

**St. Francis Xavier University**  
**Soci 216 -- Canadian Society**  
**Course Syllabus Winter 2021**

**Instructor:** Donna MacDonald (pronouns she/her)  
**Phone Number:** 867-5217  
**E-Mail:** dmacdona@stfx.ca  
**Office:** 604 NH  
**Office Hours:** Tues 11am-12  
Thursday 10am-12 or by appointment  
Also available via email any time.  
\*Virtual office hours for the month of January

**Introduction:** This course will introduce students to some of the most salient social issues in Canadian society. This course applies a critical sociological lens to the society in which we live. We will explore many of the central social issues shaping Canadian society today, including what it means to be a Canadian, problems in Canadian society including the decline of democracy, education, colonialism, multiculturalism, racism, sexism, food security, the environment, poverty, globalization & more. Drawing on theories of intersectionality, we will also consider how power and privilege intersect along difference axes, particularly ethnicity, racialization, class and gender. We will examine why these issues are so important and how the state has traditionally attempted to resolve these matters. From our readings and class discussions, we will explore these issues by considering how various sociological theories approach them.

*Class Preparation:* You are expected to read all the required readings through the course so as to develop a sense of Sociology. It is expected that you will reflect and contemplate the readings by asking your own questions and examining your personal experiences. I expect students to be **active producers** rather than passive consumers of ideas. Thus, classes will involve online participation, discussions and lectures.

**Class room etiquette/policies**

- Be respectful of your classmates and avoid class disruption (leaving class early, late, talking, whispering).
- This class should be free from discrimination and harassment in accord with the *StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy* which can be found at <http://www.mystfx.ca/campus/stu-serv/equity/>.
- Regular attendance at class is advised. (see calendar section 3.7) [http://sites.stfx.ca/registrars\\_office/academic\\_calendar](http://sites.stfx.ca/registrars_office/academic_calendar).
- Students are responsible for material discussed in class even when they are absent. Be sure to take notes as not all material covered in class will be in the readings. Always

bring a pen and paper to class. Note taking tips: <https://lss.info.yorku.ca/resources/note-taking-at-university/#Intro>

- Avoid electronic devices in class

### **Required Materials:**

*Canadian Society Soci 216 READINGS* are available on Moodle  
films, websites will be announced in class

### **Evaluation:**

There are four requirements to complete this course.

Participation	10% Moodle participation responses
Reading Reflections	20% (Due: Feb 17 & March 31)
Quiz	30% - March 3, 2018
Final Exam	40% (date determined by Registrar's office)

In the event of a class cancellation due to storm - please go to Moodle for class assignment (e.g., film, discussion)

### **Participation requirements:**

You are expected to attend classes and to come to class **prepared**, having read the assigned readings and prepared to discuss the readings. You may be called upon at any time to respond to a question about the reading. You will also be participating in group discussions in class from time to time. To ensure you come to class prepared, you will submit a response to a question on Moodle prior to attending class (if there is no question you are required to submit a one-page response to the class readings) each week on Moodle (see syllabus) You will be evaluated on quality of your response (as well as the quantity of responses). You are required to submit 10 responses on Moodle (in other words you can miss two). These responses must be submitted before Sunday - noon. (Late responses will NOT be accepted unless there are extreme circumstances as you have two passes). The moodle responses are not meant to replace attendance. Every effort should be made to attend classes and attendance will be taken into consideration in the participation grade. Accommodations: However, if you are not able to attend at least 75% of classes (missing 7 or more classes), as an alternative to participation you may submit an 8 page paper (SEE MOODLE). Please contact me at the outset of any prolonged illness or personal matter that might detract from your performance in the course. It is important to do this in a timely matter.

**Reading reflections:** Due: Feb 17 & March 31 Write two pages single spaced (Maximum 750 words) on any reading in the syllabus. There is no set template. You will be evaluated on your ability to provide a thoughtful analysis of the reading. You will consider questions such as: "What's interesting & why?" and "What's confusing & why?" Why is the reading important?"

What did you learn from this? How does it relate to other other readings (and the overall course topic)? Avoid summaries. I am interested in how you use the content, rather your ability to describe it.

**Reading schedule:** Weekly Reading responses are due on Moodle by Sunday at noon (unless indicated otherwise), prior to the dates they are assigned on the syllabus. **ADDITIONAL REQUIRED (AND RECOMMENED) READINGS MAY BE ADDED** or substituted at the instructors discretion (with advance notice).

**Date**

January 13      Intro to Canadian Society (In class response) Submit Moodle response to next week's readings before January 7 noon.

January 18-20    What does it mean to be a Canadian? Canadian Identity  
*Disenchanted Wonder: Collecting Canadian Identity through the CB*  
*"Seven Wonders of Canada" Project* by James F. Cosgrave and Patricia Cormack Role of state in defining Canada (recommended):  
<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/state/>

January 25-27    Democracy and individualism  
*Am I free* by George Pavlich  
*Rising Inequality, Declining Democracy* by Bruce Campbell  
<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/rising-inequality-declining-democracy>

Feb. 1-3      Education  
*Knowledge Commodified and the New Economies of Higher Education*  
by Magda Lewis (2010)  
*Neoliberalism and postsecondary education: A view from the colleges*  
by Kevin MacKay (2014)

Feb 8-11\*      Education con't - Residential Schools

*Reclaiming history: The residential school system in Canada*  
<http://wherearethechildren.ca/en/timeline/research/>

**Special Lecture series Part I:**

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, from 7pm-8:30pm AST (\*replaces Feb 10 class.)

Mr. DeRico Symonds, a community leader in social justice issues from Halifax, Nova Scotia will deliver a public keynote address: "***Liberation, Agitation &***

***Collective Resistance***" as part of the inaugural St.F.X. University's Department of Sociology *Dr. Agnes Calliste Black Student Voices Circle*

February 17    Chapter 2 - *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada:*  
*Repairing the Relationship* By Augie Fleras

Feb. 22-24\* Chapter 3 - *Immigrants and Immigration* By Augie Fleras  
**Special Lecture series Part II:**  
February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, from 7pm-8:30pm AST (\*replaces Feb 24 morning class)  
Dr. Rachel Zellars, Lawyer and Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Justice and Community Studies at Saint Mary's University. Dr. Zellars is a nationally recognized expert in implicit bias who researches the relationship between bias and anti-blackness. She is also a co-founder of the African Nova Scotian Freedom School and founding organizer of the Black Lives Matter Solidarity Fund Nova Scotia.

Mar 1-3 *Violence against women in Canada* (2013) Statistics Canada  
#Me too CBC pod cast "Is Sexual Harassment in the workplace still a problem?" (October 15, 2017)

### **Mar. 3 QUIZ**

March 8-10 *'Problems in the Media' in Social Problems in a Diverse Society* by D. Kendall, E. Thompson, V. Nygaard

March 15-17 Chapter 1 - *Food and Agriculture* by Terrance J. Wade / Ivy Lynn Bourgeault / Elena Neiterman  
Film: Hijacked Future (2008)

March 20-24 *The Environment and a Globalizing Sociology* Randolph Haluza-DeLay  
Debra J. Davidson

Mar. 29-Apr.7 Chapter 5- *Canada-Building* by Augie Fleras  
Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations) 2015  
The Sustainable development goals (2015) summary