

Moravian College

SOC 258 (WI) – Power & Conflict

Dr. Joel Nathan Rosen, Associate Professor of Sociology

PPHAC 311

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Office Hours: W 12n – 1p & 4p – 5p/Th 3p – 4p/F 12n – 1p or By Appointment

Course Description:

Social stratification, as it relates to the way that power and power-related conflict is negotiated, is a term sociologists use to refer to a relatively fixed, hierarchical arrangement in society by which groups have different access to resources, power, and social status. It is a system of structured social inequality, a cultural universal, and affects all aspects of peoples' lives.

This course presents an overview of social stratification using various perspectives. The course examines the variables that are used to stratify people in various societies around the world, and the consequences of stratification in these societies.

Although societies vary in terms of their understanding and interpretation regarding the degree to which stratification exists, all societies have stratification built into their systems. Also some societies stratify people only on a few dimensions such as gender and age, keeping the stratification system relatively simple. Most contemporary societies, however, are more complex with many factors interacting to create a complex social strata. In such societies, social stratification may be strongly influenced by class, occupation, income, education, race and ethnicity, religion, gender, and age.

Course Objectives:

This course aims at providing students with an understanding of the universality of stratification and the differences in the way people are stratified in different countries. The specific objectives of this course, thus, are as follows:

- to identify important variables on which power and any resulting conflict are based
- to examine the theories relative to stratification
- to compare stratification systems in various nations
- to examine the consequences of stratification

Through the writing assignments, instruction, and practice in this course, a student will:

- use writing as a means to learning disciplinary material and content.
- demonstrate mastery of the conventions of writing -- including documentation style, genres, formats, language, and tone – specific to the discipline that governs the course.
- analyze the needs and expectations of an audience for the writing common to the discipline and effectively address them in the student's own writing.
- demonstrate an ability to revise a piece of writing based on responses to early drafts.

Required Text (both available in campus bookstore):

- *The Inequality Reader* Edited by David B. Grusky and Szonla Szelenyi
- Stephen Steinberg's *The Ethnic Myth*
- There will be scores of supplemental reading offered throughout the semester

Course Requirements:

Students will be required to take a midterm, review a source (to be part of larger project assignment), negotiate the terms of an 8-10 page term-type paper, a project that includes a separate annotated bibliography, and perform other tasks, including writing article reviews and taking any unannounced quizzes, etc., as befitting a writing intensive course.

The breakdown of grades is as follows:

Misc. Work, Reviews, Quizzes, Participation etc.	20%
Midterm	20%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Source Review	20%
Paper/Project	20%

As I typically employ letter grades on written assignments, I offer the below list of how each letter translates numerically:

- A+=100/A= 96/A-=93
- B+=89/B=86/B-=83
- C+=79/C=76/C-=73
- D+=69/D=66/D-=63
- F=55-50 [actual score depends on the severity of the error(s)/student will be notified]
- Failure to turn in work translates into a *ZERO*

Grade Scale:

- A=100-95/A-=94-90
- B+=89-88/B=87-84/B-=83-80
- C+=79-78/C=77-74/C-=73-70
- D+=69-68/D=67-64/D-=63-60
- F=59...

Grade Advisory – While I respect that students have to be grade conscious, it is imperative that students understand that:

I treat evaluations as professional—not personal!

Do not ask from me anything that steps outside the boundaries, and do not wait until *Zero Hour* to inquire as to your status. Moreover, it is your responsibility to keep abreast of your own grade calculations, and unless the circumstances are unique, I'll leave you to your own devices on that matter. Also, to save us all needless heartache, and in the interest of propriety and mental health, I also have to insist on a twenty-four hour grace period before I will speak to you about any returned work. You may find that this cooling off period is exactly what we both need to come together rationally and in the spirit of liberal learning.

Finally, you are required to attend at least one office hour session during the semester, and it is mandatory that you appear during office hours to discuss/go over in much greater detail any assignment graded below a C-.

Classroom Decorum and Expectations:

Attendance – Class attendance is mandatory and vitally important to your success. Failure to attend on a regular basis not only puts your grade in jeopardy but may also be met with a lowered mark for participation.

- There are no excused absences. If you have a legitimate emergency, it is your responsibility to bring it to the attention of your instructor at your earliest convenience.

Tardiness – Tardiness to class is not only detrimental to the learning process but quite disruptive and unfair to those who make it to class on time regularly. Recurring tardiness shows a lack of respect for the classroom, the instructor, and one's fellow students and will not be tolerated. Therefore, once the door has been shut, you will not be permitted to enter.

Deadlines – Assignment deadlines are exactly that. Students are expected to comply

with deadlines in accordance with all rules, guidelines, and expectations of each assignment proffered. Failure to do so will result in a tendering of no-grade for work not done to expectation or submitted on time. The policy for late papers is as follows:

- On minor assignments, you will be allowed to turn in one late assignment as long as it is within twenty-four hours for a one letter deduction. After your one exception, you will no longer enjoy this luxury
- Do not expect me to have to chase you down in order to turn in assignments!

Participation – Classroom discussions are a big part of the learning process. Your participation is not requested—it is required. Failure to do so is both in bad taste and could conceivably be detrimental to your ability to learn effectively.

Disruptions – Disruptive behavior, including talking, unengaged behavior, i.e. reading a book, magazine, or newspaper, sleeping, chronic tardiness alongside loud entrances, and any other unfortunate breach will not be tolerated. Learning is an active process, and failure to actively engage not only threatens the individual's ability to learn but also affects others.

Academic Honesty – You are all responsible for knowing and adhering to the code of academic honesty here at Moravian College. For those of you unfamiliar with this code, it can be found on pages fifty-two through fifty-seven in your student handbook.

Please Note: It is your responsibility to see to it that these expectations and guidelines are met satisfactorily and consistently. I take the classroom quite seriously, and I expect all of you to do the same as well.

Out of Class Submission Expectations:

- a title page with a suitable title, your name, the course, section, and my name all spelled correctly
- 12 font (Times New Roman in black) with default margins and double-spaced
- page numbers
- a *References* section (if necessary) at the end of the work done in the most recent citation form of your choice (depends on your major and other factors)¹
- for every unedited internet site there must be at least two published sources
- with few exceptions, single & two-digit numbers (zero *through* ninety-nine) are to be spelled out; three digits are to be written numerically
- be wary of overuse of abbreviations and/or contractions
- a staple in the upper left hand corner (no frilly covers)

****Please Note that all in-class work must be done in blue or black ink****

¹ Work not properly cited will not be graded and could be brought to the Academic Standards Committee under a charge of plagiarism. If you have questions, please seek me out. Also, *Wikipedia* and other types of non-academic encyclopedias will under no circumstances be considered legitimate sources!

On Writing and Research:

As this instructor is particularly driven by written expression, you should expect that there will be an emphasis placed on written expression in this course. I should also like you to know from the start that I spend a great deal of time pouring over your writing and expect that you will read and explore my commentary on all things ranging from content to grammar, punctuation, and syntax. Please try to check your ego at the doors and realize that this is a learning experience while convincing yourself that blips and missteps are all part of the process.

You should also note that where applicable, this instructor expects his students to deal directly with all matters relating to the citation process. Failure to do so will be dealt with harshly with penalties ranging from a zero on work not properly documented to a formal report to the proper academic disciplinary committee.

A Note on Individual Accommodations:

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Also, as the college's Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments, those in need of further assistance or accommodation are encouraged to contact the center at 610/861-1392.

*"The celebration of ignorance
can never be the basis for advancing the
cause of our common humanity."
-A. Calcutt*

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE (Readings to be announced/distributed throughout)

Unit I – Framing the Discussion

- Understanding Social Stratification
- Theories of Stratification
- The Functions of Stratification
- Stratification through the Ages
- Intra- and Inter- National Stratification
- Class and Consumerism
- The Politics of Stratification
- Common Sense Ideas and the Realities of Interests and Agendas

Midterm Exam – approximately 18 October (but subject to change)

**Annotated Bibliographies Due – approximately 18 October (but highly
likely to change)**

Unit II – How We Live, Work, and Think in a Stratified Order (Readings to be announced/distributed throughout)

- Inequality in Society – US and Elsewhere
- Stratification by Race and Ethnicity
- Prejudice and Discrimination
- Racial and Ethnic Groups in the United States
- Minority and Majority Groups
- Stratification by Religion
- Stratification by Age
- Stratification by Gender
- Consequences of Stratification

**Source Reviews Due – approximately 8 November (but subject to
change)**

Papers Due – Tuesday 10 December at 8:30AM Sharp...No Exceptions!

