

**St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology**

**SOCI/WMGS 217: Race, Class, Gender and Sex
Fall 2016**

Instructor: Dr. Neal A. Smithwick
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Office Hours: Mondays 2:15-3:30; Tuesdays 11:15-12:30; Wednesdays 12:45-2:00;
Thursdays 9:45-12:30; or by appointment.

Class Times: Tuesdays 9:45-11:00 a.m. and Thursdays 8:15-9:30 a.m.
Classroom Location: Nicholas Hall, Room 345

- Please use your St. FX e-mail to avoid having your message blocked by SPAM filters.
- Include “SOCI 217” in the subject line.
- Finally, in our academic environment, please practice writing e-mails formally, as you will need to do on a regular basis upon graduation. For example, use a simple greeting, do not use slang or abbreviations, and always sign off with your name!

Course Description

There are varying and distinct definitions for each of the key concepts that are used in this course. The most prominent of these are to understand what is meant by the terms “race” and “ethnicity”, “gender” and “sex”, or “socio-economic class” and “status”. The title of this course is aptly named because we will explore how race, gender, and class categorizations are linked within an understanding of the social environment. Sociological research on these concepts reveals the ways in which racial, ethnic, social class and gender identities emerge from the interplay of macro-historical forces, especially since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. This course asks how this recent historical context, characterized by industrialization, urbanization, colonization, imperialism, transnationalism and globalization (to name a few) have shaped the understanding of these key concepts.

This course examines the processes and the interconnected realities of race, class, gender and sex utilizing various sociological perspectives. For example, we will seek to explain the will to racialize some groups and not others, while describing the relationships between these groups. In other words, social inequality on the basis of racialization, perceived gender roles and minority identities should not be understood as problems of, or between, individuals; rather, as social problems informed by history, policy and biographies. As a result, students will be encouraged to use their sociological imagination to examine substantive topics that include the socially constructed nature of these concepts in institutional places (like media), and the experiences of classism, sexism and racism in the workplace, schools and everyday life.

Learning Objectives

Issues involving race, ethnic relations, class, gender and sex raise a great deal of debate, and often incite degrees of discomfort. It is my hope that we are able to collectively come to a critical understanding of these conceptual definitions and social issues, and how these identities impact connections among people and to the larger national identity. Institutional responses to social inequality reveal that such identities do matter in the lived experiences of Canadians, so

there will be opportunity for students to focus on one major concept to explore, independently, its relevance in Canadian society OR to perform social service in the Antigonish community. Nevertheless, the main learning outcomes will be:

- To understand how race, class, gender and sex are socially constructed, culturally produced, and personally experienced.
- To explore and apply sociological theories to analyze issues involving race, class, gender and ethnic relations.
- To critically analyze the social forces which shape identities, and to appreciate and understand the complexity of these terms along with the emotions which charge these debates.
- In sum, to apply an intersectional approach to the study of social realities, such as social inequality. This means enhancing an awareness of how different forms of social oppression and discrimination intersect (one cannot understand the experience of belonging to a minority group without also considering questions of race, class, sexuality, disability, or age).

Course Organization and Expectations

Due to the nature and sensitivity of topics in this course, we will engage in a variety of learning methods throughout the semester, including participating in small group discussions, conducting independent research, and writing two tests. The evaluation reflects the weighting of these components. For example, the number of topics and themes available to explore in a course on race, class and gender is vast. Students are encouraged to explore a topic of their choosing independently, or to participate in 20 hours of StFX's service learning program. This aspect of learning is reflected in the course evaluation, whereby 30% of the final grade will be earned. Similarly, students will earn grades based on the completion of course readings, discussing them in-class, and submitting in-class written reflections based on those discussions. Due to the vastness of course topics, this course is reading-intensive.

Required Readings

Fleras, Augie. 2017. *Unequal Relations: A Critical Understanding to Race, Ethnic, and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada, Eighth Edition*. Toronto: Pearson.

There are also 12 short supplemental readings for this course.

- These required course readings, external to the main course text, are listed in this course schedule and posted on our Moodle web-site. Ten of these readings will be available on-line through the links provided, ***except for two articles (September 15, and November 15) that are only on reserve*** in the Angus L. MacDonald Library (sorry for this inconvenience, but there are strict regulations for copying resources that are unavailable on-line!).

Evaluation

It is simply unfair to alter the course evaluation for any individual. Therefore, under any conditions, there will be no alternative tests or assignments if you miss or do poorly on a requirement.

- **Furthermore, it is your responsibility to track your own grades: Please do not contact the professor for such information.**

In-Class Critical Reflections	20%
Mid-Term Test	25%
Essay OR Service Learning Report	30%
Final Exam	25%

In-Class Critical Reflections

There will be ten graded small group discussions held during class time throughout the semester. Students will arrive at class having both read the required readings and attending lectures, and then break off into groups of three. Students are expected to write a collaborative critical reflection based on the prompts provided. **Each group must submit their reflection by the end of class in hand-written form (one reflection for each group).** Please include the name and student ID of each group member at the top of your reflection. If you miss a discussion reflection, then there is no other option to make up these points. Students do not have to work with the same people on any given discussion, so choose your group members wisely. Most reflection assignments will take place during the second day of our weekly schedule.

- Since these are in-class group discussions, each group is expected to brainstorm together *before writing up one hand-written copy to be submitted before the end of class.*

Mid-Term Test and Final Exam

The Mid-Term Test (25%) and Final Examination (25%) will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. There will be a brief review before each of these evaluations, and all course content may be included.

Essay OR “Service Learning” Report

Students can choose whether they want to conduct their own academic research of a topic (of their choosing, but approved by the instructor) or participate in the “Service Learning” program organized by the university. **You must select which of the two options no later than September 16.** Once you have selected your option, you will not be able to change your mind!

Essay Option:

You will produce a final draft of an academically researched and written essay of 2,500-3,000 words, according to the basic academic writing guidelines (provided). You will select a topic and discuss it with the professor. You must refer to multiple peer-reviewed works apart from course readings. All academic writing guidelines will be provided to help you to conduct research and write academically. For example, utilizing proper citations and referencing, margins, fonts, etc.

Service Learning Report:

Service learning is a teaching and learning method that integrates community service with academic course work. You will select a service placement from the available options (such as volunteering at a community-based program). Through your participation in service related to race, gender or socio-economic status (class), as well as critically reflecting on your experiences, you will not only gain a deeper understanding of inequality in our society but also a broader appreciation of sociology. Please be advised that your participation will be monitored by both the placement agency and the university. Failure to miss any commitment will be penalized, and once again note that you cannot choose the essay option after September 20, *without exception because the agency will depend on your committed participation.* Final

reports will be 2,000-2,500 words, adopting all academic writing guidelines (provided) to help you write academically and to conduct related research.

- Megan Turner, from Service Learning at StFX, will visit our class on September 13 to discuss this option. For more information, here is the link:
http://sites.stfx.ca/service_learning/

Course Outline

Please note that, although each theme/reading will be covered, the detailed schedule may be altered in order to make unforeseen accommodations. Main themes are in bold.

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
Sept. 6	Introduction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview of topics & themes. • Defining key concepts. 	
Sept. 8	The Social Construction of Race & Gender. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance options. • Sociological perspectives. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 1.
Sept. 13	The Politics of Race.	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 2.
Sept. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power & inequality. • Social institutions. 	1. Gans, Herbert J. 2005. "Race as Class." <i>Contexts</i> , 4(4): 17-21. Retrieved from: http://stfx.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://ctx.sagepub.com/content/4/4/17.full.pdf+html 2. Acker, Joan. 2006. "Is Capitalism Gendered and Racialized?", <i>Class Questions, Feminist Answers</i> , pp. 113-117. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Copies on reserve only.</u> Service Learning option due.
Sept. 20	Race, Class and Gender in Capitalist Societies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is race? The concept of racialization. • Why race matters: Perceptions versus critical perspectives. • Components of racism. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 3.
Sept. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination and Racism. 	1. Fanon, Frantz. 1986. "The Fact of Blackness" In F. Fanon, <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> , pp. 82-108. London: Pluto Press. Retrieved from: http://abahlali.org/files/_Black_Skin_White_Masks_Pluto_Classics_.pdf
Sept. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing racism. 	1. Torres, Jeremiah. 2004. "Label Us Angry." In A. Har & J. Hsu (eds.), <i>Asian American X: An Intersection of 21st Century Asian American Voices</i> , pp. 55-56. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Retrieved from: Retrieved from:

		<p>https://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=AJBvCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA48&dq=Label+Us+Angry+torres&ots=If5QRd1FFk&sig=Qxw7SoyeqYZCT-EfsGFYb_4yYcg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Label%20Us%20Angry%20torres&f=false</p> <p>2. Thakore, Bhoomi K. 2014. "Must-See TV: South Asian Characterizations in American Popular Media." <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 8(2): 149-156. Retrieved from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.libproxy.stfx.ca/doi/10.1111/soc4.12125/full</p> <p>3. Cottom, Tressie McMillan. August 2013. "Brown Body, White Wonderland." Retrieved from: http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/doublex/2013/08/miley_cyrus_vma_performance_white_appropriation_of_black_bodies.html</p>
Sept. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race or Ethnicity? 	
Oct. 4	<p>Ethnicity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining ethnicity. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 4.
Oct. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing ethnicity. 	1. McIntosh, Peggy. 1989. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." <i>Peace and Freedom Magazine</i> (July/August): pp. 10-12: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Philadelphia. Retrieved from: http://www.deaflibrary.org/nakamura/courses/visualanthro/readings/McIntosh2001-WhitePrivilege.pdf
Oct. 11	<p>Racialized Inequality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of racialized inequality. Sociological perspectives. Review. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 5.
Oct. 13	Mid-Term Test	
Oct. 18	<p>An Intersectional Approach to Understanding Race, Class, Gender.</p>	1. Henderson, Debra & Ann Tickamyer. 2009. "The Intersection of Poverty Discourses: Race, Class, Culture, and Gender." In B.T. Dill & R.E Zambrana (eds.), <i>Emerging Intersections: Race, Class, and Gender in Theory, Policy, and Practice</i> , pp. 50-72. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. Retrieved from: https://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=AJBvCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA121&dq=The+Intersection+of+Poverty+Discourses:+Race,+Class,+Culture,+and+Gender&ots=If5QRd3DIr&sig=3aCJFTkr0rsXe1FBOh04mEc2ZKE#v=onepage&q=The%20Intersection%20of%20Poverty%20Discourses%3A%2

		ORace%2C%20Class%2C%20Culture%2C%20and%20Gender&f=false
Oct. 20	Gender and Sexuality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racialized, aboriginal, & immigrant women. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 6.
Oct. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender in media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film.
Oct. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gendered inequality. 	1. Ferber, Abby L. 2007. "The Construction of Black Masculinity: White Supremacy Now and Then." <i>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</i> , 31(1): 11-24. Retrieved from: http://stfx.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://jss.sagepub.com/content/31/1/11.full.pdf+html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please read: <i>Introduction</i> (pp. 11-12), <i>The Historical Context</i> (pp. 14-15), <i>An Intersectional Approach</i> (pp. 15-15), <i>Mainstream Constructions of Black Masculinity</i> (pp. 19-22), and <i>Conclusion</i> (pp. 22-23).
Nov. 1	Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous history/cultural revitalization/reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special guest speaker: Mr. Syliboy. 1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 7.
Nov. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity in various situations. 	
Nov. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question of autonomy. Re-thinking First Nations' relationships. 	
Nov. 10	Immigration and Multiculturalism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic dependency despite exclusionary practices. 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 8.
Nov. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement Intersectionality. 	1. Brennan, Denise. 2004. "Selling Sex for Visas: Sex Tourism as a Stepping-Stone to International Migration." In B. Ehrenreich & A. R. Hochschild (eds.), <i>Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, Sex Workers in the New Economy</i> , pp. 158-168. New York: Holt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies on reserve only.
Nov. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiencing multiculturalism. 	1. Roberts, Dorothy & Sujatha Jesudason. 2013. "Movement Intersectionality: The Case of Race, Gender, Disability, and Genetic Technologies." <i>Du Bois Review</i> (Fall): pp. 313-328. W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research. Retrieved from: http://stfx.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1473906532/fulltextPDF/76F5D50DAE974FA2PQ/2?accountid=13803#
Nov. 22	Multicultural Diversity in Canada. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguishing between 	1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 9.

	perceptions and reality.	
Nov. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional practices. • The Canadian context. 	
Nov. 29	Moving Forward in a Globalized World.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course Text: Fleras, Ch. 10. 2. Kimmel, Michael S. 2003. "Globalization and Its (Mal)contents: The Gendered Moral and Political Economy of Terrorism." <i>International Sociology</i>, 18: 603-620. Retrieved from: http://stfx.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://iss.sagepub.com/content/18/3/603.full.pdf+html
Dec. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay/Report Due at the start of class: HARD COPIES ONLY.

Technology and Academic Conduct

Although electronic devices are allowed in class, especially for annotating lecture content, it is expected that students not distract themselves and others by engaging in content outside of course materials. Think of your undergraduate studies as practice for entering the real world, in which using social media during work hours can often lead to you being fired! Furthermore, *cell phone usage is a very disrespectful and disruptive act, so please put them away prior to class.*

- The course includes a **Moodle** course page, but please do not e-mail the professor via Moodle (use the StFX web-mail). All topics are listed on Moodle to help you follow the course syllabus easily.
- Furthermore, there is a student discussion forum available on Moodle for you to communicate with one another outside of class. Please use this forum for whatever you want, such as asking questions that you may have missed in lectures, organizing study groups, seeking clarity or just to introduce yourself. This forum is for student communication, so I will not be monitoring them (in other words, I will not participate).

Accessibility and Accommodation

St. Francis Xavier University supports academic accommodation for students with any sort of disability so that they may meet the learning objectives of their courses and be given the opportunity to be evaluated fairly on their mastery of course material. The **Tramble Room** welcomes students with documented disabilities and offers them a student-centred program of support. For more information about access and accommodation, please see: http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/.

- **For all students**, please feel free to speak with me about course material and how to succeed in academia. It is my pleasure to help you.