



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology

Inequality in Society: Theory & Evidence
Soc UA137: Fall 2021

Time:	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-1:50pm	Location:	194 Mercer, room 304
Instructor:	Mike Hout	email:	mikehout@nyu.edu
Office hours:	Wednesdays, 11AM-12NOON <u>Sign up online at:</u> www.wejoinin.com/sheets/bwpoa	Location:	295 Lafayette (Puck Bldg.), room 4139
Course Assistant:	Adam Braffman	email:	ab8665@nyu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An upper-division course focused on the causes and consequences of social inequality. Lectures will introduce the concepts, theories, and measures of inequality; the intersection of class with race and gender; institutional supports for stratification, including family, schooling, and work; social mobility. Exercises will use nationally representative data and allow student to go into these topics deeper, following their own threads of inquiry.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

1. Explore the dimensions of inequality in society both abstractly in readings and practically in data exercises.
2. Catalogue similarities and differences between sociological and economic understandings of inequality.
3. Investigate the gap between actual inequalities and people's perceptions of them.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

1. Weekly exercises to gain familiarity with data and concepts.
2. Research memo highlighting key findings from exercises: **23 November**

ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

Attendance is required. I will stop taking roll once I learn everyone's name, but the course assistant and I will note absences, deducting from the "class participation" portion of your grade if you miss without advance notice. NOTE: I will make some reference to the readings in my lectures, but they are designed to complement what you have read, not repeat it.

GRADING

Class participation 15% of grade
Although this is a lecture class, come to class prepared to discuss the reading, ask questions, and answer my questions. Your engagement is essential for the kind of learning that occurs in a course like this.

Research memo 15% of grade each
Write a research memo discussing the most interesting findings from your exercises. Summarize the findings in enough detail that a person who knows little about the underlying data can understand what you have found. In a paragraph or two, discuss how your findings fit into one or more of the readings. Consult the short readings for examples. Due **23 November**

Final exam **TBA** 70% of grade

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

[Providing this notice is campus policy.]

NYU expects and requires its students to adhere to the highest standards of scholarship, research and academic conduct. Essential to the process of teaching and learning is the periodic assessment of students' academic progress through measures such as papers, examinations, presentations, and other projects. Academic dishonesty compromises the validity of these assessments as well as the relationship of trust within the community. Students who engage in such behavior will be subject to review and the possible imposition of penalties in accordance with the standards, practices, and procedures of NYU and its colleges and schools. Violations may result in failure on a particular assignment, failure in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or other penalties.

Policies and procedures are outlined at:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html>.

BOOKS

- Gilbert, Dennis. 2020. *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality* (11th edition). SAGE Publications.
- Harnois, Catherine. 2019. *Analyzing Inequalities: An Introduction to Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality Using the General Social Survey*. SAGE Publications.

SHORT ARTICLES

(available on JSTOR)

- Fetner, Tina. 2016. "U.S. Attitudes Toward Lesbian and Gay People are Better than Ever." *Contexts*, vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 20 - 27
- Hout, Michael. 2012. "The Social and Economic Returns to Higher Education in the United States." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 379-400.
- Hout, Mike. 2018. "American Religion: All or Nothing at All." *Contexts*, vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 78-80.
- Hunter, Marcus Anthony. 2013. "Race and the Same-Sex Marriage Divide." *Contexts*, vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 74-76.
- Marsden, Peter V. Tom W. Smith, and Michael Hout. 2020. "Tracking US Social Change Over a Half-Century: The General Social Survey at Fifty." *Annual Review of Sociology* 46: 109-134.
- Warr, Mark. 2009. "Safe at Home." *Contexts*, vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 46-51.

Weekly Readings

<i>Month</i>	<i>Tuesdays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>
September	<p>7 US Class structure <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Chs. 1-2</p> <p>14 Social class, occupation, & change <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 3</p> <p>21 Wealth & income <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 4</p> <p>28 Racial disparities <u>Read:</u> TBA</p>	<p>2 Overview & Enrollment <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 1</p> <p>9 GSS & IPUMS data <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 2-3</p> <p>16 Class in the GSS <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 5</p> <p>23 Income in the GSS <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 9</p> <p>30 Race & ethnicity in the GSS <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 4</p>
October	<p>5 Lifestyles & values <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 5</p> <p>12 Legislative day [no class]</p> <p>19 Social mobility <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 6</p> <p>26 Family & career <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 7</p>	<p>7 Sexuality in the GSS <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 6</p> <p>14 Professor travel [no class]</p> <p>21 Comparing generations <u>Read:</u> None</p> <p>28 Inequalities in families <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 7</p>
November	<p>2 Education <u>Read:</u> Hout (2012)</p> <p>9 Elites & power <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 8</p> <p>16 Consciousness & conflict <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 9</p> <p>23 Research memo due: noon</p> <p>30 Poverty & policy <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 10</p>	<p>4 Inequalities in education <u>Read:</u> Harnois, Ch. 8</p> <p>11 Surveying elites <u>Read:</u> Handout #1</p> <p>18 Attitudes & consciousness <u>Read:</u> Handout #2</p> <p>25 Thanksgiving</p>
December	<p>7 Growing inequalities <u>Read:</u> Gilbert, Ch. 11</p> <p>14 Last class: Review No new reading</p> <p>TBA Final exam</p>	<p>2 Using CPS data <u>Read:</u> Handout #3</p> <p>9 Inequality in CPS <u>Read:</u> Handout #4</p>