



# SOCI 218:10

## Social Inequality in Canada



### **Instructor:**

Dr. Joel Z. Garrod  
jgarrod@stfx.ca

### **Location:**

Mulroney Hall 3030  
U7/U8

### **Office Hours:**

By appointment

This course explores the distribution of social, political, and economic resources in Canadian society, and the unequal access to those resources based on class, race, Indigenous status, ethnicity, age, disability, and region.

Looked at through the lens of class and power, we will examine the socio-economic roots of social inequality, as well as the causes and consequences of poverty in Canada. Special attention will be paid to the transformation of social inequality over time, as well as the rise and impact of neoliberal social policies. The course will conclude with a reflection on the state of social inequality today, and whether things could be different.

# Course Objectives & Textbook

By the end of this course, you should have:

- A broad grasp of the origins and impacts of social inequality
- A general knowledge of how social inequality intersects with class, race, gender, age, ability, and region
- A critical view of the rise of neoliberal social policy
- An understanding of the main drivers of social inequality today



All readings can be found on Moodle

I truly believe that this course is relevant to your lives. If, at any time during this course, you feel that what we're learning isn't useful, I urge you to ask me: "Why should I give a damn?"

I'll gladly take time to explain why I believe what we're learning is important for you to know. And if I can't explain why, I'll amend that section of the course.



# Requirements

**Participation** is absolutely vital to this course, and will likely be a necessary part of getting a good grade. In return for attending, I promise to make the course interesting, and worthwhile. If you are unable to attend regularly, please talk to me about possible accommodations.

The **Midterm** will assess your understanding of course materials and concepts up to the middle of the term. You will be asked to evaluate what sorts of impacts a universal basic income would have on inequality in Canada. **October 14**

The **Inequality or Service Learning Paper** is intended to get you thinking about the role of inequality in Canadian society. If you choose the **Inequality Paper**, you will choose a news report focusing on a socio-economic circumstance faced by Canadians experiencing social inequality. The topic must have a socio-economic and policy dimension. You will then provide a critical analysis of the issue. If you choose the **Service Learning Paper**, you will volunteer for 20 hours with a community partner and produce a paper based on your experiences. The paper will focus on what was learned about living with social inequalities through your service work. **December 5**

The **Take-Home Exam** will assess your understanding of course material and concepts from the entire term. It will consist of a single essay question. **Sometime during exam period**

Grading		
✓	Participation:	10%
✓	Midterm:	20%
✓	Inequality Paper:	35%
✓	Take-Home Exam:	35%

<b>All citations in APA or ASA Style</b>	<b>Double-spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font</b>	<b>Late items lose 5 marks per day</b>
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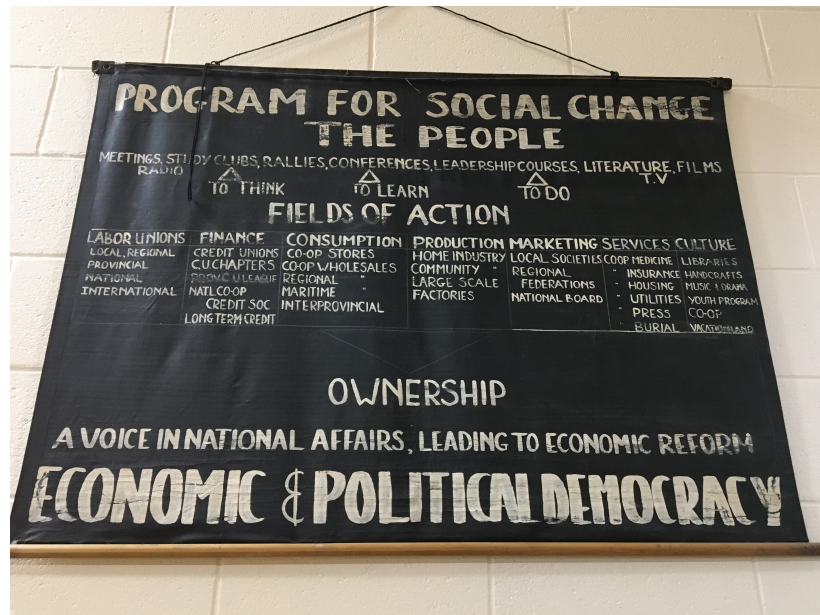
# Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
Sept 8	Introduction	Syllabus
Sept 12	What is Inequality?	Grabb & Hwan, "Social inequality now"
Sept 15	When is Inequality?	Graeber & Wengrow, "Farewell to humanity's childhood: Or, why this is not a book about the origins of inequality"
Sept 19	<b>Film: <i>Seven Up!</i></b>	No readings
Sept 22	Power and Class	Hwang & Grabb, "Investigating concentrated ownership, transnational connections, and state involvement in the Canadian economy"  Carroll, "Corporate power in twenty-first century Canada"
Sept 26	Income and Wealth	Carroll, "Billionaires and networkers: Wealth, position and corporate power"  Macdonald, "Born to win"
Sept 29	Work	Rinehart, excerpt from <i>The Tyranny of Work</i>  <b>Film: <i>The Parking Lot Movie</i></b>
Oct 3	<b>Film: <i>The Parking Lot Movie</i></b>	No readings

Date	Topic	Readings
Oct 6	Basic Income	Forget, "The town with no poverty"  <b>Film: Free Lunch Society</b>
Oct 10	Thanksgiving	No readings
Oct 13	Basic Income	Graeber, "What are the political effects of bullshit jobs, and is there anything that can be done about this situation?"  <b>Film: Free Lunch Society</b>
Oct 17	<b>Midterm</b>	No readings
Oct 20	Monopoly	No readings
Oct 24	Education and Poverty	Lehmann, "Becoming middle class"  Gans, "The positive functions of poverty"
Oct 27	Colonialism	Lowman & Barker, "Canada and Settler Colonialism"  Comack, "Corporate colonialism and the 'crimes of the powerful' committed against the Indigenous peoples of Canada"
Oct 31	Racism	Maynard, "The Black side of the mosaic"
	<b>Drop Date Nov 2</b>	
Nov 3	Sex and Gender	Federici, excerpt from <i>Caliban and the Witch</i>
Nov 7	Fall Break	No readings
Nov 10	Fall Break	No readings

Date	Topic	Readings
Nov 14	From the Welfare State to Neoliberalism	Finkel, "The welfare state since 1980"
Nov 17	<b>Film: Bitter Medicine</b>	No readings
Nov 21	Disability	Reaume, "Understanding critical disability studies"  Bresge, "'Do our lives count for less?' Coronavirus shows gaps in Canada's disability aid, experts say"  Canadian Human Rights Commission, "MAiD cannot be an answer to systemic inequality"
Nov 24	The Future of Inequality	Peters, "Inequality"  Day, "You don't want Hygge. You want social democracy"
Nov 28	<b>Film: 63 Up</b>	No readings
Dec 1	<b>Film: 63 Up</b>	No readings
Dec 5	Review and Wrap-Up	No readings

**Final Paper Due**



# Additional Information

## Drop Date

Students may drop this course, online in Banner, on or before **November 2, 2022**.

## COVID-19

The 2022-2023 academic year is taking place during an exceptional period of human history. As the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, we may have to adjust the course assessment plan and/or delivery method with little or no notice. You may also have to stay home from class for various reasons related to COVID-19 (such as simply feeling ill). If this happens to you, please contact me so that we can discuss an alternative to your attendance grade for that class. Lastly, it is important that you take care of yourself by getting adequate amounts of sleep, and by taking appropriate mental health breaks. The university website on COVID-19 provides more information and links (<https://www.stfx.ca/coronavirus>).

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

As this course involves the production of written work, you should familiarize yourself with the standards for proper referencing of all cited materials, such as books, journal articles, newspaper articles, websites, and so on. For help with citation styles, I recommend visiting the Student Success Centre (<https://www.mystfx.ca/student-success/style-guides>).

Students that attempt to pass off someone else's work as their own (i.e., plagiarism) will be dealt with through the university policy on academic honesty. Please ensure that you fully understand this policy (see section 3.8 of the academic calendar, found at: <https://www2.mystfx.ca/registrar-office/academic-calendars>). Resources for avoiding plagiarism can be found on the library website (<https://www2.mystfx.ca/library/plagiarism>).

## Writing Assistance

Despite the fact that this is a writing-intensive course, we will not be able to spend much time on the craft of writing. If you need assistance with your writing, I recommend booking an appointment with me or visiting the Student Success Centre (<http://www2.mystfx.ca/student-success/>).

## Accommodations

If you have an injury, develop an illness, or encounter a personal crisis that will impact your progress in this course, please email me as soon as you are able. This will ensure that we find a way for you to complete the course. The Health and Counselling Centre is another resource available to you (<http://www2.mystfx.ca/health-and-counselling/>).

If you have any disabilities that require an accommodation in teaching style or evaluation, please speak to me as soon as possible so we can implement those accommodations. You may also want to contact the Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning (<https://www2.mystfx.ca/accessible-learning/tramble-centre-accessible-learning>).

## **Equity and Discrimination**

Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe, and equitable learning environment free from discrimination or harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. These values and practices are in accord with the StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy which can be found at (<https://www2.mystfx.ca/equity/policies>). Please feel free to discuss with me any questions or concerns you have about equity in our classroom or in the StFX community. If I cannot answer your questions or help you address your concerns, I encourage you to talk to the Chair of our Department, or the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (Megan Fogarty, [mfogarty@stfx.ca](mailto:mfogarty@stfx.ca)).

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## **Grade Scale**

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			