**SOCIAL INEQUALITY (SOC 3300:001)**

Winter 2016

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Course*** | ***CRN*** | ***Section*** | ***Days*** | ***Time*** | ***Location*** |
| 3300 | 26041 | 001 | Tues,  Thurs | 11:45 am – 1:35 pm | 0028 Manoogian |

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

**Course Description**

This semester we will look at several key categories of difference – race/ethnicity, social class, sex, gender, sexuality, and dis/ability – and explore how these categories are constructed and transformed into systems of inequality. Using sociological theories and intersectional analysis, we will examine how social structures maintain and perpetuate systems of inequality that create differential access to resources for the members of diverse groups. We will look at individual experiences of inequality in the United States and across the globe, and use a social justice framework to explore strategies for resisting oppression and transforming society.

**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.*

**Required 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

\*The textbook is available at Purdy-Kresge Library Reserves.

\*Additional readings and assignments will be posted on *Blackboard*. You are expected to log in to Blackboard regularly to access course materials (e.g., readings and homework assignments), 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 Responses | weeks 1 – 8 and week 15 | 25 |
| Discussion Questions | weeks 9 – 14 | 10 |
| Group Presentation | *… to be announced* | 15 |
| Final Paper | part 1: Monday, 02/15 at 5 pm  part 2: Monday, 04/18 at 5 pm  part 3: Friday, 04/29 at 10:40 am | \_\_\_\_\_  40 |
|  |  | 100 |

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

High APP scores will be earned by students who 1) attend class regularly, 2) prepare for class thoroughly, and 3) participate respectfully and knowledgably.

1) *Attendance:* Information that is critical to your understanding of course materials will be provided during class time, so it is necessary that you attend. I will take attendance regularly, if not daily. It is your responsibility to ensure that I have recorded you as “present.” “Attendance” grades are based on a four point scale: 0 – 2 absences = 4 pts; 3 absences = 3 pts; 4 absences = 2 pts; 5 absences = 1 pt; 6+ absences = 0 pts. In addition, chronically arriving late for class and/or leaving class early is disrespectful and disruptive and will have a negative impact on your attendance grade. Please note that I do not expect to be informed of singular absences and 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 excessive absences, please contact me immediately. 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.

2) *Preparation:*  You are expected to complete all assigned work prior to class so you are able to contribute *knowledgeably* to class discussions. Your opinion is valuable, but you must be able to assess the readings critically and relate them to your personal experiences and broader social phenomena to demonstrate that you understand and can apply the sociological perspective. Your performance on in-class assignments, homework assignments, and unannounced quizzes may be used to assess your preparation for class. Other indicators of adequate preparation include asking thoughtful questions and responding thoughtfully to verbal and written questions, as well as participating actively in group work.

***It is expected that you bring your textbook and paper or electronic copies of course readings with you to class.*** *You will need them for in-class activities and assignments.*

“Preparation” grades are based on a 2 point scale: always/often prepared = 2 pts; generally/occasionally prepared = 1 pt; rarely/never prepared = 0 pts.

3) *Respectful and knowledgeable participation:* You are expected to treat all members of the class and the broader community with *respect***.** You should *listen attentively* when others are speaking and use *inclusive language*when it is your turn to speak. We will discuss sensitive topics in this course. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these discussions, but personal opinions should be presented in a way that does not marginalize any person or group. *Respectful participation* also means refraining from participating in private conversations (in person or on a cell phone, tablet, or laptop) during class time.

* Cell phone use is not permittedwhen class is in session (barring extraordinary circumstances, of which I must be informed before class begins). I will reduce your course grade by 2% for each unauthorized use of your cell phone. I will tell you when such a reduction occurs. The same rule applies to tablets.
* You are permitted to use a laptop computer in class for *note-taking.* If I discover that you are not using your computer for class purposes, I will reduce your course grade by 2%. I will tell you when such a reduction occurs. After two violations, I will revoke your computer use privileges.

“Participation” grades are based on a four point scale:

* Students who *frequently* speak knowledgeably and respectfully *and* who listen attentively will earn 4 points.
* Students who *occasionally* speak knowledgeably and respectfully *and* who listen attentively will earn 3 points.
* Students who speak frequently and respectfully, *but* express opinions more than they engage with course materials and/or do not listen attentively (e.g., have side conversations, doze regularly) will earn 2 points.
* Students who are attentive and seem engaged in class but rarely speak will earn 1 point.
* Students who rarely speak and are disrespectful and/or inattentive will earn 0 points.

***Reading Responses, or “the 3 – 2 – 1” | 25%***

You will complete six assigned reading responses over the course of the semester (specifically, weeks 1 – 8 and week 15). It is essential that you bring a paper copy of each reading response with you to class on the due date because you will be required to comment on your original response during the class period. As such, I will collect reading responses at the end of class. If you are absent on the day a reading response is due, you may submit your response by email. It must arrive in my inbox prior to the start of class (11:45 am) for you to receive credit. Points will be deducted for the lack of hand-written commentary.

Each reading response must have the following three components:

* Requirement 1: Choose and describe the three most important aspects (concepts, issues, factual information, etc.) of the reading. Provide a justification for each of your choices. At least *one* of your choices must be a *concept* that is central to the reading. You must provide a definition of the concept *in your own words* as well as a justification for choosing it.
* Requirement 2: Identify two aspects of the reading you do not understand. Briefly discuss *why* the confusing aspects interfered with your general understanding of the reading.
* Requirement 3: Pose a question that addresses implications or applications of the reading content. The answer to your question should go *beyond* the reading content and should *not* reflect the areas of confusion discussed in requirement 2.

Responses are due on the days noted and will cover the readings listed below. I will drop your lowest score at the end of the semester. If you submit all six reading responses, you will receive extra credit.

01/14 The Neoliberal Arts

01/26 Capitalism, Class, and the Matrix of Domination

02/02 The Case for Reparations

02/16  *R1*: Social Construction of Gender; *R2*: Naming All the Parts; *R3*: Square Pegs

*(Revised to incorporate multiple readings)*

03/01 Mapping the Margins *(Respond only to the sections you are assigned)*

04/19 Toward a New Vision

***Discussion Questions | 10%***

During weeks 8 – 14, you will submit one discussion question per group presentation. (A revised syllabus will be posted to Blackboard once readings/groups are determined.) For full credit, your discussion question must be *typed* on a full sheet of paper with your name at the top and it must be submitted at the beginning of class. In addition, you must attend class to receive credit. You may submit a *clarification* question or an *elaboration* question. *Good* questions are sociological and cannot be answered in only a few words.

*Clarification:* Identify an aspect of the reading that you do not understand (similar to “requirement 2” above). Explain *why* you find this aspect of the reading to be confusing and pose a question asking the presenters or other members of the class to elucidate the meaning for you. In addition to posing a question, you must suggest possible answers to the question.

*Elaboration:* Pose a discussion question to the class that goes beyond the reading content (similar to “requirement 3” above). Your question should ask about implications or applications of information presented in the reading. In addition to posing a question, you must explain how *you* would respond to the question during class discussion.

***Group Presentation | 15%***

You will choose presentation topics and groups by the fifth week 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, 20 to 30 minute presentation that highlights main ideas and key sociological concepts. Some class time will be set aside for groups to work on their presentations, including most (if not all) of the class period on 02/18. 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 | 40%***

You will submit a final, five page (maximum) research paper in which you explore the relationship between “history and biography” with respect to an *individual* social changemaker and the *structural* conditions of their lives. After identifying someone who worked (or works) to alleviate inequalities of race, ethnicity, class, sex, gender, sexuality, or disability, you will investigate *both* their personal biography *and* the conditions of society that inspired them to work for social change. You will describe their strategies of resistance and reflect on how similar strategies continue (or not) to be useful today. This assignment will be submitted in three parts.

1. Brief statement identifying the social changemaker *and* an annotated bibliography with a minimum of five relevant and scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles *due* Monday, February 15th at 5 pm.
2. Final paper *due* Monday, April 18th at 5 pm.
3. Presentation *due* Friday, April 29th during final exam period (10:40 am).

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

*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 required to keep backup copies of all work and check Blackboard regularly to ensure that grades are posted accurately.
* 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* must have a clear and informative subject line that includes your full name and the name of the course in which you are enrolled. Emails without this information in the subject line will be promptly returned to sender. I also ask that you 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.”
* All written work must be *typed* in 11 or 12 pt. font and double-spaced with one inch margins. Your name should be at the top and pages should be numbered. Multiple pages should be *stapled* together. *All work submitted electronically (via email or Blackboard) must be saved with a file name that includes your full name and the assignment name.*
* *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 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, January 11: Classes begin

Mon, January 18: *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day* (university closed)

Mon, January 25: Last day to add a course or drop a course with full tuition reimbursement

Sun, February 7: Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no tuition reimbursement)

Fri, February 12: Degree applications due

Mon, February 22: Early assessment period ends

Sun, March 27: Last day to withdraw from a class *with instructor permission*

Mon, March 14 through Sat, March 19: *Spring Break* (no classes)

Mon, April 25: Classes end

Tues, April 26: Study day

Wed, April 27 through Tues, May 3: Final Exams

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

*The course schedule is tentative and (inevitably) will be adjusted throughout the semester.* Please read assignments in the order listed.

*Key:* (O) → Ore textbook **|** (B) → Blackboard **|** 🞖 → Option for group presentation

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| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Date*** | ***Topic*** | ***Assigned Readings*** |
| 01/12 | Welcome ☺; syllabus |  |
| 01/14\* | Pedagogical introduction;  rules of engagement | **(B)** The Neoliberal Arts  **(B)** Claiming an Education |
| 01/19 | Constructing differences | **(O)** Part I (p. 1-18) |
| 01/21 | Maintaining inequalities | **(O)** Part II (p. 211-236) |
| 01/26\* | Race, class, and the matrix of domination, day 1 | **(O)** Racial Formations (p. 19-29);  **(B)** Capitalism, Class, and the Matrix of Domination |
| 01/28 | Race, class, and the matrix of domination, day 2 | **(O)** Doubly Divided: The Racial Wealth Gap (p. 100-107)  **(B)** Class Matters |
| 02/02\* | Race, class, and the matrix of domination, day 3 | **(B)** The Case for Reparations |
| 02/04 | *Library instruction day* | *Attendance is mandatory.* A make-up assignment must be completed if you miss this class (see Blackboard).  \*We will finish discussing The Case for Reparations, if necessary and time permitting. |
| 02/09 | Focus on Detroit, day 1 | **(B)** *Driving Detroit:* “Riding on the Freeway” (intro) and “Who Will Feast on the Fruits of Labor (Ch. 5) |
| 02/11 | Focus on Detroit, day 2 | **(B)** *Driving Detroit:* “Turf Wars” (Ch. 6)  **(B)** America’s Biggest Problem Is Concentrated Poverty;  **(B)** Black Owned Businesses Are Quietly Powering Detroit’s Resurgence |
| ***Final Paper Part 1 DUE at 5 pm, Monday, 02/15*** | | |
| 02/16\* | Sex, gender, and sexuality, day 1 | **(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) |
| 02/18 | *Group Workshop ☺* | *\*Come prepared to work on your group presentations* |
| ***Early Academic Assessment (EAA) period ends 02/22*** | | |
| 02/23 | Sex, gender, and sexuality, day 2 | **(O)** Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence (p. 554-570) |
| 02/25 | Sex, gender, and sexuality, day 3 | **(O)** Getting Off and Getting Intimate: … Fraternity Men’s Approaches toward Women (p. 188-210) |
| 03/01\* | Intersectionality | **(B)** Mapping the Margins  *Note:* Everyone reads the Introduction (1242-1245), Conclusion (1296-1299), and *one* of the following sections:   * Structural intersectionality (1245-1251) * Political intersectionality & domestic violence (1251-1265) * Political intersectionality & rape (1265-1275) * Political intersectionality & social science (1275-1282) * Representational intersectionality (1282-1296) |
| 03/03 | Intersectional research | **(O)** An Intersectional Approach to Resistance and Complicity: Case of Racialized Desire … (p. 263-276) |
| ***Group presentations, 03/08 – 04/14 (Weeks 9 – 14)*** | | |
| 03/08  03/10 | Media, language, and culture | **(O) 🞖** Media Magic: Making Class Invisible (p. 91-100);  **(O) 🞖** The Prime-Time Plight of Arab Americans after 9/11 (p. 443-463);  **(O) 🞖** Self, Identity, and the Naming Question … Language of Disability (p. 500-512);  **(O) 🞖** Names, Logos, Mascots, and Flags (p. 512-525) |
| ***Spring Break (03/15 – 03/17)*** | | |
| 03/22  03/24 | Work and family | **(O) 🞖** Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences … (p. 363-380);  **(B) 🞖** Maid in LA;  **(O) 🞖** Why Won’t African Americans Get (& Stay) Married? Why Should They? (p. 237-253);  **(O) 🞖** Families on the Fault Line: America’s Working Class… (p. 253-263) |
| 03/29  03/31 | The state: criminal justice | **(O) 🞖** Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality (p. 400-407);  **(B)** 1.5 Million Missing Black Men;  **(B)** How to Cut the Prison Population;  **(B)** The Prison Population Forecaster |
| 04/05  04/07 | The state: immigration policy | **(B)** The Real Hispanic Challenge;  **(O) 🞖** How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair …  (p. 490-500);  **(O) 🞖** The Treacherous Triangle: Justice, Immigration … (p. 407-418);  **(B)** “My parents were deported”;  **(O) 🞖** Climate of Fear (p. 525-531) |
| 04/12  04/14 | Global perspectives | **(B) 🞖** India’s Reproductive Assembly Line;  **(B) 🞖** International Sexual Trafficking of Women and Children;  **(B) 🞖** Poisoning the Planet |
| ***Final Paper Part 2 DUE at 5 pm, Monday, 04/18*** | | |
| 04/19\* | Resistance and social change, day 1 | **(O)** Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, & Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection (p. 711-725) |
| 04/21 | Resistance and social change, day 2 | *… continued* |

***FINAL EXAM WEEK:***

*→ FRIDAY, April 29th from 10:40 am to 1:20 pm,* ***\*Final Paper Presentations (Part 3) DUE***

**We are going to have a wonderful semester together! ☺**

Engaged Reading\*

Reading provides opportunities to create new knowledge. An author writes to communicate ideas or share experiences, but cannot possibly say all there is to say about any given topic. Readers must bridge the gaps of meaning; as they do, they contribute their own assumptions, experiences, and ways of perceiving “reality.” In this way, every act of engaged reading is a process of meaning creation.

Moreover, 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.

*\* Material adapted from: http://www.slideshare.net/UCEW/engaged-reading-and-writing*