



Course Outline

2026-2027 Catalog

SOC 30 - Sociology of Inequality

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course is an analysis of social stratification and its affect on minority/majority group relations in American society. Emphasis will be on an examination of how the class system ranks categories of people in hierarchies rooted in wealth, income, prestige, power and education. Social inequality that exists nationally and globally are studied though the lens of institutional discrimination and environmental issues.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Compare and contrast sociological perspective and theories of social inequality.
2. Define and analyze the concept of power and privilege.
3. Describe how socioeconomic status contributes to social distance among minority-majority groups members.
4. Apply critical thinking skills in written and oral communication.
5. Differentiate concepts such as prejudice, discrimination, segregation, assimilation and pluralism.
6. Analyze the cultural and institutional factors involved in race and ethnicity relating to macro-level to the micro-level.
7. Examine the minority-majority group relations and how they impact issues such as power and privilege.
8. Identify the interplay of race, ethnicity, class, age, and sexuality affecting class relations.
9. Identify social, political, economic and cultural movements to change class inequalities within our social institutions.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
	<u>Lecture</u>
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Introduction to social inequality including the history of minority/majority relations and basic sociological concepts and theory.	6.00
Prejudice and Privilege - an overview of understanding inequality at the micro/macro level including interpersonal and institutional levels of class ranking.	9.00
What it means to be a minority: The social construction of class, race and gender	6.00
Social inequality and power among minority/majority groups	6.00
Prejudice, discrimination, and cultural privilege	6.00
Socioeconomic and intersection of class, race, ethnicity and gender.	6.00
Institutional discrimination and environmental issues.	6.00
Understanding inequality as it relates to various social institutions such as health care, education and religion.	6.00
Total Hours: 51.00	

Methods of Instruction

- A. Class Activities
- B. Group Discussions
- C. Guest Speakers
- D. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- E. Lecture
- F. Reading Assignments

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Exams/Tests
- B. Quizzes
- C. Papers
- D. Projects
- E. Class participation

- F. Written assignments (Each student will be required to write at least 1500 words for credit in the course, this work will be evaluated on content and syntax).

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read the article "Roots of Inequality" by Michael Schwalbe. Be prepared to discuss in class how the transition from an agricultural to industrial society contributed to inequality in our society.
2. Read the chapter on 'Social Construction of Identity' by Jenny Stuber. Be prepared to defend in class how our identity is a social construction of our society and that where we are born has everything to say about who we are.

Writing Assignments

1. In the section on Creating Boundaries; read the chapter on 'Diversity in the Lean Automobile Factory: Doing Class through Gender Disability and Age'. Write a 5 page paper on how the use of language and specific words can be a tool to oppress or challenge subordination. Utilize the research on the Car Co. in the article to illustrate how management and policies on diversity can alter the position of anyone who does not meet company guidelines and ends up an "unproductive and therefore less valuable worker". Be prepared to discuss in class.
2. Review Williams 'Paradigm for Research on Socioeconomic Status and Health'. Write a 5 page synopsis about the various factors included in the paradigm, how they are related and interconnected. What theoretical perspective would this paradigm apply to? Be prepared to discuss in class.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Contact either the Torres Shelter or the Jesus Center. Seek permission to tour the respective facility for personal reference. Inform them you are a student conducting research on the Hungry and Homeless individuals within our community. Describe your findings to the class.
2. Tour the extremes of our community. Note the contrasts within just one city and observe the various inequalities and prepare to share your observations with the class.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

David Grusky, Jasmine Hill editors. (2018). Inequality in the 21st Century. *Routledge, 1st edition*. 9780813350646.

Stuber, Jenny. (2021). Exploring Inequalities - A Sociological Approach. *Sage Publications, Second Edition*. 9781071815687.

Tracy Ore. (2022). The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality. *Oxford University Press, 8th*. 9780197618967.

Scott R. Sernau. (2019). Social Inequality in a Global Age. *Pearson Education, 6th Edition*. 978-1544309316.

Minimum Qualifications

Sociology (Masters Required)

Created/Revised by: Riley, Melinda

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