

# SYO 4530 – Social Inequality

## Summer C 2023 Syllabus

### 1. Course General Information

Items	Information
<b>Course</b>	
Class sections	02D3 and 02D5
Class format	Online - Asynchronous
<b>Instructor</b>	
Name	Luis Rondan-Vasquez (he/him/his), M.A.
Preferred way of contact	Message via e-learning platform (Canvas).
E-mail	<a href="mailto:lrondanvasquez@ufl.edu">lrondanvasquez@ufl.edu</a>
Online office hours	Tuesdays 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM.

### 2. Welcome Message

Welcome to **Social Inequality (SI)**! I am Luis Rondan-Vasquez, the instructor of this course. SI is a general approach to the definition, dimensions, causes, dynamics, and consequences of social inequality. I organized SI following this syllabus. It summarizes key course aspects that students should know. Due to that, please read this document carefully and ask me any questions.

### 3. Course Objectives

- Understand social inequality's definition, causes, dynamics, and consequences from a sociological standpoint.
- Analyze and discuss critically key dimensions of social inequality, such as class, race/ethnicity, gender, and their relationships.
- Evaluate everyday experiences in U.S. society and abroad using key concepts, theories, and methods of social inequality research.

### 4. Course Format

This is an asynchronous online course. Therefore, there are no scheduled Zoom lectures. Instead, the course is based on the online submission of class material (via the e-learning course platform) and the development of online assignments.

### 5. Course Activities

#### 5.1. Weekly Submission of Class Materials

Since the first week of the course, the instructor will upload to e-learning a set of class materials that students should review. This set will be available each Monday at 9:00 AM. The weekly class materials are:

- a) **Modules:** Document that summarizes key concepts, theories, methods, and empirical evidence about a social inequality topic the course will cover in a week. Modules are designed to be self-learning materials that do not require a live lecture to be fully understood. Nevertheless, you can always ask questions about the module content on the question board, which is explained below. In some cases, the module will be submitted with a video of myself explaining aspects of the module. The modules are organized into three topics, and there are 10 in total:

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### **Topic I: Defining Social Inequality**

- Module 1: Concept, relevance, and characteristics.
- Module 2: Origins, dynamics, types, and consequences.

### **Topic II: Dimensions of Social Inequality**

- Module 3: Class.
- Module 4: Race/ethnicity.
- Module 5: Gender.
- Module 6: Intersectionality.

### **Topic III: Social Inequality in Daily Life**

- Module 7: Poverty 1.
- Module 8: Poverty 2.
- Module 9: Global Inequality.
- Module 10: Responses to social inequality.

b) **Question Boards:** boards on e-learning where students can post questions about class materials and any course-related issues. I prefer that questions about the class material content be posted on the question boards because it helps me answer faster questions that other students might also have. Nevertheless, you also can email me questions about the material if you feel more comfortable in that way.

c) **Required Readings:** a set of book chapters and papers required to be read each week. They will be available for **FREE** via e-learning (Canvas) or [ARES Course reserve service](#) from the UF library. The required readings are described below:

**\*Required book chapters from:**

Szelenyi, David B., and Grusky Szonja. 2011. *The Inequality Reader: Contemporary and Foundational Readings in Race, Class, and Gender*. 2nd Edition. New York, London: Routledge (ISBN: 9780813344843).

**\*Required papers:** a list of required papers will be provided as a separate document from the syllabus.

d) **Assignment Instructions:** a set of prompts or questions that guides students in developing course assignments. These assignments will be described in detail in the next section (participation in course assignments). If you have any questions about assignment instructions, you also can post them on the question board.

## **5.2. Participation in Course Assignments**

Once weekly class materials are uploaded, students should review them (modules, readings, and assignment instructions). Then, students may ask questions about the materials if they have them. Once class material has been understood, students are ready to do these assignments:

a) **Quizzes:** Online short evaluations based on questions about the weekly class modules. These evaluations comprise multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false questions. Students have to take one quiz for each module (10 in total). This quiz will be taken during the business week where the module was published

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(Monday at 9:00 AM to Friday at 11:59 PM). Students have two attempts to do the quizzes, and only the highest score will be considered for grading. Also, the single lowest score will be dropped from the grading calculation. In this way, the average quiz score is calculated with the 9 highest quiz scores. This average represents 20% of the student's final grade.

- b) **Discussion Boards:** an online place where students discuss questions of the instructor about weekly required readings. To participate in discussions, each student has to provide: i) an answer to instructor question(s) and ii) comments about at least one classmate's answer (e.g., pointing out agreements or disagreements or providing examples). Students have to participate in 8 of 10 discussion boards. If they participate in 9 or more, the lowest score(s) will be dropped from grading. The average participation score in discussion boards represents 20% of the student's final grades. Please review your post on discussion boards to ensure it was saved successfully.
- c) **Reflections:** Written answers to prompts related to one or more modules and readings. There will be 3 reflections during the course. Reflection instructions will be given at least one week before their submission deadline. The average reflections score represents 15% of the student's final grades. Please double-check the proper and timely reflection submission. If your reflection is unavailable or incomplete on the e-learning platform, you receive a zero score or a deduction, respectively.
- d) **Research Project:** individual research proposal based on a collective literature review. This project is based on two components that will be developed through the course:
- **Collective literature review:** summary of recent papers on a social inequality topic done by groups of 4-5 students. This summary will be made in three steps:
    - **Proposal:** topic definition and rationale (5% of final grade).
    - **Detailed outline:** scheme of main topics, sub-topics, and key ideas (5% of final grade).
    - **Final version:** summary of readings and potential research questions (10% of final grade).
  - **Individual research proposal:** a research question proposed to fill a gap in recent research on a subtopic of the collective literature review. This proposal will provide a critical review of recent research in a subtopic of the literature review chosen by each student. This review will show the scope and limitations of previous research and propose a research question that contributes to overcoming one limitation mentioned. This proposal will be made in three steps:
    - **Proposal:** sub-topic chosen and rationale (5% of final grade).
    - **Detailed outline:** scheme of main themes, sub-themes, and key ideas (5% of final grade).
    - **Final version:** proposal of a research question based on a critical review of recent research on the chosen topic (15% of final grade).

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### 5.3. Office Hours

Weekly time slot where the instructor guides students in understanding and developing course activities. The office hours are offered online via Zoom at the time mentioned above (see page 1). Nevertheless, students can request Zoom meetings by appointment. Although having meetings during office hours is optional, I strongly recommend them to help you improve your efficiency in course activities. During office hours, students will be attended to on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please come up with specific topics or questions to use meeting time more effectively.

## 6. Grading

### 6.1. Grading Breakdown

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Student Competence Assessed</b>	<b>Final grade percentage</b>
Quizzes	Understand module contents about social inequality's definition, causes, dynamics, and consequences.	20%
Discussion boards	*Understand, analyze, discuss, and apply reading content about social inequality. *Communicate effectively ideas and reasoning.	20%
Reflections	*Analyze, discuss, and apply module content and readings to understand daily social events. *Communicate effectively ideas and reasoning.	15%
Research project	<i>Collective literature review:</i> *Work collectively to create a product using course content. *Communicate effectively ideas and reasoning.	20%
	<i>Individual research project:</i> *Effective application of course content as a whole to create an individual product.	25%
Total Grade		100%

### 6.2. Grading Scale

<b>Letter</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Score</b>
A	Exemplary Work	Thorough understanding of the course material that exceeds the average.	A	93.0-100
			A-	90.0-92.9
B	Good Work	Clear understanding of the material with minor gaps.	B+	87.0-89.9
			B	84.0-86.9
			B-	80.0-83.9
C	Average Work	Understanding of the material with substantial gaps.	C+	77.0-79.9
			C	74.0-76.9
			C-	70.0-73.9
D	Marginal Work	Superficial understanding of the material.	D+	67.0-69.9
			D	64.0-66.9
			D-	61.0-63.9
E	Unacceptable Work	Lack of demonstrating substantial understanding of the material.	E	≤ 60.9

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### 6.3. Grading Policies

- a) Due Dates:** Students should submit assignments by the due date to be able to get full credit (avoiding late-submission deductions). Keep in mind that assignment due dates are different than the assignment availability date. Some assignments are available an extra day (24 hours from the due date) to allow late submissions.
- b) Late Assignments:** Students who miss the due date for any assignment due to a valid reason (e.g., university duties, religious holidays, medical procedures, etc.) can request a late submission without deductions. To make this request, the students should present proof documentation of the reason that justifies the late submission. To request this documentation, students contact the University Care Team ([umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or by phone at 352-294-2273). They will collect documentation and let me know the number of excused days if they apply. Students who do not present the above documentation can still submit the late assignment with a score deduction of 15% from the total points possible. For instance, a student received a score of 90/100 from a late reflection submission. This score will be reduced to 15% of the total score possible (15/100 points). Therefore, the final grade is 75/100. The late-assignment submission with a deduction is available only for a 24-hour window after the assignment's due date.
- c) Review Grades Request:** Students have three days to request a grade review. I establish this time window to encourage students to review their grades and request any changes quickly. In this way, I can begin grading the next assignment faster. To request the grade review, students should send an e-mail asking about this procedure and provide reasons to justify their request. Then, I will review the assignment and ask the student to join Zoom office hours to discuss their grade with me.
- d) Final Grades:** Students' final grades will be calculated by the e-learning system based on their grades in all the course assignments. I will double-check this calculation and assign final grades. The final grades given to students will not be rounded up. If you are concerned about your final grade calculation, please track your assessment grades and double-check e-learning calculations. Also, if you are concerned about your expected final grade based on your course assignment grades, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule a Zoom meeting and discuss it.

## 7. Class Policies

### 7.1. Communication

The course has three ways of communication: the question board, e-mail, and office hours. One way of communication is preferable over the others depending on the issue students want to address with me.

- a) Question Boards:** these boards are preferable over other communication means to ask questions about the content of course materials. For instance, request to elaborate the explanation of a concept, provide an example, or clarify the instructions of an assignment. Question boards are more useful for the mentioned purposes because I can reply faster to shared questions. Also, students can have the answer faster and sometimes immediately by reviewing previously answered questions.

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b) **E-mail:** This communication means is preferred over others mentioned for asking specific questions regarding your assignments or your participation in the course. For example, “yes” or “no” questions, questions about how you are doing an assignment that requires a one-sentence answer, asking for an extension in a deadline for health issues, or requesting a Zoom office hour by appointment, etc. E-mails are better for answering previous questions because they can be solved with a short answer (it does not require dialog) and are a private means for communicating sensitive topics. Please email me via e-learning because it allows me to identify and reply faster to students' emails.

Please keep in mind that I review my e-mail inbox only during business hours and days (Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM). Also, I usually reply to e-mails during the morning (8:00 AM - 8:30 AM) and noon (12:00 - 12:30 PM). I can quickly answer specific questions in the periods mentioned. I usually reply in a 24-hours-time window. If it passes and you do not receive an answer to an urgent e-mail, please follow up on your inquiry.

c) **Zoom Office Hours:** this means of communication is preferred over the others when answering the question will require dialog. For example, explaining a theory or providing more detailed feedback on a graded assignment.

### 7.2. Class Participation

Students are expected to maintain active class participation. It means reading the modules and required readings, posting comments on the discussion boards, doing quizzes and other assignments, and asking questions if required.

Students should maintain a respectful attitude toward their classmates' opinions when participating in class activities. Students should state their points of view and provide arguments to justify them without demeaning others' opinions. To do that, please: a) keep an open attitude to others' opinions, b) look to understand others' viewpoints before criticizing them, c) criticize ideas, not individuals, and d) avoid insulting and inflammatory language.

### 7.3. Accommodations

Students could request accommodations if they have special conditions (e.g., disabilities) that make it difficult to course participation. To receive accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible and give me the official documentation required to grant accommodations from the [Disability Resource Center](#).

### 7.4. Academic Honesty

UF students should observe The Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’”

The [UF Honor Code](#) establishes several actions that violate this Code and its sanctions. For instance, "unauthorized assistance" violates the Honor Code, and students aware of this action should report it (avoiding complicity). Students can report

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code violations to the instructor or the Dean of Students Office. If you have questions about allowed and prohibited behaviors, please ask me.

### 7.5. Course Evaluation by Students

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the course instruction quality by completing [online course evaluations via GatorEvals](#). Guidance on how to give professional and respectful feedback is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. They can complete evaluations via the e-mail received from GatorEvals or via this [website](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students [here](#).

### 8. Course Calendar

The modules above (see page 2) will be addressed following the tentative calendar below. Please keep in mind that this calendar is a plan that could be updated according to the pace and circumstances of the semester.

Module	Module and assignments open at 9:00 AM	Quiz closes at 11:59 PM	Post to DB* closes at 11:59 PM	Reply to DB closes at 11:59 PM	Reflection closes at 11:59 PM	Steps of Research Project due
1	May 15	May 19	May 19	May 21		
2	May 22	May 26	May 26	May 28		May 28
3	May 29	June 02	June 02	June 04	June 04	
4	June 05	June 09	June 09	June 11		June 11
5	June 12	June 16	June 16	June 18		
No module						June 25
6	June 26	June 30	June 30	July 02		
7	July 03	July 07	July 07	July 09		July 09
8	July 10	July 14	July 14	July 16	July 16	
9	July 17	July 21	July 21	July 23		July 23
10	July 24	July 28	July 28	July 30		
No module					Aug 02	
No module						Aug 13

**\*Note: DB = Discussion Boards.**

### 9. Miscellaneous

#### 9.1. Study Suggestions

- Read each module and required reading carefully. Do not wait until the last minute to read the materials.
- Ask all the questions you have. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the course. In this way, you can get a clear understanding of course contents and assignment instructions.
- Make sure you have enough time to review the papers needed for the research project. If you do not know how to move forward with your research project at any time, please let me know to see how I can help you.
- Please let me know if you have any circumstances that affect your course performance. In this way, I can help you figure out how to avoid the circumstances mentioned affecting your wellness and course performance.

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- Explore and use (if needed) the student’s resources listed below.

### 9.2. Students' Resources

- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#): Call (352) 392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services.
- [Student Health Care Center](#): Call (352) 392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need.
- [UF Police Department](#): Call (352) 392-1111 (or 911 for emergencies).
- [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center](#): call (352) 733-0111 for immediate medical care or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road.
- [UF Computing Help Desk](#): Contact this office at (352) 392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu) for E-learning technical support.
- [Career Connections Center](#): visit this center for career assistance and counseling services (Reitz Union Suite 1300) or call (352) 392-1601.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): Visit this center for inquiries about general study skills and tutoring at Broward Hall. Call (352) 392-2010 or (352) 392-6420 to make an appointment.
- [Writing Studio](#): Visit the studio for help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers (2215 Turlington Hall). Call 352-846-1138 to make an appointment.
- [Online Students Complaints](#): Service to report problems in UF online services.

### 9.3. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*Q: How can I refer to you?*

A: Please call me Mr. Rondan.

*Q: Can I schedule a meeting during your online office hours to discuss a grade posted four days ago?*

A: No. I can discuss grades three days after they are posted in e-learning.

*Q: Can you round up my final grade?*

A: No. As I said earlier, I will not round up final grades.