

Sociology R1B

Social Inequalities

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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%
Paper One.....	15%
Paper Two.....	20%
Paper Three.....	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. 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 most of the time. At the minimum, turn your video on when speaking and always during breakout room discussions. Please email me if having your video on is going to be a problem for any reason.

If you are self-conscious about seeing your own video or you find it distracting, know that you can turn off "self view" by clicking on your image/box and choosing that option from the list that pops up. If you have a concern about your personal space, you might consider: 1) positioning the camera so that only a wall is visible in the background; 2) adjusting the lighting so that you are less visible (backlit/dark); 3) using a virtual background.

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

Equipment Resources: If you need equipment (laptop, webcam, microphone) in order to participate in our Zoom meetings, you may borrow them through the Student Technology Equity Program (STEP): <https://bit.ly/32eaimn>

Reading Responses: Students will write a total of five 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 500 words in length (two pages of double-spaced text). Responses must be submitted to bCourses by the beginning of class. 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). Only one reading response per week is allowed. See assignment on bCourses for detailed instructions.

Peer-Review Editing: For each essay, you will choose a partner with whom you will exchange drafts and review one another's work, for the first draft of each essay. You will choose a different partner for each essay. Do not forget to put your name on your partner's paper so you can get credit for your work!

Reading: You are responsible for all assigned reading and assignments. 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. This will help you develop ideas for your essays. If you do not read carefully and keep up, you will probably feel frustrated or disappointed with the course.

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 in length and difficulty. The first two focus on course material, while the third necessitates library research and outside texts.

For each essay, you will turn in a first draft, receive feedback on it, and then submit a revised second draft. Your grades depend on: the quality of your writing and analysis; how well you integrate feedback; how you apply the course's writing techniques and material. You must submit every draft of every assignment in order to pass the course.

Late Policy: timely submission of your work is so important to the structure of this course that late work may not be accepted. If accepted, it will be penalized 2/3 of a letter grade for every day it is late (e.g. A>B+). This applies to both drafts of each essay (Reading Responses may not be submitted past the deadline. 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! 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.

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. Familiarize yourself with MLA style formatting. Refer to *The Purdue Owl Writing Lab*¹ and note the following specifications for our course's format and style guidelines:

- single space* the header at the top-left of your first page (name, course, assignment, due date);
- center your **creative title** above your first paragraph;
- no title page;
- single space* block quotations;
- 1" margins;
- indent paragraphs (no extra spaces between paragraphs);
- doubled-spacing (except the header, block quotations, and the works cited page);
- page numbers (bottom center);
- 12-point Times New Roman font.

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. DSP students whose accommodations grant extra time on take-home assignments must email the instructor at least 24 hours before an assignment is due if they wish to use those accommodations on that assignment. 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.

Disclaimer: this course includes material that may be emotionally-difficult and disturbing. Reactions, including, but not limited to, discomfort, anxiety, anger, sadness, disgust, guilt, and stress to course material is not grounds for exemption from, or customization of, policies pertaining to coursework, participation, assignments, and exams et cetera.

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/>

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. "WA" indicates readings from Rosenwasser and Stephen. *Writing Analytically*. 6th edition. 2012.

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. Please email me to arrange an appointment for a Zoom meeting. We will work together to arrange a time that fits both of our schedules. 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 28~~~~~

### **Course Overview**

Introduction to the course

~~~~~Week Two, September 4~~~~~

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

WA: “Analysis.”

No memo this week

~~~~~Week Three, September 11~~~~~

## **Thesis Statements and Essay Structure**

*(receive prompt for essay one)*

\*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]

Income and Wealth Inequality: <https://inequality.org/facts/income-inequality/>

*Berkeley’s Writing Guide*. ch 5, “Thesis Statements and Arguments,” and ch. 6, “Handling Other People’s Writing.”

~~~~~Week Four, September 18~~~~~

Sentence Mechanics and Making Evidence-Based Claims

FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER ONE DUE

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

Racial Economic Inequality: <https://inequality.org/facts/racial-inequality/>

WA: “Recognizing Weak Thesis Statements” and *Berkeley’s Writing Guide*, ch. 4, “Mechanics.”

~~~~~Week Five, September 25~~~~~

## **Developing the Argument**

*PEER REVIEW DUE*

\*Neocleous, Mark. 2000. *The Fabrication of Social Order: a Critical Theory of Police Power*. Sterling, VA: Pluto Press. "Preface" and Ch. 1, "Police Begets Good Order."

WA: “Making a Thesis Evolve” (227-235)

~~~~~Week Six, February 25~~~~~

Concision and Precision

SECOND DRAFT OF PAPER ONE DUE
(RECEIVE PROMPT FOR ESSAY TWO)

*Bonilla-Silva. E. 2003. *Racism Without Racists: Colorblind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield. “The Strange Enigma of Race in Contemporary America” and “The Central Frames of Colorblind Racism”.

Zinsser. Ch. 2, "Simplicity," and Ch. 3, "Clutter" (6-16).

~~~~~Week Seven, October 2~~~~~

**Syntax and Style**  
*FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER TWO DUE*

Omi, Michael. 2014. *Racial Formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge.  
"Introduction."

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

~~~~~Week Eight, October 9~~~~~

Finding One's Voice
PEER REVIEW DUE

*Brucato, Ben. 2014. "Fabricating the Color Line in a White Democracy." *Theoria*, Issue 141,
Vol. 61, No. 4 (December).

Metzger. 1989. *Writing for Your Life*. New York: Harper Collins. "On Creativity."

~~~~~Week Nine, October 16~~~~~

**Beginning a Research Paper**  
*SECOND DRAFT OF PAPER TWO DUE*  
*(RECEIVE PROMPT FOR FINAL PAPER)*

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

Alford. "Beginning a Research Project."

~~~~~Week Ten, October 23~~~~~

Logic in Arguments

*Wilkinson and Pickett. "Physical Health and Life Expectancy" (74-87). From *The Spirit Level*.
NY: Bloomsbury Press, 2010.

WA: Analyzing Arguments

~~~~~Week Eleven, October 30~~~~~

**ANALYSIS OF EXAMPLE STUDENT PAPERS**  
*PROPOSAL AND LIST OF SOURCES DUE*

\*hooks, bell. 2000. *all about love: new visions*. New York: Harper Collins. "Greed: Simply Love" (p. 105-125).

Example Student Papers

~~~~~Week Twelve, November 6~~~~~

Synthesizing Evidence from Multiple Sources

WA: “Using Sources Analytically” (267-281)

~~~~~Week Thirteen, November 13~~~~~

**Writing Workshop**

*Project Presentations*

Reading: research material for final paper

~~~~~Week Fourteen, November 20~~~~~

Writing Workshop

First draft of final paper due

Project Presentations

Reading: research material for final paper

~~~~~Week Fifteen, November 27~~~~~

**No class (holiday)**

~~~~~Week Sixteen, December 4~~~~~

Writing Workshop

Project Presentations

Reading: research material for final paper

The final draft of essay three is due to bCourses by 11:59pm Monday, December 14. Late submissions may not be accepted, and if accepted, will be subject to the course policy on late assignments.