

Sociology R1B

Social Inequalities

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UC Berkeley
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Wednesdays 2:00pm-4:00pm

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, synthesis of multiple sources, and organization of relatively complex claims and analysis. 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 such divisions. 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.....	10%
Essay One.....	15%
Essay Two.....	20%
Proposal.....	5%
Final Paper.....	35%

Participation: Seminar courses depend on active participation. Please be mindful of group dynamics so that everybody feels comfortable to speak up. The first part of this course will take place online. 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) may affect your grade. Our discussions will not be recorded. If you are synchronically present, you will be expected to participate in class discussions.

NOTE: students who miss class 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.

Reading Responses: Students are required to write two reading responses on the substantive reading, indicated by an “*” in the schedule. Responses should be analytical—not simply statements of opinion. Each must be between one-and-a-half to two pages in length, formatted correctly.

Responses must be submitted to bCourses by Tuesday at 2pm the week that your chosen reading is scheduled. Since one of the purposes of these assignments 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 (please do not email me a paper 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 two, 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 at bCourses/files for more information.

Reading: You are expected to have completed each week's required 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 and 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.

Writing Workshop and Presentations: Students will present drafts of their final papers and provide constructive criticism on each other's work at the end of the semester. We will also read example papers from other semesters. 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.

Late Policy for essays: 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 late. 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 exception to course policy unless you are able to provide adequate supporting evidence of circumstances that warrant it (e.g. DSP, illness, personal or family emergency). 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.

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. NOTE: freewrites are exempt from the formatting guidelines.

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.

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: 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.

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

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 of at least 24 hours, even if the instructor does not reply before the deadline.

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

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.

Office hours are important and I encourage you to make use of them. My office hours are Fridays 2pm-4pm. Sign up here: Sign up [here](#). Please email if you would like to meet but cannot make that time. [Here](#) is the link for Zoom office hours.

Note: this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

Course Schedule

An "" indicates substantive reading.*

Week One, January 19

Introduction to the course

Week Two, January 26

Reading Analytically

Davis and Moore. 1944. "Some Principles of Stratification." *American Sociological Review*.

Vol. 10, No. 2, Annual Meeting Papers (Apr., 1945), p. 242-244.

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

Recommended: "Analysis."

Week Three, February 2

Structure and Process

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

Week Four, February 9

Sentence Mechanics and Clarity

Freewrite for Essay One due Sunday

- *Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. 2016. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Ch. 7, "From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
Recommended: *Berkeley's Writing Guide*, Ch. 4 "Mechanics," and Zinsser, "Simplicity" and "Clutter" (6-16).

Week Five, February 16

Developing the Main Argument and Revising

Essay One due Sunday

- *Ribas, Vanesa. 2015. "'Painted Black': Oppressive Exploitation and Racialized Resentment." From *On the Line: Slaughterhouse Lives and the Making of the New South*, Ch. 4. Berkeley: UC Press.
Recommended: "Making a Thesis Evolve" (227-235)

Week Six, February 23

Syntax and Style I

- *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 Seven, March 2

Syntax and Style II

Freewrite for Essay Two due Sunday

- *Mingus, Mia. 2022. "You Are Not Entitled to Our Deaths: COVID, Abled Supremecy and Interdependence." From *Leaving Evidence*. <https://bit.ly/3Kewv97>
Recommended: "Revising...Rhetoric of the Sentence" (391-414)

Week Eight, March 9

Finding One's "Voice"

Essay Two due Sunday

- *hooks, bell. 2000. "Coming to Class Consciousness." From *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. NY: Routledge Press.

Recommended: "On Creativity."

Week Nine, March 16

Beginning a Research Paper

In-class workshop on finding sources

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

Recommended: Alford. "Beginning a Research Project."

Week Ten, March 23

Spring Break

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE SUNDAY

Week Eleven, March 30

Developing Ideas and Evidence-Based Claims

Freewrite for Final Paper due Sunday

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

Recommended: "Analyzing Arguments"

Individual research and reading for final paper

Week Twelve, April 6

Synthesizing Evidence from Multiple Sources

First draft of Final Paper due Sunday

Example student papers

Recommended: "Using Sources Analytically"

Research and reading for final paper

Week Thirteen, April 13

Writing Workshop

Example student papers

Individual research and reading for final paper

Week Fourteen, April 20

Writing Workshop and Presentations

Individual research and reading for final paper

Week Fifteen, April 27

Writing Workshop and Presentations

Individual research and reading for final paper

The Final Paper is due to bCourses by 11:59pm Monday, May 9. Late submissions may not be accepted, and if accepted, will be subject to the course policy on late assignments.