bring a #882-E compatible Scantron form to class with you on exam day. Make-up exams will be permitted at my discretion and only in extenuating circumstances. In addition, they must be completed within one week of the exam date. *It is your responsibility to schedule a make-up exam.* Failure to show up on the day of the exam without previously informing me will result in a 20% deduction in your midterm exam score.

***Media Briefings* | *30%***

Three times during the semester – March 7th, March 28th, and April 16th – you will complete a media briefing assignment. You will complete a media briefing worksheet independently (at home), and then share your analysis in small assigned groups (in class). Group members will choose one briefing (based on interest, significance, and relevance) to share with the class. You will receive an individual grade (rather than a group grade) for your individual “briefings.” *Points will be deducted from late assignments. Assignments more than one week late will NOT be accepted.* More information about this assignment will be discussed in class and posted to Canvas.

***Final “Exam”* | *20%***

The final *essay* “exam” will be cumulative and collaborative. We will discuss the specific format of the final on Wednesday, April 18th. Final preparation for and presentation of the final will occur on Monday, April 23rd and Wednesday, April 25th, respectively. Make-up finals will be permitted at my discretion and only in extenuating circumstances. Late finals will receive reduced points, and finals more than one week late will *not* be accepted.

*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 Canvas, or in email communications. Not attending class, not checking Canvas, 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 returned to sender promptly. 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/*](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 your questions about course materials during class times, office hours, independently scheduled meetings, or by email. I will do my best to answer emails in 48 hours or less. If you do not receive a reply within this time frame, 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 and grade and return assignments in a timely fashion.
* I will treat all students with respect.
* I will acknowledge and correct my mistakes.

**Important Dates:**

Mon, January 8: Classes begin

Mon, January 15: *M.L.K. Day (no classes, university closed)*

Mon, January 22: Last day to add a course or drop a course with full tuition reimbursement

Sun, February 4: Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no tuition reimbursement)

Fri, February 9: Degree applications due

Mon, February 26: Early academic assessment period ends

Sun, March 25: Last day to withdraw from a class *with instructor permission*

Mon, March 12 – Sun, March 18: *SPRING BREAK! (no classes, university closed)*

Mon, April 23: Classes end

Tues, April 24: Study day

Wed, April 25: Final Exam, 2:45 – 4:45 pm

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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

*Key:* **(O)** → Ore textbook; **(C)** → PDF available on Canvas; ***\* weblink*** *(instead of PDF)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Date*** | ***Topic*** | ***Assigned Readings*** |
| 01/08 | Welcome ☺; introductions & other important things |  |
| 01/10 | QUIZ #1; course expectations; rules of engagement | **(C)** Syllabus  **(C)** Rich: Claiming an Education (p. 608-613)  **(C)** An Introduction to Sociology (p. 5-20) *\*only required for students new to sociology* |
| 01/15 | *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day* | *No classes, university closed* |
| 01/17 | Constructing differences | **(O)** Ore: Part I (p. 1-18) |
| 01/22 | Maintaining inequalities | **(O)** Ore: Part II (p. 211-224, *end at “family” section*) |
| 01/24 | Race & ethnicity | **(O)** Omi & Winant: Racial Formations (p. 19-29)  **(O)** El Sawy: Yes, I Follow Islam, but I’m not a Terrorist (p. 596-598) |
| 01/29 | Race & ethnicity | **(C)** Brodkin: How Did Jews Become White Folks? (p. 274-283)  **(O)** Waters: Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only? (p. 29-41) |
| 01/31 | Class | **(O)** Mantsios: Media Magic: Making Class Invisible (p. 91-99)  **(C)** How Many Americans Live in Poverty? *\*weblink* **(O)** Rubin: Families on the Fault Line: America’s Working Class (p. 253-263) |
| 02/05 | Class | **(O)** Lui: Doubly Divided: The Racial Wealth Gap (p. 100-107) |
| 02/07 | Sex & gender | **(O)** Lorber: The Social Construction of Gender  (p. 112-120)  **(O)** Fausto-Sterling: The Five Sexes, Revisited  (p. 120-127)  **(O)** Chase: Square Pegs: Affronting Reason (p. 685-698) |
| 02/12 | Sexuality & intersectionality | **(O)** Bornstein: Naming All the Parts (p. 157-169)  **(O)** Pyke: An Intersectional Approach to Resistance and Complicity: Racialized Desire (p. 263-276) |
| 02/14 | Wiggle room & (pre)exam review | ***\*\*Participation assessment DUE at NOON.*** |
| 02/19 | ***Midterm exam*** |  |
| 02/21 | Work | **(O)** Harvey Wingfield: Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences … (p. 363-380)  **(C)** The Pay Gap for Black Women *\*weblink* |
| 02/26 | (Post)exam review & media briefing assignment | **(C)** Media briefing assignment **(**read the assignment and come to class prepared to ask questions) |
| 02/28 | Education | **(O)** Crow Dog & Erdoes: Civilize Them with a Stick (p. 297-304)  **(C)** Pewewardy**:** Playing Indian at Halftime (p. 180-185) |
| 03/05 | Education | *Guest speaker from the College of Education*  **(C)** Delpit: Lessons from Teachers  **(C)** What ‘white folks who teach in the hood’ get wrong about education *\*weblink*  **(C)** America’s Teachers Still Don’t Think Black and Latino Kids Are Smart *\*weblink* |
| \*03/07 |  | ***MEDIA BRIEFING #1*** |
| 03/12&14 | *SPRING BREAK ☺* | *No classes* |
| 03/19 | Special topic: immigration | **(O)** Thompson: How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair (p. 490-499)  **(C)** Massey: The Real Hispanic Challenge (p. 3-7)  **(C)** How Fear of Deportation Puts Stress on Families *\*weblink* |
| 03/21 | Violence & social control | **(O)** Kaufman: The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence (p. 554-570)  **(C)** How to Raise a Feminist Son *\*weblink*  **(C)** Half of All Female Homicide Victims Are Killed by Intimate Partners *\*weblink*  **(O)** Ray & Rosow: Getting Off and Getting Intimate: Fraternity Men’s Approaches toward Women (p. 188-210) |
| 03/26 | Special topic: rape culture | *Guest speaker from Enough Said (Detroit)!*  **(C)** Olson: Transforming Rape Culture on a College Campus (p. 98-103)  **(C)** Woman’s Brilliant Analogy Sums Up the Insidiousness of Victim Blaming *\*weblink* |
| \*03/28 |  | ***MEDIA BRIEFING #2*** |
| 04/02 | Special topic: mass incarceration | **(O)** Western & Pettit: Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality (p. 400-407)  **(C)** Mass incarceration, children, education |
| 04/04 | Special topic: mass incarceration | **(C)** Healing victims & offenders & reducing crime  **(C)** My son’s 14 year old killer deserves a 2nd chance *\*weblink* |
| 04/09 | Global perspectives | **(C)** Rudrappa: India’s Reproductive Assembly Line (p. 22-27)  **(C)** Hodge & Lietz: International Sexual Trafficking of Women and Children (p. 449-454) |
| 04/11 | Global perspectives | **(C)** Pellow & Brulle: Poisoning the Planet (p. 37-41) |
| \*04/16 |  | ***MEDIA BRIEFING #3*** |
| 04/18 | Resistance and social change | ***\*\*Participation assessment DUE at NOON.***  **(O)** Hill Collins: Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, & Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection (p. 711-725)  **(C)** Final “exam” instructions (read the assignment and come to class prepared to ask questions & begin working) |
| 04/23 | *Final “exam” collaboration* |  |
| 04/25 | ***Final “exam” presentation*** |  |

***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.