

# SYA 7933: Social Stratification

## Spring 2026

Tuesdays      Period 7 – 9      1:55 pm - 4:55 pm      USTLER 103

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### Office hours:

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>How</i>	<i>Where</i>
Tuesdays	12:30 – 1:30 pm	In Person	Turlington 3356
Thursdays	1:00 – 2:00 pm	In Person <i>or by appointment</i>	Turlington 3356

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INCLUDE “SYA 7933” IN SUBJECT OF ALL EMAILS

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### Required Readings:

Grusky, David, Dds. *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*. 4th Edition. Taylor & Francis (Routledge), 2014.

#### *Access instructions:*

The textbook is available for free as an eBook through UF Libraries’ subscription to “Taylor & Frances eBooks Complete.” To access the eBook, search for the title in [Primo](#) while on campus or after connecting to UF VPN if off campus. You may read the book online, download select chapters as pdf files, or download the whole book as a pdf file. You are welcome to purchase a hard copy of the textbook but are not required to do so.

All other readings available on Canvas.

## Overview of the class:

Sociology has engaged with and studied inequality since its foundation. Though the outcomes of interest, the processes that produce them, the motivations for study, the paradigms of interpretation and explanation, and methods have all changed and evolved substantially over the history of the discipline, inequality remains central as a matter of interest within sociology. Some scholars argue that sociology is defined by the study of inequality. But because the sociological study of inequality has a long history, many streams of thought, nearly countless domains, and touches upon almost every topic of sociological inquiry, it can be challenging to study.

This class provides a broad overview of the many literatures in stratification by examining theories and empirical contributions in most of its main areas. Unfortunately, no single-semester class on stratification and inequality can be exhaustive (though it can certainly be exhausting). If a topic of interest to you is not covered, I strongly encourage you to look at the relevant chapters in the Grusky-edited textbook. We will discuss sociological approaches to understanding the shape, causes, and consequences of inequality in class, status, race, gender, income, and education; learn about the dynamics of inequality across and within generations; and investigate the role of markets, neighborhoods, organizations, and institutions in shaping inequalities.

Below is the schedule of topics for the semester. The full list of reading assignments can be found at the bottom of this syllabus, as well as on Canvas.

Date	Class #	Topic	Facilitators
13-Jan	1	Foundational questions and frames	
20-Jan	2	How to think about inequality & methods	
27-Jan	3	Marxian Class Theories	
3-Feb	4	Weberian Theories of Class	
10-Feb	5	Durkheim, Class, Occupations	
17-Feb	6	Educational Attainment	
24-Feb	7	Economists on Inequality	
3-Mar	8	Race	
10-Mar	9	Incarceration	
17-Mar		<i>No Class – Spring break</i>	
24-Mar	10	Gender	
31-Mar	11	Post-Industrialism, Neo-Liberalism	
7-Apr	12	Labor, Organizations, and Work	
14-Apr	13	Cultural and Social Capital	

I envision this graduate seminar as a shared enterprise of collective and collaborative knowledge-building. The bulk of your work will consist of critical assessments of weekly readings, which I call “interrogations.” In addition to being submitted on Canvas for a grade, interrogations will be shared with all students in the seminar. This intensive work will turn provide the basis for our discussion in class, which will be our opportunity to collaboratively synthesize both ideas in the

readings and the perspectives of each other. In this way, this seminar is structured as a microcosm of the (ideal) culture of collaboration, sharing, and exchange that make up some of the most exciting and gratifying aspects of knowledge production found in sociology (and academia generally).

## **Course Requirements**

### *Class participation and format*

This seminar is discussion-based and requires your active participation in class. You will only be able to actively participate if you have completed all required readings for each week and come to class prepared to discuss them. Each week features foundational readings that will help shape your sociological thinking even where you may not yet see an immediate connection to a specific research idea or project that you are working on.

During class we will strive for active engagement with one another. This consists of active listening to questions and insights, good-faith dialogue with one another, and maintaining patience as others speak.

### *Reading Interrogations*

Each student will write ten (10) interrogations of a week's readings over the course of a semester. This means that you will have four weeks in which you don't have to write an interrogation. Choose your weeks wisely and plan ahead.

Interrogations are not summaries of readings but memos that critically engage with the readings. While you may need to briefly review some of the arguments made in the readings, you should summarize only insofar as is necessary to situate and ground your critical engagement. You may conceive of your interrogation as an active conversation with the authors – as you might in the context of prepared remarks as a discussant that you present at a conference. Interrogations may highlight the strengths or potential weaknesses of readings, draw connections between them, engage in conceptual synthesis, suggest ways to expand on an argument or framework, discuss how readings relate to one another in the same week or another week (many readings are chosen because they are part of an academic debate). Or your interrogation may describe an aspect of the readings which surprised you, or which you found noteworthy, and why. Interrogations should raise “simple” clarification questions – often, they turn out to be not simple at all but instead point towards parts of an argument that raise additional issues.

The length of each memo should be about 2 pages (there are no word limits or requirements, but about 500 words is a good target).

Your interrogation memos will constitute the foundation of our classroom discussions. Because of this, the timely upload and review of submissions is critical. Our class meets on Tuesdays. You should complete the readings and write your interrogations *for the following week* by the Sunday *preceding* class. Memos are due at 10 pm on Sunday and will be shared with everyone in class. I encourage you to read through other interrogations whenever time permits. Class discussion

should ideally include students responding to the ideas, issues, and questions raised in each other's interrogations. However, such dialogues must maintain a civil and professional tone and should focus on sharing perspectives, amplifying other's observations, or posing questions. Responses should try to avoid criticism, which can often hinder open exchange, even when it is intended constructively.

### *Facilitating Discussions*

Classroom discussions will be facilitated by pairs of (two) students. Because we are a relatively small group, each student will facilitate two class discussions over the course of the semester but you cannot work with the same co-facilitator twice.

Facilitation does not require a summary or presentation of the assigned readings but it should include an effort to 1. Compile questions and issues raised in the interrogations, 2. Organize discussion by topics, and 3. Drawing connections between, and/or raising observations about, themes and issues brought up in the memos. Facilitators will control the topics and pacing of classroom discussion and choose how the discussion will proceed (for instance, should we speak freely, raise hands to speak, or make a speaking queue, etc.).

### *Scholarly Book Review*

Your final project for the semester will consist of a written review of an influential, landmark book in sociology from the last 3-4 decades. Reviews will emulate the tone, content, and spirit of book reviews published in academic journals. I will provide a list of books and each student will choose one on which to write their review. You are strongly encouraged to read reviews of your chosen book in peer-reviewed journals which followed the book's publication.

The book review is similar in aim to your interrogations, but larger in scope. Your review should briefly summarize the main arguments of the book, situate the book in its scholarly milieu and point out the ideas and streams of thought with which the book engages. You should note the most important contributions of the book, discuss whether these were controversial and why, and what arguments and perspectives on the topic the book overturned, eclipsed, or built upon. In addition, you should note where the book's strengths and weaknesses lie and elaborate on why you think this is the case. When doing this, you should avoid a bad habit among academics, namely criticizing scholarship for failing to meet your personal views or expectations of what is important. It is generally more constructive and useful to first ask whether the author met the goals they set for themselves in the book. Secondly, you may discuss ways in which the book met, fell short of, influenced, or shifted the standards of the scholarship on the topic on which it was written.

Additional details about the book review, as well as the list books to choose from, will be provided in a separate document during the semester. If you want to review a book that is not on the list, you can make your case in discussion with me.

## **Grading**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>
Class participation	15
Interrogations	50
Facilitation of class	15
Book review	20

## University Policies

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please visit <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

## Reading Assignments

Readings from the *Social Stratification, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* textbook are marked as *GSS4E*. Readings marked with an asterisk (\*) are required. Other readings are optional but highly recommended.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
13-Jan	1	Foundational questions and frames	* Davis & Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification" <i>GSS4E</i> Ch. 2 * Tumin, "Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis" <i>GSS4E</i> Ch. 3 * Fischer, Hout, et al "Inequality by Design," <i>GSS4E</i> Ch. 4 * Jackson & Grusky, "A Post-Liberal Theory of Stratification," <i>BJS</i> 2018. * Wright, "From Stratification to Class Analysis (and back again?)" <i>ASA</i> 2005 Wright & Burawoy "Sociological Marxism," 2000.
20-Jan	2	How to think about inequality & methods	* Lizardo, "The End of Theorists," <i>Open Book</i> , 2010 * Weber, "Science as a vocation," 1922 * Reuten, "Marx's Method," 1998 Hall, "Marx's Notes on Method: A Reading of the 1857 Introduction," <i>Cultural Studies</i> , 2003
27-Jan	3	Marxian Class Theories	* Marx, <i>The Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> , 1848. * Wright, <i>Classes</i> , Ch 1 and 2 * Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," from <i>Debate on Classes</i> , 1990 * Dahrendorf, "Class and Class Conflict in Industry Society," <i>GSS4E</i> Ch. 15 Winant, "The Baby and the Bathwater: Class Analysis and Class Formation after Deindustrialization," 2024

			<p>Wallerstein, "Class Conflict in the Capitalist World Economy" GSS4E Ch. 17</p> <p>Chibber &amp; Veneziani, "The Different Facets of Injustice," 2021.</p>
3-Feb	4	Weberian Theories of Class	<p>* Weber, "Class, Status, Party," GSS4E Ch. 18</p> <p>* Giddens, "The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies," GSS4E Ch. 19</p> <p>* Chan &amp; Goldthorpe, "Is There A Status Order In Contemporary British Society?" GSS4E Ch. 21</p> <p>* Breen, "Foundations of a Neo-Weberian Class Analysis," in <i>Approaches to Class Analysis</i>, 2005.</p> <p>Wright, "The Shadow of Exploitation in Weber's Class Analysis," <i>ASR</i>, 2002</p>
10-Feb	5	Durkheim, Class, Occupations	<p>* Durkheim, "The Division of Labor in Society," GSS4E Ch. 22</p> <p>* Goldthorpe &amp; Hope, "Occupational Grading and Occupational Prestige," GSS4E Ch. 25</p> <p>* Weeden &amp; Grusky, "The Case for a New Class Map," <i>AJS</i> 2005.</p> <p>Weeden &amp; Grusky, "The Three Worlds of Inequality," <i>AJS</i> 2012</p> <p>* Wodtke, "Social class and income inequality in the United States: Ownership, authority, and personal income distribution from 1980 to 2010," <i>AJS</i>, 2016.</p> <p>Zhou &amp; Wodtke, "Income Stratification among Occupational Classes in the United States," <i>SF</i> 2018.</p>
17-Feb	6	Educational Attainment	<p>* Jencks et al, "Inequality: A reassessment of family and schooling in America," GSS4E Ch. 59</p> <p>* Breen et al, "Nonpersistent Inequality in Educational Attainment," GSS4E Ch. 62.</p> <p>* Jackson, "Determined to Succeed," GSS4E Ch. 63</p> <p>* Alon, "Toward a Theory of Inequality in Higher Education," GSS4E Ch. 64</p> <p>* Brand &amp; Xie, "Who Benefits Most from College?" GSS4E Ch. 66</p> <p>* Torche, "Is a college degree still the great equalizer? Intergenerational mobility across levels of schooling in the United States," <i>AJS</i> 2011.</p> <p>van de Werfhorst, "Is Meritocracy Not So Bad After All? Educational Expansion and Intergenerational Mobility in 40 Countries," <i>ASR</i> 2024</p>
24-Feb	7	Economists on Inequality	<p>* Atkinson, Piketty, Saez, "Top Incomes in the Long Run of History," GSS4E Ch. 7</p>

- \* Goldin & Katz, "The Race Between Education and Technology," GSS4E Ch. 8
- \* Solon, "Intergenerational Income Mobility," GSS4E Ch. 56
- \* Autor & Dorn, "The growth of low-skill service jobs and the polarization of the US labor market," *AER* 2013
- \* Kristal & Cohen, "The causes of rising wage inequality: the race between institutions and technology," SER, 2017
- Naidu & Carr, "If you don't like your job, can you always quit? Pervasive monopsony power and freedom in the labor market," *JLPE*, 2022.
- Farber et al, "Unions and Inequality over the Twentieth Century: New Evidence from Survey Data", QJE, 2021
- Wright, "Class and Inequality in Piketty," *Contexts* 2015

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3-Mar     8     Race

- \* Omi & Winant, "Racial Formation in the United States," GSS4E Ch. 79
- \* Massey & Denton, "American Apartheid," GSS4E Ch. 44
- \* Wilson, "Being Poor, Black, and American," GSS4E Ch. 40
- \* Bertrand & Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal?" GSS4E Ch. 86
- \* Fernandez & Fernandez-Mateo, "Networks, Race, and Hiring," GSS4E Ch. 77
- \* Baker, "The Historical Racial Regime and Racial Inequality in Poverty in the American South," *AJS*, 2022
- \* Saperstein & Penner, "Racial Fluidity and Inequality in the United States," *AJS* 2012
- Rosenfeld & Kleykamp, "Organized Labor and Racial Wage Inequality in the United States", *AJS*, 2012
- \* Wodtke, Elwert, Harding, "Neighborhood Effect Heterogeneity by Family Income and Developmental Period," *AJS*, 2016
- Wright, "The Class Analysis of Poverty,"
- Goodwin, "Black Reconstruction as Class War,"

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10-Mar     9     Incarceration

- \* Western & Petit, "Incarceration & Social Inequality," *Daedalus* 2010.
- \* Wildman & Western, "Incarceration in Fragile Families," *Future of Children*, 2010

- \* Pager, "Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration," GSS4E Ch. 88
- \* Pager & Shepherd, "Sociology of Racial Discrimination in employment housing credit and consumer markets," *ARS* 2008
- \* Wakefield & Uggen, "Incarceration and Stratification," *ARS* 2010
- Gourevitz, "Police Work: The Centrality of Labor Repression," 2015.
- Usmani & Clegg, "The Social Origins of Mass Incarceration," 2020.

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17-Mar	<i>No Class – Spring break</i>		
24-Mar	11	Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Hochschild, "The Time Bind," GSS4E Ch. 92</li> <li>* Goldin &amp; Rouse, "Orchestrating Impartiality," GSS4E Ch. 95</li> <li>* Correll et al, "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" GSS4E Ch. 96</li> <li>* Reskin, "Rethinking Employment Discrimination and its Remedies," GSS4E Ch. 98</li> <li>* Bielby, "The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation," GSS4E Ch. 100</li> <li>* Jacobs, "Revolving Doors: Sex Segregation and Women's Careers," GSS4E Ch. 101</li> <li>* Tam, "Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less?" GSS4E Ch. 107</li> <li>* Blau, "Sources of the Gender Wage Gap," GSS4E Ch. 108</li> <li>* Ridgeway, "The Persistence of Gender Inequality," GSS4E Ch. 113</li> <li>* England, Levine &amp; Mishel, "Progress toward gender equality in the United States has slowed or stalled," <i>PNAS</i> 2020</li> <li>Gorman &amp; Kmec, "Hierarchical Rank and Women's Organizational Mobility: Glass Ceilings in Corporate Law Firms," <i>AJS</i> 2009.</li> <li>Mittleman, "Intersecting the Academic Gender Gap: The Education of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual America", <i>ASR</i>, 2022</li> <li>Davies &amp; Frink, "The Origins of the Ideal Worker: The Separation of Work and Home in the United States From the Market Revolution to 1950," <i>Work &amp; Occupations</i>, 2014</li> <li>Goldin, "A grand gender convergence: Its last chapter," <i>AER</i> 2014</li> </ul>

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31-Mar	12	Post-Industrialism, Neo-Liberalism	<p>* Bell, "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society," GSS4E Ch. 123</p> <p>* Esping-Anderson, "Social Foundations of Post-Industrial Societies," GSS4E Ch. 124</p> <p>* Stiglitz, "Globalism's Discontents," GSS4E Ch. 131</p> <p>* Esping-Anderson, <i>Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism</i>, 1990, Ch. 1-3</p> <p>* Crowley et al, "Neo-Taylorism at Work: Occupational Change in the Post-Fordist Era", <i>Social Problems</i>, 2010</p> <p>Hacker &amp; Pierson, "Winner-Take-All Politics," GSS4E Ch. 11.</p> <p>* Fourcade &amp; Healey, "Classification situations: Life-chances in the neoliberal era," <i>AOS</i>, 2013.</p> <p>Mandel &amp; Rotman, "The Stalled Gender Revolution and the Rise of Top Earnings in the United States, 1980 to 2017," <i>SS</i> 2022.</p>
7-Apr	13	Labor, Organizations, and Work	<p>* Piore, "The Dual Labor Market: Theory and Implications," GSS4E Ch. 70</p> <p>* Howell &amp; Kalleberg, "Declining Job Quality in the United States: Explanations and Evidence," <i>RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal</i>, 2019</p> <p>Weil, "Understanding the Present and Future of Work in the Fissured Workplace Context," <i>RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal</i>, 2019</p> <p>* Ray, "A Theory of Racialized Organizations," <i>ASR</i>, 2019</p> <p>* Acker, "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations," <i>Gender and Society</i>, 2006</p> <p>* Western &amp; Rosenfeld, "Unions, norms, and the rise in US wage inequality," <i>ASR</i>, 2011</p> <p>* Muow &amp; Kalleberg, "Occupations and the Structure of Wage Inequality in the United States, 1980s to 2000s," <i>ASR</i>, 2010</p> <p>Grodsky &amp; Pager, "Structure of disadvantage individual occupational determinants of the Black-White wage gap," 2001</p> <p>Western &amp; Bloome, "Economic Insecurity and Social Stratification," <i>ARS</i>, 2012.</p> <p>Mandel &amp; Semyonov, "Gender pay gap and employment sector: Sources of earnings disparities in the United States, 1970–2010," <i>Demography</i> 2014</p>
14-Apr	14	Cultural and Social Capital	<p>* Bourdieu, "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste," GSS4E Ch. 114</p>

- \* Chan & Goldthorpe, "Social Stratification of Theater, Dance, and Cinema Attendance," GSS4E Ch. 115
  - \* Lareau, "Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life," GSS4E Ch. 116
  - \* Reardon & Bschoff, "Income Inequality and Income Segregation," GSS4E Ch. 117
  - \* Meyer, "The Evolution of Modern Stratification Systems," GSS4E Ch. 129
  - \* Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," GSS4E, Ch. 4
  - \* DiMaggio & Garip, "When do Social Networks Increase Inequality?" GSS4E Ch. 78
  - Frank, "What's the Matter With Kansas?" GSS4E Ch. 118
  - Hout & Laurison, "The Realignment of U.S. Presidential Voting," GSS4E Ch. 119
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