

Sociology 173: Inequality

Instructor: Andrew Penner

TA: Matt Rafalow

Spring 2016

Office hours: Wednesday 12pm-1pm

Overview

Inequality is a core, if not *the* core area, in sociology. It touches on issues of gender, race, and class, as well as many other axes of along which inequality is created. Likewise much of the research on key sociological concepts like stigma, reference groups, and organizations considers how they help us understand inequality. In this class we will cover some of the most important concepts (e.g. stigma) for understanding inequality, and examine several key axes (e.g. gender) along which inequality is created.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course:

Knowledge & Understanding

- Students will be able to provide a broad overview of the sociological perspective on inequality
- Students will be able to discuss 2-3 key ideas about one core concept and one key axis of contemporary US inequality

Cognitive Thinking Skills

- Students will be able to synthesize research on inequality and explain how core topics and key ideas are related

Key Transferable Skills

- Students will be able to design a blog using video technology to effectively communicate ideas
- Students will be able to personalize a web-based ePortfolio template that will synthesize their work in the course with a summary of their learning

Format

Class Structure

This class is structured as an online seminar. Because it is a seminar, the focus will be less on the instructor and more on interacting with each other and the ideas in the

readings and other course materials. As an online course, this interaction will take place online and will be technologically mediated.

Weekly Tasks

You will be assigned to groups containing four other students. Every week, one member of your group will be responsible for facilitating discussion and making a short (2-3 minute) video blog covering that week's material. This video will be watched by the other groupmates.

In addition, students will also be assigned to watch and comment on video blogs made by students in other groups. As with any seminar, we hope that these comments and discussions are just the start of the conversation, and hope that you will use the tools at your disposal to continue the discussion.

Other Expectations

Given the nature of the class, you will be expected to engage at a deeper level, and there will be much more emphasis on synthesizing material (i.e. relating materials to other materials) and interacting with others to explain your thinking. The class places little emphasis on memorizing vocabulary and concepts. This format also allows you to gain fluency with video conferencing, video blogging, and your final project will be to build an ePortfolio website.

Timeline

Quarter Overview

- *Week 1* will examine neighborhoods and give you a chance to get to know each other, the TA, and me, and become familiar with the tools for course.
- *Weeks 2-5* will cover core concepts in inequality.
- *Weeks 6-9* will cover key axes of inequality.
- *Week 10* will be spent on your ePortfolio.
- Everyone will make one video blog on a core concept, one video blog on a key axis and develop a web-based ePortfolio of their work.

Weekly Overview

In a typical week:

- **Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday** will be spent going over the material from that week and meeting in small groups with your discussion section-mates and the TA to talk about the material. In addition, the TA will hold a class-wide office hours/discussion Wednesday afternoon. Note that students in the Monday sections have less time to do the reading, but more time to think about their videos afterwards, while students in the Wednesday sections have more time to do the reading but less time to make their video after discussion. Tuesday

students split the difference. Each discussion section thus has its own unique set of challenges, and you should plan accordingly.

- Students' videos are due by **6:00pm Thursday** (Irvine time). Half of the students making videos for that week will then participate in a live discussion with each other and the professor **Thursday from 7:00-8:30pm**, which other students will watch. Students who are not in the discussion can participate by asking questions in real time in the chat interface.
- **Friday, Saturday, and Sunday** will be spent watching and commenting on your classmates' videos for that week and starting the reading for the following week. Sunday evening there will be a video introduction posted on the core concept or key axes being covered in the coming week.

A Note about Technology

Technology provides wonderful tools and allows us the flexibility to do amazing things and carry out discussions in new ways, but it requires new skills that you will be expected to learn. This class will allow you to explore with the course content using some these new forms of communication and educational technologies (real time online video meetings, video blog recordings, online discussion boards, developing a web-based ePortfolio, etc.)

To complete this course, you may find the following campus resources helpful:

- UCI Computer labs:
 - <http://www.oit.uci.edu/labs/>
- Ayala Library Resources
 - Presentation/Recording Studio:
<http://www.lib.uci.edu/services/mrc/presentation-studio.html>
 - MRC Media Equipment: Student Assignments & Group Viewing
<http://www.lib.uci.edu/services/mrc/mrc-media-equipment-and-group-viewing.html>
 - Workshop Series: Video Production (tranyy@uci.edu, 949-824-2407)

You may also use personal technology such as your phone, tablet or computer.

Netiquette Respect

"Netiquette" is defined as network etiquette, the do's and don'ts of online communication. In this course it is important to respect each other. People are not always very nice and respectful to each other on the internet, but I expect you to conduct yourself in a way that reflects well on UCI.

In our online classroom, we will be communicating both via video, but much of our communication will be written. The written language has many advantages: more

opportunity for reasoned thought, more ability to go in-depth, and more time to think through an issue before posting a comment.

However, written communication also has certain disadvantages, such a lack of the face-to-face signaling that occurs through body language, intonation, pausing, facial expressions, and gestures. As a result, please be aware of the possibility of miscommunication and compose your comments in a positive, supportive, and constructive manner.

Academic Honesty

One facet of respect is intellectual honesty and integrity. Integrity of one's own work is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. Refer to [Appendix VIII: Academic Honesty](#) for these policies.

Unfortunately, cheating is often especially problematic in online classes. Because of this, ***we ask that you use your UCI photo as your avatar, and that your videos be recorded with you facing the camera.***

Disability Services

If you need support or assistance because of a disability, you may be eligible for accommodations or services through the Disability Service Center at UC Irvine. Please contact the DSC directly at (949) 824-7494 or TDD (949) 824-6272. You can also visit the DSC's website: <http://www.disability.uci.edu/>. The DSC will work with your instructor to make any necessary accommodations. Please note that it is your responsibility to initiate this process with the DSC.

Assignments

Video Blog

For this assignment, you will make a short video (2-3 minutes, in a video blog format) discussing the material assigned for that week. You are also welcome to draw on material from previous weeks and outside sources but should be clear and explain thoroughly when you draw on resources from outside of class. My suggestion would be to include outside material as a response to your blog (yes, you can respond and comment on your own blog!), as this will allow you to go into more detail and explain the new material more fully without having to worry about the time limitation of the video blog.

Your video blog will be uploaded and viewed by your groupmates and other classmates. **Everybody will be in charge of making a video about one core concept (weeks 2-5) and one key axis (weeks 6-9).**

Reflections and Comments on Video Blogs

You will also **view** videos made by three of your classmates, including your discussion section-mates, and **comment** on the degree to which they communicated clearly and captured the content of the material.

Final project

For the final project, you will **create an ePortfolio** that synthesizes the material we have covered in the class. As a starting point, this might include the two videos that you made and a summary statement that relates the ideas in the two videos and ties them in with the larger themes from the class. This is meant to provide an opportunity for reflection, and we are open to other formats, but you should check with your TA before getting too creative.

Class participation

Offer Your Opinion

The above is just the beginning of the conversation, and I encourage you will continue the conversations and discussions among your classmates and friends. The goal of the course is to create a forum in which you can talk and think deeply about the ideas we cover.

For example:

- Do two of the video blogs you watched disagree about something? Weigh in with your opinion!
- Or maybe there is a question that came up in your group's discussion that you were curious to share with classmates and get other opinions on. Please share your thoughts!

Discussions and Meetings

Each week your group will have an hour virtual discussion section to meet with another group and your TA to go over any questions that came up in the readings. In order to get the most out of this time, I recommend that you set up meetings with your groupmates beforehand to compare notes, answer each other's questions, and compile a list of questions for your TA. In addition, your TA and I will hold townhall style online office hours that you can attend.

Grading

You will be graded on:

- Your two video blogs (20% each)
- Your reflections and the feedback that you give on others' video blogs (15%)
- The remaining 45% of your grade will come from your ePortfolio (25%) and your participation in the Thursday evening whole class discussion (20%).
- Extra credit is given for class participation.

Late Assignments

A note about late assignments: Given that other students are depending on you to complete the video blog in time so that they can comment on it, it is very important that it be done on time. As such, late assignments will be penalized by one third of the total points per day late (i.e. on time assignments can earn a maximum of 25 points, one day late can earn a maximum of 16 points, and two days late can earn a maximum of 8 points).

Introductions and Learning the Tools (Week 1)

Week 1: Neighborhoods and Context

- Leonhardt, David. "[In Climbing Income Ladder, Location Matters.](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/business/in-climbing-income-ladder-location-matters.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&)" The New York Times 22 July 2013. Web.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/business/in-climbing-income-ladder-location-matters.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&>
- Massey, Douglas S. "[American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of an Underclass.](#)" American Journal of Sociology 96.2 (1990): 329-357.
- Beller, Emily and Michael Hout. "[Intergenerational Social Mobility: The United States in Comparative Perspective.](#)" The Future of Children 16.2 (2006): 19-36.

Core concepts (Weeks 2-5)

Week 2: Stigma

- "[A Class Divided.](#)" Frontline. PBS.org. WGBH. 26 March 1985. Television.
 - Lovaglia, Michael J., Jeffrey W. Lucas, Jeffrey A. Houser, Shane R. Thye, and Barry Markovsky. "[Status Processes and Mental Ability Test Scores.](#)" American Journal of Sociology 104.1 (1998): 195-228.
 - Hanselman, Paul, Sarah K. Bruch, Adam Gamoran, and Geoffrey D. Borman. "[Threat in Context: School Moderation of the Impact of Social Identity Threat on Racial/Ethnic Achievement Gaps.](#)" Sociology of Education 87.2 (2014): 106-124.
- Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):*
- Domina, Thurston, Andrew M. Penner, and Emily K. Penner. "[Membership Has Its Privileges': Status Incentives and Categorical Inequality in Education.](#)" Sociological Science 3 (2016): 264-295.

Week 3: Cumulative Advantage

- Elliott, Andrea. "[Invisible Child](#)." The New York Times 9 December 2013. Web. <<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/invisible-child/?n=Top/News/U.S.>>
- Duncan, Greg J., Amy Claessens, Aletha C. Huston, Linda S. Pagani, Mimi Engel, Holly Sexton, Chantelle J. Dowsett, Katherine Magnuson, Pamela Klebanov, Leon Feinstein, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Kathryn Duckworth, and Crista Japel. "[School Readiness and Later Achievement](#)." *Developmental Psychology* 43.6 (2007): 1428-1446.
- Lareau, Annette. "[Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families](#)." *American Sociological Review* 67.5 (2002): 747-776.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Jonsson, Jan O., David B. Grusky, Matthew Di Carlo, Reinhard Pollak, and Mary C. Brinton. "[Microclass Mobility: Social Reproduction in Four Countries](#)." *American Journal of Sociology* 114.4 (2009): 977-1036.

Week 4: Reference Groups

- De Waal, Frans. "[Moral Behavior in Animals](#)." Online video. TED talk. Ted Conferences, LLC. Filmed November 2011. <http://www.ted.com/talks/frans_de_waal_do_animals_have_morals>
- Attewell, Paul. "[The Winner-Take-All High School: Organizational Adaptations to Educational Stratification](#)." *Sociology of Education* 74.4 (2001): 267-295.
- DiPrete, Thomas A., Gregory M. Eirich, and Matthew Pittinsky. "[Compensation Benchmarking, Leapfrogs, and the Surge in Executive Pay](#)." *American Journal of Sociology* 115.6 (2010): 1671-1712.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Lynch, John W., George Davey Smith, George A. Kaplan, and James S. House. "[Income inequality and mortality: importance to health of individual income, psychosocial environment, or material conditions](#)." *BMJ: British Medical Journal* 320, no. 7243 (2000): 1200.

Week 5: Institutions

- Zimbardo, Philip G. "[Stanford Prison Experiment Slide Tour](#)." Stanford Prison Experiment. Web. 6 October 2014. <<http://www.prisonexp.org>>
- Pettit, Becky and Bruce Western. "[Mass Imprisonment and the Life Course: Race and Class Inequality in U.S. Incarceration](#)." *American Sociological Review* 69.2 (2004): 151-169.

- Pager, Devah. "[The Mark of a Criminal Record.](#)" American Journal of Sociology 108.5 (2003): 937-975.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Wildeman, Christopher and Bruce Western. "[Incarceration in Fragile Families.](#)" The Future of Children 20.2 (2010): 157-177.

Key Axes (Weeks 6-9)

Week 6: Gender

- "[World's Toughest Job.](#)" Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 14 April 2014. Web. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HB3xM93rXbY&feature=youtu.be>>
- Williams, Christine L. "[The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the 'Female' Professions.](#)" Social Problems 39.3 (1992): 253-267.
- Waldfogel, Jane. "[Understanding the 'Family Gap' in Pay for Women and Children.](#)" The Journal of Economic Perspectives 12.1 (1998): 137-156.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Correll, Shelley J. "[Constraints into Preferences: Gender, Status, and Career Aspirations.](#)" American Sociological Review 69.1 (2004): 93-113.

Week 7: Race

- "[ABC's What Would You Do? \(Bike Thief\).](#)" ABC. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 15 December 2010. Web. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0kV_b3IK9M>
- Kirschenman, Joleen and Kathryn M. Neckerman. "[We'd Love to Hire Them But...': The Meaning of Race for Employers.](#)" The Urban Underclass. Ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991. 203-243. Print.
- Steele, Claude M. and Joshua Aronson. "[Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans.](#)" Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 69.5 (1995): 797-811.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Penner, Andrew M. and Aliya Saperstein. "[How Social Status Shapes Race.](#)" Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 105.50 (2008): 19628-19630.

Week 8: Immigration

- "[Act One: Alien Experiment.](#)" Jack Hitt. 456: Reap What You Sow. This American Life. WBEZ, Chicago. 27 January 2012. Web.

<<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/456/reap-what-you-sow?act=1>>

- Hopkins, Daniel J., Van C. Tran, and Abigail Fisher Williamson. "[See No Spanish: Language, Local Context, and Attitudes Toward Immigration.](#)" *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 2.1 (2014): 35-51.
- López-Sanders, Laura. "Trapped at the Bottom: Racialized and Gendered Labor Queues In New Immigrant Destinations." Working Paper 176. The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego, 2009. Print.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Duncan, Brian and Stephen J. Trejo. "[Tracking Intergenerational Progress for Immigrant Groups: The Problem of Ethnic Attrition.](#)" *The American Economic Review* 101.3 (2011): 603-608.

Week 9: Class, Wealth, and Poverty

- "[Three Miles.](#)" Chana Joffe-Walt. 550: Three Miles. This American Life. WBEZ, Chicago. 13 March 2015. Web.
- Reardon, Sean F. "[The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations.](#)" *Whither Opportunity: Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances.* Ed. Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2011. 91-116. Print.
- Desmond, Matthew. "[Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty.](#)" *American Journal of Sociology* 118.1 (2012): 88-133.

Additional Reading for Discussion Leaders (optional for non-discussion leaders):

- Rivera, Lauren A. "[Diversity Within Reach: Recruitment Versus Hiring in Elite Firms.](#)" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 639.1 (2012): 71-90.