

Sociology R1B

Social Inequalities

John Kaiser, PhD
UC Berkeley
Fall 2021
Wednesdays 2pm-4pm
Online

Sociology R1B fulfills the second half of the Reading and Composition requirement. It has three main goals: 1) to assist you in developing a clear, persuasive, and personal prose style in English; 2) to refine and build upon the close reading techniques you practiced in R1A; and 3) to equip you with the skills necessary for writing a research paper—a standard requirement of many upper-division (100-level) courses. Other goals include: an increased ability to think critically, analyze and comprehend texts, construct arguments supported by evidence and reasoning, write clearly, and enjoy scholarly activity. Additionally, this course encourages students to cultivate a personal writing practice as a tool for analytical thinking and reading critically.

Writing is more than a means to communicate; it provides a special tool to nurture analytical and creative thinking. These capacities facilitate success in scholarship, even in fields that put less emphasis on writing. Designed to significantly improve composition skills, Sociology R1B trains students in the analysis, comprehension, structure, mechanics, and creativity of formal academic writing. We apply these skills in our reading of course material and outside texts. Not all of the readings exemplify excellent writing styles; rather they provide examples of various styles, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

Our essay assignments progress in difficulty and complexity through the semester, culminating in a longer research paper that incorporates advanced techniques of style, creativity, and organization of complex arguments. This course emphasizes revising in the writing process. Since our readings cover social science, it also introduces concepts useful for reading texts in these fields.

This course uses several forms of social inequality and current events in the United States as objects of analysis. An intersectional approach enables us to analyze how race, class, and gender inflect cultures, institutions, and structures of inequality. We also analyze mechanisms that create, reproduce, and transform relations of domination/subordination and exploitation. A central theme is how divisions between groups facilitate structures of domination and how people overcome divisions, leading to various types of transformation. Our essays invite students to synthesize complex, abstract theories of inequality and creatively apply them to current events while evaluating both theory and evidence.

Coursework and Grading

A grade of at least “C-” is required to pass this course.

Attendance and Participation.....	15%
Reading Responses.....	15%
Essay One.....	15%
Essay Two.....	15%
Proposal.....	5%
Final Paper.....	35%

Seminar participation: This course is organized as a seminar. Seminars depend on the engaged and active participation of their members. Please bear in mind that the quality of that participation will be more important than quantity. If internet connectivity keeps you from attending class, you will need to communicate with me at least 24 hours before any given absence so that we can develop an alternative contribution to the class’s learning experience. Missing more than two classes (in either synchronic or in a negotiated alternative form) will affect your grade. Our discussions will not be recorded. If you are synchronically present, you will be expected to participate in class discussions. Please be mindful of group dynamics so that everybody feels comfortable to speak up.

NOTE: students who miss two classes during the first two weeks may be dropped.

Video policy: This is a seminar discussion, not a large lecture, so I ask that everybody turn their video on. Good communication is an important part of seminar discussions, and visual cues facilitate communication. Turning your video on or off affects the group. Feel free to turn it off when you need to for whatever reason (like you need to take a break), as long as it stays on a majority of the time. At the minimum, turn your video on when speaking and during breakout room discussions. Please email me if having your video on is going to be a problem.

WARNING: Do not record our meetings! It is illegal to record without notifying and getting consent from everybody in your recording.

Reading Responses: Students will write a total of three reading responses on substantive reading, which is indicated by an “*” in the schedule. Responses should be analytical—not simply statements of opinion. Each must be about 550 words in length (two pages of double-spaced text, formatted correctly). You may not receive full credit if your paper is 50 words or more under the 550 word requirement. This word requirement does not apply to the header or works cited. Anything over two pages will not be read or graded, even if it meets the parameters for word requirement (header and works cited do not count towards page length; works cited may be on page 3).

Responses must be submitted to bCourses by the deadline: 24 hours before class officially starts that week (so Tuesdays at 2pm). Since one of the purposes of these responses is to promote quality discussions on the material, they must be submitted on time. You may not submit a response for a week's reading retroactively. No late responses will be accepted, even if you try to turn it in one minute after the assignment closes on bCourses (please do not email me a

Reading Response that you couldn't upload to bCourses because the assignment has closed). Only one reading response per qualifying week is allowed. Once you submit a Reading Response and it has been graded it will be counted as one of your five, even if you do not like the grade you received or have some other reason for not wanting it counted. See the instructions for this assignment on bCourses/files for more information.

Peer-Review Editing: For each essay, you and a partner (TBD) will exchange drafts and review one another's work, for the first draft of each essay.

Reading: You are expected to have completed each week's reading as preparation for class attendance and participation. Always read analytically and take notes as you go. Come to class with questions and observations about what you found interesting, significant, puzzling, etc. If you do not read carefully and keep up, you might feel frustrated or disappointed with the course. When page numbers are listed next to a reading, you are only responsible for those pages.

Essays: This course requires a minimum of 32 pages of writing, which is the university requirement for the second part of the Reading and Composition sequence. Three essay assignments, combined with the reading responses, meet this requirement. The first two focus on course readings, while the third necessitates library research and outside scholarly sources. For each essay, your grade will depend on the quality of your writing/analysis, how well you fulfill the requirements of the assignment, and how well you apply the course material. You must submit every assignment in order to pass the course.

Late Policy: Late essays will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for every day late (e.g. A>A-). Reading Responses may not be submitted past the deadline; no exceptions. If you have trouble uploading any assignment to bCourses, you must email it to me by the deadline: j_kaiser@berkeley.edu

Please do not ask for an extension for any of the assignments! You may let the instructor know of any special circumstances that may affect your performance, but please do not ask for an exception to course policy unless you are able to provide proof of special circumstances that warrant it (e.g. DSP, illness, personal crisis/emergency). *Official supporting documentation must be presented.* Although you may have a legitimate reason for making such a request, not all of your classmates—even those with more serious situations—necessarily feel entitled enough or comfortable asking.

Note: please submit all your papers in WORD files.

Writing Workshop: Students will present drafts of their final papers and provide constructive criticism on each other's work at the end of the semester. You will receive detailed instructions at the appropriate time.

Final Paper: There is no final exam for this course. Students will complete a final research paper in lieu of an exam. This final research paper should demonstrate mastery of course material. You will receive detailed instructions at the appropriate time.

Guidelines and Resources

Formatting: All work must be formatted correctly, which includes--but is not limited to--the following:

- single space the header at the top-left of your first page, and include only the following information: name, course, assignment, due date
- center your **creative title**, in bold, above your first paragraph;
- no title page;
- *single space* block quotations;
- 1" margins;
- indent paragraphs (no extra spacing between paragraphs);
- no justification for right-side margins;
- doubled-spacing (except the header, block quotations, and the works cited page);
- two spaces between sentences (e.g. after each period);
- page numbers (bottom center);
- 12-point Times New Roman font;
- all other formatting guidelines that we cover in class

Refer to *The Purdue Owl Writing Lab*¹ and chapter six of Berkeley's Writing Guide for more formatting information. Note that we use a modified version of MLA formatting, so some of what you find there will be different, in which case you should follow the guidelines specific to our course.

Student Learning Center (SLC): The SLC provides peer writing tutors. You are expected to make use of their services: <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Disability accommodations: If you need disability-related accommodations in this class please inform the instructor. Students who need academic accommodations should contact the Disability Students Program, 260 Cesar Chavez Center. Note that DSP accommodations are not retroactive. Also note that accommodations apply differently to the essays and reading responses. DSP students whose accommodations grant extra time on take-home assignments must email the instructor at least 12 hours before an essay is due if they wish to use those accommodations on that assignment.² This must be done for each assignment. Once we agree on your DSP deadline it becomes a firm deadline that cannot be extended further. Extensions will not be granted retroactively. Accommodations are built into the policy for reading responses: students choose which three reading responses they submit.

NOTE: Plagiarism, broadly put, is the presentation of another's words and/or ideas as one's own. It is grounds not only for automatic failure, but also for administrative disciplinary action. This also applies for other forms of academic dishonesty (a.k.a. cheating). Please see the Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct, Section III B, Academic Violations, and Section IV, Disciplinary Procedures.

¹ <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

² If you email the instructor at least 12 hours before an assignment's official due date, you will receive accommodations, even if the instructor does not reply before the deadline.

Wellness Resources: Berkeley offers several types of counseling services. You can call to talk to someone for help or to make an appointment: 642-9494 or <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling/lets-talk>. You will also find a comprehensive list of various types of resources (financial, food, and housing; sexual harassment; technology; writing; mental health) on bCourses/files: "Student Resources."

Course Materials

All of our reading material is available on bCourses. If you have trouble accessing all the pages of any given reading, try downloading it.

Recommended Supplementary Reading

Becker, Howard & Pamela Richards. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Johnson, William A., et. al. *Sociology Student Writer's Manual*. Fifth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2006.

Metzger, Deena. *Writing for Your Life: a Guide and Companion to the Inner Worlds*. UK: HarperCollins, 1992.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well: the Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

Office Hours and Contact Info

Office hours are important and I encourage you to make use of them. My office hours are Fridays 2pm-4pm. Sign up here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/odkhw>. If you cannot make that time, please let me know. Office hours are first come, first serve basis. My email address is: j_kaiser@berkeley.edu. Please allow at least 24 hours for a reply. I usually do not check email on holidays or weekends. NOTE: do not try to contact me through bCourses or reply to bCourses announcements; email me directly instead.

Course Schedule

*This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
An "*" indicates substantive reading.*

~~~~~Week One, August 25~~~~~  
**Course Overview**

Introduction to the course

~~~~~Week Two, September 1~~~~~  
Reading Analytically

*Davis and Moore. "Some Principles of Stratification." *American Sociological Review*. Vol. 10, No. 2, 1944, Annual Meeting Papers (Apr., 1945), p. 242-249.

Recommended: "Analysis."

~~~~~Week Three, September 8~~~~~

**Thesis Statements and Essay Structure**

\*Tumin, Melvin. "Critical Response." *American Sociological Review*. Vol. 18, No.4, (Aug., 1953), p. 387- 394.

Recommended: *Berkeley's Writing Guide*. Ch. 5, "Thesis Statements and Arguments," and Ch. 6, "Handling Other People's Writing."

~~~~~Week Four, September 15~~~~~

Sentence Mechanics and Making Claims

Freewrite for Essay One due by 11:59pm Sunday

*Marx, Karl. 1848. Excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto* ["Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism"] (32-41). From *Selected Works, Vol. I*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, [1964]

Recommended: "Recognizing Weak Thesis Statements" and *Berkeley's Writing Guide*, Ch. 4, "Mechanics."

~~~~~Week Five, September 22~~~~~

**Concision and Precision**

Essay One due 11:59pm Sunday

\*Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. Chapter 7. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016.

Recommended: Zinsser. "Simplicity" and "Clutter" (6-16).

~~~~~Week Six, September 29~~~~~

Developing Evidence-Based Claims

*Ribas, Vanesa. 2015. "The Value of Being Negro, the Cost of being Hispano: Disposability and the Challenges for Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Workplace." From *On the Line: Slaughterhouse Lives and the Making of the New South*. Berkeley: UC Press.

Recommended: "Making a Thesis Evolve" (227-235)

~~~~~Week Seven, October 6~~~~~

**Syntax and Style**

Freewrite for Essay Two due by 11:59pm Sunday

\*Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital" (241-258). From J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. NY: Greenwood Press.

Recommended: "Revising...Rhetoric of the Sentence" (391-414)

~~~~~Week Eight, October 13~~~~~

Finding One's "Voice"

Essay Two due by 11:59pm Sunday

*Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. "Creating a Caring Society" (84-94). *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 1, January 2000.

Recommended: "On Creativity."

~~~~~Week Nine, October 20~~~~~

**Beginning a Research Paper**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE BY 11:59PM SUNDAY**

\*Wilkinson and Pickett. 2010. "Physical Health and Life Expectancy." From *The Spirit Level*. NY: Bloomsbury Press.

Recommended: Alford. "Beginning a Research Project."

*In-class workshop: finding sources*

~~~~~Week Ten, October 27~~~~~

The Structure of Arguments

*Quinn, Beth. 2002. "Sexual Harassment and Masculinity: the Power and Meaning of 'Girl Watching.'" *Gender and Society*, Vol. 16, No. 3 June (p. 386-402).

Individual research and reading for final paper

Recommended: "Analyzing Arguments"

~~~~~Week Eleven, November 3~~~~~

**Synthesizing Evidence from Multiple Sources**

Freewrite for Final Paper due

Past Student Paper

Individual research and reading for final paper

Recommended: "Using Sources Analytically" (267-281)

~~~~~Week Twelve, November 10~~~~~

Analysis of Past Student Papers

Past student paper

Individual research and reading for final paper

~~~~~Week Thirteen, November 17~~~~~

**Writing Workshop**

Initial Analysis ("1st draft") for Final Paper due April 25

*Project Presentations*

Individual research and reading for final paper

~~~~~Week Fourteen, November 24~~~~~

HOLIDAY

NO CLASS

~~~~~Week Fifteen, December 1~~~~~

**Writing Workshop**

*Project Presentations*

Individual research and reading for final paper

**The Final Paper is due to bCourses by 11:59pm Monday, December 13th. Late submissions may not be accepted, and if accepted, will be subject to the course policy on late assignments.**