

Sociology R1B

Social Inequalities

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UC Berkeley
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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. 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

*All assignments must be submitted on paper; no electronic submissions will be accepted.
A grade of at least “C-” is required to pass this course.*

Grading:

Attendance and Participation.....	10%
Reading-Response Memos.....	10%
Peer-Review Editing.....	5%
Paper One (first and second draft).....	15%
Paper Two (first and second draft).....	20%
Presentations.....	5%
Paper Three (first and second draft).....	35%

Participation and Attendance (A&P): This aspect of evaluation consists of: 1) attendance (regularity and punctuality); 2) participation; 3) in-class work. Regular attendance and good participation is essential for doing well. We only meet once a week, so you are only permitted one absence. More than one absence will lower your A&P grade by one letter grade per absence. Tardiness can be disruptive and may also adversely affect your grade. Distracting behavior, such as chatting, surfing the web, and phone play, may lower your grade.

Students are expected to participate regularly by contributing to our discussions. Please be mindful of group dynamics so that everybody feels comfortable to speak up. Contributing to discussions includes positive attitude and listening as well as speaking up. A grade of “A” in this section will not be possible without contributing thoughtfully to discussions throughout the semester.

Participation credit, including any in-class assignments and quizzes, and missed lectures cannot be made up under any circumstances, even with evidence of legitimate reason for missing class. However, a legitimate absence may be excused if the student’s request includes evidence of the legitimate reason for missing class (this will prevent the grade penalty for attendance only).

Reading-Response Memos: There will be five reading-response memos on the substantive reading, which is indicated by an “*” in the schedule. Memos should be thoughtful, analytical responses—not simply statements of opinion.

A hard copy of each memo must be submitted in whichever class’s “Reading Due” corresponds to the texts analyzed in your memo. Because the memos promote good discussions on the material, you must submit them on time. You may not submit a memo for past reading or classes. Only one memo per class/text is allowed. No late memos will be accepted. Memos may not be redone or made up under any circumstances (no exceptions!).

Each student must write five memos of 2 points each to receive full credit (a $\sqrt{+}$ = 2 points; a $\sqrt{=}$ = 1 point; and a $\sqrt{-}$ = 0 points). For each memo, in a well-written, **two-page** discussion, answer the following:

- What is the author’s main argument and what is the structure of that argument?
- How does the author provide support for this argument?
- What are the strongest counter arguments to the author’s main argument?

Memos must be written in a formal discussion style (no bullet points, lists, etc.). You will need to write between one-and-a-half and two pages. Do not go over two pages! A bibliography is not required for memos, but citations are.

Peer-Review Editing: For each essay, you will choose a partner to exchange drafts and review and edit one another's work. That person will be your partner for that essay assignment, including both the 1st and 2nd drafts. 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 with a pencil in hand and take notes as you go.

Regarding the substantive reading, 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 assignment in order to pass the course.

A hard copy of each draft is due *in class*. Bring two (2) copies of each draft (one for the instructor and one for your partner). If you bring only one copy of your assignment to class, you will automatically lose one letter grade on that assignment.

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 a full letter grade for every day it is late (two grades max). This applies to both drafts of each essay.

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. Therefore, out of fairness and to avoid favoritism, *please* do not ask for an exception to this policy.

IMPORTANT: If you miss class when an assignment is due, you should email it to me right away, and arrange to deliver your hard copy (I will not grade it until I have the hard copy). You must submit the first draft with the second draft of each essay (paperclip them together). If you are absent on a day that your peer-review is due, you should arrange to deliver it to your partner right away.

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.

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 modified MLA format and style guidelines:

- single space* the header at the top-left of your first page (name, course, assignment, date);
- center your creative title (**and bold**) above the start of your text;
- no title page;
- use *two spaces* between sentences;
- single space* block quotations;
- 1" margins;
- indent paragraphs (no extra spaces between paragraphs);
- doubled-spacing (except the header and block quotations);
- page numbers (bottom center);
- 12-point Times New Roman font;
- staple pages together;
- selective use of passive voice;
- no contractions.

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.

Student Learning Center (SLC): The SLC provides peer writing tutors. You are expected to make use of their services. You do not need an appointment. Find them in the Chavez Center (<http://slc.berkeley.edu>).

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

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

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.

ATTENTION: Students who miss any of the first three classes may be dropped from the class.

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. There is also on-campus drop-in counseling that does not require an appointment: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling/lets-talk>. You can also drop in at the Tang center if you need immediate and urgent support (first 5 sessions are free). Those hours are Monday-Friday 10am-5pm. Please make use of these great resources available to us!

Mindfulness and meditation can also really help with stress. Berkeley offers free mindfulness classes! <https://www.facebook.com/Mindfulnessatberkeley/> There is also a meditation and prayer room in Eshleman Hall, open Monday-Friday 8am-9pm. Another option is a tranquil stroll through the quieter parts of campus or up Strawberry Mountain.

Course Materials

All of our reading material is available on bCourses, where you will find three folders: Substantive Reading, Techniques of Analytical Writing, and Optional Reading.

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.

Rosenwasser and Stephen. *Writing Analytically*. 6th edition. 2012.

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

Always bring paper and pen to class for writing exercises.

Office Hours and Contact Info

Office hours are an important part of college learning, and are especially central to this particular course. The best times to meet will be Thursdays 2pm-4pm. I ask students to email me to arrange an appointment so we can find a time that works. We will also decide on a location for our meeting over email. 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, January 22

Course Overview

Introduction to the course

Week Two, January 29

Reading Analytically

"Analysis."

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

Week Three, February 5

Thesis Statements, Mechanics, and Essay Structure

Berkeley's Writing Guide. ch 4, "Mechanics" and ch 5, "Thesis Statements and Arguments," and ch. 6, "Handling Other People's Writing."

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

Week Four, February 12

Evidence and Reasoning

"Recognizing Weak Thesis Statements."

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

-->>**FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER ONE DUE** (two copies)

Week Five, February 19

Flow

"Making a Thesis Evolve" (227-235)

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

-->> **PEER REVIEW DUE**

~~~~~Week Six, February 26~~~~~

## **Sentence Mechanics and Style**

“Revising...Rhetoric of the Sentence” (391-414)

\*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.

->> **SECOND DRAFT OF PAPER ONE DUE**

~~~~~Week Seven, March 5~~~~~

Clarity: Concision, Precision, and Diction

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

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

-->>**FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER TWO DUE (two copies)**

~~~~~Week Eight, March 12~~~~~

## **Finding One’s Voice**

Metzger. “On Creativity.”

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

-->> **PEER REVIEW DUE**

~~~~~Week Nine, March 19~~~~~

Beginning a Research Paper

Sources workshop-----> *bring your laptop to class*

Alford. “Beginning a Research Project.”

* Bonilla-Silva. E. Chapter 1, “The Strange Enigma of Race in Contemporary America” and Chapter 2, “The Central Frames of Colorblind Racism”. From *Racism Without Racists: Colorblind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.

-->> **SECOND DRAFT OF PAPER TWO DUE**

~~~~~Week Ten, March 26~~~~~

**Spring Break!!!**

~~~~~**Week Eleven, April 2**~~~~~  
Using Evidence to Build Arguments

“Using Sources Analytically” (267-281)

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

Individual research material for Final Paper

~~~~~**Week Twelve, April 9**~~~~~  
**Synthesizing Evidence from Multiple Sources**

Individual research material for Final Paper

-->> ***PROPOSAL AND LIST OF SOURCES DUE***

~~~~~**Week Thirteen, April 16**~~~~~  
Writing Workshop

Final Project Presentations

Individual research material for Final Paper

~~~~~**Week Fourteen, April 23**~~~~~  
**Writing Workshop**

*Final Project Presentations*

Individual research material for Final Paper

-->> ***FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER THREE DUE (Two copies)***

~~~~~**Week Fifteen, April 30**~~~~~  
Writing Workshop

Final Project Presentations

Individual research material for Final Paper

-->> **PEER REVIEW DUE**

*The Final Paper is due in my box in 410 Barrows by 2pm on Monday, May 13th.
Late submissions may not be accepted, and if accepted will be assessed a
penalty according to course policy.*