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SOCI 441.01: Capstone - Inequality and Social Justice

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Capstone: Inequality and Social Justice

Course Information

Professor: Kathy Kuipers

- Office: Social Science, room 311
- Hours: Tuesday (3-5:00) and Wednesday (2-4:00) and by appointment
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Course Objectives:

This course is designed as a capstone course for senior sociology majors in either the ISJ option with reading, discussion, and graduate level thinking about inequality and social justice OR the REaCH option focusing also on rural and environmental change. You will work on your writing while also exploring the differences between inequality and inequity; the use of justice rules and how we decide what's fair and what's not, how inequality influences social interaction, and what we know about how inequality plays out within different contexts including rural and environmental settings.

This course also is designed to satisfy the upper division writing requirement for sociology majors. As a skill development course, it will provide you with an opportunity to work in a highly focused way on your writing while also teaching you how sociologists write research papers. You will do a substantial amount of writing, editing (not only your own work, but also the work of your classmates), and rewriting. The rewriting will go beyond simple copy-editing and correcting mechanical errors to revising for content, clarity, conciseness, jargon, and structure.

Initially, we will spend more time on writing and less time on ISJ content. We will review editing techniques and revising requirements, discuss writing for sociologists and social scientists, and clarify the process of sociological research within the context of inequality and social justice. In addition to the substantive readings, you will be required to formulate a research question, investigate a topic of your choice, collect data to help you answer that question, and analyze and compile the results to disseminate to others. You will spend most of the semester investigating your question and writing (and rewriting) drafts of smaller writing assignments to be combined into a larger sociological research paper. The paper will be formatted for publication in a sociological journal or for presentation to sociologists.

Learning Outcomes for Writing in Sociology:

- Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for sociological inquiry
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information on inequality and social justice and/or rural and environmental change effectively from diverse sources

- Manage multiple perspectives on an inequality and social justice topic or on a rural and environmental change topic
- Recognize the purposes and needs of sociological audiences and adopt the sociological voice in your writing and presentations
- Use multiple drafts, revisions, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing your written work
- Follow the American Sociological Association's conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation
- Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

Prerequisites:

The formal prerequisites for this course are the successful completion of Soci. 101, 220 or 275, and two ISJ electives. This will assure that you have some basic understanding of the concepts and principles of sociology and are aware of possible topics and areas for research within the ISJ option area. Also, it helps to have taken or be taking Soci. 318, the research methods course, for a better understanding of how data and research fit together.

This course is one of the elective classes that count towards the Major and the Minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. If you enjoy this course and would like to know more about the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, please contact me or drop by the office, LA 138A-B, or visit the [Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies website](http://hs.umt.edu/wgss/) (<http://hs.umt.edu/wgss/>)

Course Requirements:

This is an active participation seminar. You are expected to participate in discussions every class session. I will often call on you to summarize readings or make connections between readings and other issues. The readings are designed to help your writing, to emphasize the sociologist's point of view in conducting and writing about research, or to provide the contextual background for your proposed project. You should complete the assigned readings before you come to class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities. You are responsible for raising questions that you have about the readings or about problems in preparing and writing your assignments and in-class discussion is the best way of doing this. Since class participation, especially in small-group settings, is such an important part of this class, **your attendance at all class meetings is mandatory**. Your class participation (in-class discussions, small group participation, informal presentations on your project at different stages, and in-class writing assignments) will be worth 20% of your final grade (122 points).

Reading Questions are posted on *Moodle* to guide you in your reading and to prepare you for participation in class discussions.

In addition to a discussion of the readings, students will have written assignments due each week. Three types of writing assignments are due for this course: drafts of your own work, comments on others' work, and strategies for revision of your own work. You will also write a final research paper, formatted for publication in a sociological journal, combining your five revisions with additional writing. All of these must be submitted electronically to *Moodle* by class time on the day that they are due. They **MUST** be in WORD-readable format so that I

can make comments on them and return them to you. A written “test” on ethics also will be due in the 4th week. Paper copies of certificates for the completion of the “test” and the Writing Center form (due in the 3rd week) are due IN CLASS. Written work is worth 80% of your final grade and **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be accepted**. (Point distribution is as follows: 5 drafts, worth 20 points each; 5 sets of peer reviews, each worth 20 points; 4 strategies for revision, each worth 10 points; an IRB ethics assignment worth 10 points; the final paper worth 200 points.)

You will be required to present informally in class on several occasions: briefly on your research topic, your research methods, your data collection, and your final paper. We will also spend class time working in small groups for focused discussion and evaluation of your written work. This constructive peer criticism will help you improve your written communication skills and respond to those criticisms in your written descriptions of strategies. These sessions will require that students submit their written work and give feedback on each other’s work as indicated in the syllabus schedule. Other students will rely on your drafts in order for them to write their peer reviews, or on your reviews in order for them to write their strategies for revision and you will let them down with late assignments. The functioning of a class like this depends upon the timely submission of work, especially peer reviews and drafts to be distributed to other students, so no exceptions or excuses will apply for late work.

Please note that to receive a high grade in this course, you must not only satisfy the standard requirements, but also demonstrate **excellence** in participation, your written work, your contribution to improvement in peer work and your development of your own revisions, your data collection, and your final project. The basic requirements for the course are listed above. Additional demonstrated **excellence** in writing and analysis includes the following: intellectual and imaginative seriousness, complex engagement with the elements of sociological research, a research question and analysis that makes a contribution to the discipline, a serious commitment to revision, and a mastery of writing fundamentals (and no typographical errors).

Readings: Five books are required as primary texts for the class and are available from the bookstore.

1. Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. 2016 *The Craft of Research, Fourth Edition*. The University of Chicago Press. OR
Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2008 *The Craft of Research, Third Edition*. The University of Chicago Press.
2. American Sociological Association. 2007. *ASA Style Guide, Third Edition*. (The formatting basics of the *ASA Style Guide* are also available yearly in each of its journals. A student version may be downloaded from the ASA website—free of charge.)
3. Greene, Anne E. 2013. *Writing Science in Plain English*. University of Chicago Press.
4. Gladwell, Malcolm. 2008. *Outliers: The Story of Success*. Little, Brown and Co.
5. Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.

Additional readings are required and will be available on Moodle.

Students also **must** use and participate on the *Moodle* course supplement where all of the additional readings and handouts will be posted. In order to be prepared for class, you will need to check *Moodle* regularly—at the very least, well before each class meeting—for announcements, readings, and extra information. Written assignments (in WORD-readable format) should be uploaded to *Moodle* by the due date and students may access comments and feedback on assignments in the *Moodle gradebook*. Direct your browser to <http://umonline.umt.edu> or access *Moodle* by clicking on “my.umt.edu” on the University of Montana homepage. “UM Online-Moodle” is one of the buttons at the top of the page. In the future, the syllabus, schedule, additional readings, handouts, assignments, grades, and other information will be posted on the site. I recommend that you bookmark this site and visit it regularly.

A few words about plagiarism and academic dishonesty: “Plagiarism is the representing of another’s work as one’s own. It is a particularly intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion.” (Taken from the [Student Conduct Code](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php), available for review online, http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php.)

Plagiarism includes:

- Copying from another’s paper or allowing another to copy from one’s own paper
- Unpermitted collaboration: working together on an assignment
- Copying words or ideas from sources and failing to give credit to the source.
- Giving or receiving unpermitted aid on a take-home examination or paper.

Make sure that your work is your own. In this class, discussion of ideas is permitted, and even encouraged among classmates. Giving and accepting comments on each other’s writing is also allowed. Neither using another student’s paper as a template for your own nor copying from any written a document (without giving proper credit) is acceptable. If this is unclear, please ask. Be careful!

Email: My email address is listed at the top of the syllabus. I will use your University of Montana email address to contact you, and I remind you that email is an official form of communication at UM—that means that **you should check yours regularly for updates** from me. Please use a clear subject line when emailing me. I will generally respond—if a response is deemed necessary or is requested—within 24 hours, except on weekends. Note: While I am delighted to communicate with you and answer questions over email, please do NOT email me drafts of papers or attachments unless asked to do so.

Writing Center

I strongly encourage all students to consult with the Writing Center as you work through your assignments. Note that the Writing Center does not edit or correct papers, but helps students plan and execute papers in one or more tutoring sessions. [Schedule appointments](http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/) (online at <http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/>). Note that for your first draft paper, you will be required to complete at least one consultation with Writing Center staff and have a Writing Center staff member complete a certificate indicating that you have consulted with him or her.

Accessibility

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications.

Course Schedule: Each of the following sections is arranged according to specific topics to be covered in the course. Topics and required readings for each section are listed below each heading. Our progress through the list may change as we spend more or less time on any particular topic. It is your responsibility to keep up with the readings as we move through the course.

Tentative Course Outline

DAY ASSIGNED READING AND/OR IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Week One: Section 1, Introduction and Orientation

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| January 24 | In-class: course overview, expectations, etc.
Weekly assignments and groups
Other Resources |
| January 26 | Read: Weisheit, Ralph and Frank Morn. 2004. <i>Pursuing Justice</i> . Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Chpt. 3.
"Economy Emerges from the Rubble" and "The Curse of Charity," links on Moodle. |

Week 2: What's Justice

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| January 31 | Read: Booth I. RESEARCH, RESEARCHERS, AND READERS (pp. 1-27 in 3rd edition)
Greene "Why Write Science in Plain English," "Before You Write," "Tell a Story," and "Favor the Active Voice" and "Basic Writing Concepts" (pp. 1-28; 87-91)
ElbowPart I "Some Essentials" |
| February 2 | Gladwell, Malcolm. 2008. <i>Outliers: The story of success</i> . Little, Brown and Company. Pp. 15-68 |

Week 3: What do Peer Reviews look like?

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| February 7 | Read: Booth II. ASKING QUESTIONS, FINDING ANSWERS, (pp. 31-67)
Booth Prologue and 12. <i>Planning</i> , and 13. (<i>Drafting Your Report</i> pp.171-202)
<i>ASA Style Guide</i> (pp. 1-36; 45-47); copyediting (pp. 93-94)
Due: Draft#1 of Topic Proposal due on Moodle.
Due: Writing Center Certificate due in-class. |
| February 9 | Read: Greene "Choose your Words with Care," "Omit Needless Words" (pp. 29-51)
ElbowPart V "Feedback"
In-class: Meet in peer review groups.
Due: Peer Review #1 due in-class AND on Moodle (in two places). |

Week 4 Revising. Ethics.

- February 14 Read: Gladwell, Malcolm. 2008. *Outliers: The story of success*. Little, Brown and Company. Pp. 69-115; 250-269
Read: Elbow Part III "More Ways to Revise"
Booth 14. *Revising Your Organization and Argument* (pp. 203-212) OR
Reorganizing Your Argument and 17. *Revising Style* (pp. 249-269)
Discuss in class: strategies for revision.
Due: Strategies for Revisions #1 due on Moodle
- February 16 Read: *ASA Code of Conduct* on Moodle.
View: [IRB Website at UM](http://www.umt.edu/research/compliance/default.php)
(<http://www.umt.edu/research/compliance/default.php>)
In-class: IRB discussion
Schedule a meeting for week 5 or 6 with Prof. Kuipers to discuss your final paper project.

Week 5: Research Methods

- February 21 Formulating Questions II; Proposed Data Collection; Audience
Read: Booth 16. INTRODUCTIONS (pp. 232-248)
Discuss: data collection; discussion of methods, strategies, and tactics
Read: *ASA Style Guide* (pp. 69-88)
Read: Elbow Part IV "Audience"
Draft: a plan for your data collection and begin to implement it. **Plan MUST be approved by Prof. Kuipers**
Due: (1) IRB Certificates, in-class; (2) Thesis statement, in-class
- February 23 Distributive Justice
Discuss: Justice Rules—deciding what's fair and what's not
Read: Hegtvedt, Karen. 2005. "Doing Justice to the Group." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31:25-45.
Elster, Jon. 1992. *Local Justice*. New York: Sage. Pp. 62-85.
Due: Draft#2 of Introduction/Statement of Problem/Proposed Research.

Week 6 Finding Sources

BEGIN DATA COLLECTION—METHODS MUST BE APPROVED BY PROFESSOR KUIPERS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- February 28 In-class: Learn how to maximize your literature search:
Meet with Librarian, Prof. Susanne Caro, in the Student Learning Center, Level 2, Mansfield Library.
Read: *ASA Style Guide* (pp. 39-68)
Greene "Old Information and New Information, "Make Lists Parallel," and "Vary the Length of your Sentences" (pp. 52-66)
In-class: Meet in peer review groups.
Due: Peer Review #2 due in-class AND on Moodle.

- March 2** Read: Coates, Ta-Nehisi "The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration" *The Atlantic*, October 2015. (See discussion assignment on Moodle)
Discuss in class: strategies for revision.
Due: Strategies for Revisions #2
- Week 7** **Provisional Answers: Academic Justification for our Arguments**
- March 7** Read: Alexander "Introduction" and "1. The Rebirth of Caste"
Work on finding references for your research project—be prepared to answer the following questions in class this week. Has your project been done before? (If so, find another one.) How does your project take into account the work that has already been done? How is your project different? How are you collecting your data?
Discuss: data collection; answers to questions on handout.
- March 9** In-class: Meet with Kelly Webster, Director of The Writing Center, to discuss: Literature Reviews
- Week 8** **Mass Incarceration**
- March 14** Read: Greene "Design Your Paragraphs," "Arrange Your Paragraphs" (pp. 67-86)
Read: Booth 16. FROM PROBLEMS TO SOURCES and ENGAGING SOURCES, (pp. 68-102); 13. DRAFTING, (pp. 187-202 or 12.3) *ASA Style Guide* (pp. 89-108)
Due: Draft #3, Provisional Answer/Theory (with Preliminary Literature Review).. Also, attach a preliminary list of references
- March 16** Read: Alexander "2. The Lockdown" and "3. The Color of Justice."
Optional: "4. The Cruel Hand"
- Week 9** **Spring Break**
No classes. Make sure that your data collection is on schedule. The analysis is due in 3-1/2 weeks!
- Week 10** **What's Wrong with Diversity?**
- March 28** Read: Michaels, Walter Benn. 2006. *The Trouble with Diversity: How we learned to love identity and ignore inequality*. Metropolitan Books. Pp. 1-49.
In-class: Meet in peer review groups.
Due: Peer Review #3 due in-class AND on Moodle.
- March 30** Read: Weisheit, Ralph and Frank Morn. 2004. *Pursuing Justice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Chpt. 12.
Discuss in class: strategies for revision.
Due: Strategies for Revisions #3
- Week 11** **Writing about Research Methods**
- April 4** Read: Booth, et al., III. MAKING A CLAIM AND SUPPORTING IT (pp. 105-151)
Due: Draft #4, Methods Draft

- April 6 **No class—Professor Kuipers will attend the PSA meetings in Portland. Read *Freedom Summer* and work on your data collection. You should have most of your data collected by now.**
 Read: McAdam, Doug, *Freedom Summer*. Oxford University Press: New York. “Prologue.”
- Week 12 Witnessing Injustice—Behavioral Outcomes**
- April 11 **Read:** The Civil Rights Act on Moodle; [Civil rights Martyrs](http://www.splcenter.org/civil-rights-memorial/civil-rights-martyrs) (<http://www.splcenter.org/civil-rights-memorial/civil-rights-martyrs>); [Black Church Torched](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/11/02/vote-trump-painted-on-wall-of-burned-out-black-church-in-mississippi/?utm_term=.2f5366574e4b) (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/11/02/vote-trump-painted-on-wall-of-burned-out-black-church-in-mississippi/?utm_term=.2f5366574e4b)
 View: *Freedom Summer* (<http://www.pbs.org/video/2365275337/>) or *Freedom Riders* (<http://www.pbs.org/video/1925571160/>)
 In-class: Meet in peer review groups.
 Due: Peer Review #4 due in-class AND on Moodle.
- April 13 Read: McAdam, Doug, *Freedom Summer*. Oxford University Press: New York. Chpts. 3 and 4.
- Week 13 Emotional and Other Behavioral Outcomes of Witness**
- April 18 Read: Selections from York, *A Murmuration of Starlings*, and Rankine, *Citizen*, on Moodle
 Discuss in class: strategies for revision.
 Due: Strategies for Revisions #4
- April 20 Read: Booth, et al. V. SOME LAST CONSIDERATIONS (pp. 271-283)
 Booth, et al. 12. *Communicating Evidence Visually* (pp. 213-231)
- Week 14 Emotional Outcomes of Witness**
- April 25 **NO CLASS. Writing Day. Schedule extra appointment with Prof. K. for help with your analysis, if you need it.**
 Due: Draft #5, Analysis Draft
- April 27 Read: *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan, on Moodle
 Read: Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All Be Feminists*.
 In-class: Meet in peer review groups.
 Due: Peer Review #5 due in-class AND on Moodle.
- Week 15 Long-term Outcomes of Witness**
- May 2 Discuss: Abstract, Discussion, References, rubric for final paper
 In-class presentations
- May 4 In-class presentations on research projects
- Finals Week**
 Due Thursday, May 11 (1:10 pm): Final Paper