The University of South Dakota  
Department of Anthropology and Sociology  

SOC 423 – Social Stratification  

Desire2Learn online course  

Fall 2017 Syllabus  

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Spars  

Undergraduate Credit Hours: 3  
Lessons: 15  
Discussions: 7  
Research papers: 3  
Internet Activities: 7  
Quizzes: 2  

Required Text  

And other assigned readings (which will be made available on the course website)  

Course Prerequisites  
SOC 100 Introduction to Sociology or SOC 150 Social Problems.  

Course Description  
The course will present basic concepts and analysis of the major problems of contemporary society, including the social causes of these problems and the public policy consequences of solutions. We will be using a comparative/global perspective to study episodes of stratification.  

The course explores sociological explanations of the development, existence and perpetuation of institutionalized inequality in society, and the impact of inequality on personal and family life, education and politics.  

The course focuses on the social arrangements of social stratification and inequality and their effects on society and individual lives. It critically examines the historical, theoretical, and empirical foundations, manifestations, and maintenance of social class difference, power and conflict. The course primarily examines the United States, but, because the U.S. is not isolated from world affairs, including global economic affairs, it will necessarily also tend to more global concerns.
Topics covered include:
- Basic Features of Stratification: class, status and power
- The meaning and nature of many dimensions of stratification
- The social class system in U.S. and intersections of race
- The consequences of inequality in imperatively coordinated societies
- The relationships between class, status and power - or economic standing, social prestige and political resources.
- The nature of social mobility especially in relation to class ascription and achievement.
- The process of legitimization in the formulation and maintenance of social classes.
- Sociological theories that have been developed to explain stratification, prejudice and racism

Course Expectations
Successful completion of this course will enhance the student's ability to:
- Understand the theories and concepts which help to explain social stratification
- Learn the variety of ways that societies are stratified with a particular focus on the United States
- Identify and refute myths and generalizations about members of a particular social categories and social classes
- Recognize the complexity of stratification, especially the intersection of race, class, and gender.
- Interpret and synthesize information and ideas
- Analyze and evaluate arguments
- Select and apply scientific and other appropriate methodologies
- Communicate clearly, precisely, and in a well-organized manner
- Learn to recognize various patterns of social structure, such as norms, roles, relationships, and institutions
- Become familiar with research methods
- Develop a further understanding of sociological theory

These expectations will be assessed using a series of short discussions, two quizzes, internet activities and research essays.

Course Structure, Assignments, and Evaluation
The course structure follows the structure of the textbook. We will divide the semester into 13 Chapter Weeks, with Mondays as day 1 and Sundays as day 7.

Each Week I will expect you to follow the traditional textbook routine – read the chapters, ponder the issues, answer the questions, learn the key words – so that you gain some insight and understanding into the subjects under discussion. You will also need to on occasion view a film – don’t wait until the last moment to watch it in case of technical difficulties. There is no Extra Credit for the course.

Assignments and Activities
Each week (in the course Content Section) is a document “Summary and Assignments”. This document outlines what needs to be done each week (such reading assignments, essay, online discussions, and videos) and the deadlines. It also highlights some of the main concepts from the chapter. Make sure you read this document.
Evaluation

• **7 On-line Discussion Board Assignments (10 points each=70 total)** – Students are required to participate in online discussions or activity with their classmates. I will post questions for you to respond to almost every week. You will need to respond thoroughly to my questions (for a maximum of 5 points) by Thursday 11:59 pm and then respond briefly to at least 1 of your fellow group’s posts no later than 11:59 pm (CT) on Sundays. This discussion board participation is worth up to 10 points each.

  • In order to get your points, be sure your responses are of substance and do not wait until the last minute to make your posts.
  • Be sure to check in with the discussion board frequently as the discussions may be helpful to your study of that week’s chapter.
  • I will presume that you have read all of the discussion board posts for your group.
  • The idea is for you to take away sufficient information that you can go on the web and find resources that will help you with your task.

*You should treat all communications in this class as you would in the business world. In other words, I expect communication to be formal, using proper grammar, spelling and netiquette. For examples of proper netiquette, please refer to the Online Student Handbook.* The seven discussion weeks will therefore score 70 points maximum. Feedback and grades will be returned within one week after the conclusion of the discussion topic. Grades and feedback can be found in the Grades section of the course and will be designated by “Discussion#,” where the “#” will be replaced by the discussion number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posting a response to instructor’s question by Thursday @ 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substantiveness of initial posting (including 250 minimum word count)</strong></td>
<td>4 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>You must include a citation from your text</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responding to peer posting</td>
<td>1 point</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Substantiveness of peer posting response (including 150 minimum word count)</strong></td>
<td>3 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Include a citation from your text or other source</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading all other peer postings</td>
<td>1 point</td>
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**An Important Note:** Discussions can be a bit difficult, as you have to know something of the subject in order to discuss it (thus, the emphasis on reading each week’s chapter and doing some work in the online student learning center). With this in mind, you should not be surprised that certain answer types will get no grade points in discussions:

1. Simply parroting someone else’s statement (that is, using the same ideas/words as an answer – like a talking parrot does when you speak to it).

   If you respond by simply agreeing/disagreeing, e.g.: “I agree/disagree with X’s statement that SD will always be mainly agricultural” and you don’t add any new information that is not in the original poster’s text, you get no grade points.
2. Copying someone else’s post.
   For example, if someone makes a point in a discussion, you don't get any grade points for making the same point, if you don't add any new information to the original poster’s text.

- 7 Internet Activity Reports (10 points each=70 total) – Students are required to write seven reports over the supplemental internet activities. These websites/articles and subsequent short report will address a related theme in the textbook. Each report has a minimum 400 words (approximately one page). These are based on observations and answering the posed questions. They are not necessarily formal essays, but should be thorough. Grades and feedback will be available one-two weeks after submission.

- 2 Quizzes (40 points = 80 total) – Two 40 point quizzes (multiple choice) will be given which cover chapters 1-5 and 12-16. The quizzes will be available for you to take on-line and must be completed within a 45 minute time period. Any quiz that is not received within the 45-minute limit will receive a zero. The quiz will allow approximately one minute per question. The midterm quiz will be available between October 5th – October 11th (11:59pm); the final quiz will be open between Tuesday, November 28th at 12:01 am and 11:59pm (CT) on Thursday, December 7th. These are not open-book quizzes. Grades and feedback will be available within one week after the deadline.

- 3 Research Essays (20 points each=60 total) – Students are required to write eight research papers over the supplemental reading or viewing. These readings/viewings and subsequent essay will address a related theme in the textbook. Grades and feedback will be available one-two weeks after submission.

Essay Grading Guidelines

Each Essay has a maximum score of 20 points - in order to get these points, you must include the items below. Each essay has a minimum of 1000 words (not including the required bibliography). You can follow the rules of your preferred format (e.g. MLA, SAA, etc.) (but you must follow a recognized writing style and format).

Although short, these papers should be a well-reasoned and presented discussion of the question or task. Two bits of important advice on how to approach the assignment: 1) this is your chance to earn grade points – offer ideas and reasoned opinions on the subject under discussion, not paraphrased content out of the book; and 2) write straightforward discursive text, with correct grammar and spelling – while I value creative writing, the goal here is to present your analysis and interpretation of the subject.

After comparing the class papers, I will score individual paper on several qualities, each with a maximum possible point total:

- quality and originality of answer, logic and thoroughness of discussion/presentation, word count, and accuracy of grammar and spelling: 12 points;
- inclusion of direct quotes and other information from the relevant textbook chapter in your discussion (and bibliography): 2 points;
- inclusion of direct quotes and other information from the relevant article/viewing in your discussion (and bibliography): 4 points;
- inclusion of direct quotes and/or information from at least one external written source
(e.g., academic journals, edited volumes (something you’d find in a university library). Sources must be able to pass academic scrutiny. (If you aren’t certain – ask or don’t use it) in your essay: 2 points

Note: Digital journal articles found on the web, are acceptable as sources. Journal Databases are merely gateways to accessing acceptable journal articles (e.g. JSTOR, EBSCOhost) and are acceptable. Websites are not acceptable as sources.

The three essays will therefore score 60 points maximum. Feedback and grades will be returned within one to two weeks after the deadline. Grades and feedback can be found in the Grades section of the course and will be designated by “Essay#,” where the “#” will be replaced by the essay number.

To summarize: 1) participation points from seven (7) online class discussions = 25%; 2) seven (7) internet activity reports = 25%; 3) three (3) essays = 21%; and 4) two (2) quizzes = 29%. Feedback and grades will be returned within one-two weeks after the submission deadline.

I do not offer Extra Credit in any form

Grading Scale (points): A (90-100%) = 280-252; B (80-89%) = 251-224; C (70-79%) = 223-196; D (60-69%) = 195-168; F (59% - <) = 167-0

Typical Week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Start of week. Reading assignments given. On-line discussion topic assigned and forum opened.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Open for independent work and discussion</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Open for independent work and discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Respond to initial On-line discussion posting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Open for independent work and discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Open for work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>All weekly assignments due by 11:59 CT Sunday night</td>
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Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Perspectives and Concepts in the Study of Stratification</th>
<th>Ch.1</th>
<th>Introduce yourself</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 21-27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Two</td>
<td>Dimensions of Inequality in the United States</td>
<td>Ch.2</td>
<td>Online Discussion 1</td>
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<td>Aug. 27 - Sept. 3</td>
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<td>Internet Activity 1</td>
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<td>Week Three</td>
<td>Social Stratification in Human Societies: History of Inequality</td>
<td>Ch.3 Supp. Article</td>
<td>Online Discussion 2</td>
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<td>Sept. 4 - 10</td>
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<td>Internet Activity 2</td>
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<td>Week Four</td>
<td>Social Stratification Theory: Early Statements</td>
<td>Ch.4</td>
<td>Online Discussion 3</td>
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<td>Sept. 11-17</td>
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<td>Video</td>
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<td>Week Five</td>
<td>Modern Theories of Social Stratification</td>
<td>Ch.5 Supp. Article</td>
<td>Essay 1 Due</td>
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<td>Sept. 18-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Six</td>
<td>American Class - Upper Class The Corporate Class</td>
<td>Ch.6 Ch. 7</td>
<td>Online Discussion 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 25 – Oct. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internet Activity 3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week Seven  | October 2-8 | The Middle and Working Classes | Ch. 8 | Midterm Quiz – Ch. 1-8
|            |            |                               |       | Internet Activity 4 Due
| Week Eight | October 9-15 | Poverty and the Political Economy of Welfare | Ch.9 Supp. Article | Online Discussion 5 Video
| Week Nine  | October 16-22 | Gender Stratification and Inequalities | Ch. 10 Video | Online Discussion 6 Internet Activity 5
| Week Ten   | October 23-29 | Inequalities of Race and Ethnicity | Ch. 11 Supp. Article | Essay 2 Due
| Week Eleven| Oct. 30 -Nov. 5 | Social Mobility: Class Ascription and Achievement | Ch.12 | Online Discussion 7 Video
| Week Twelve| Nov. 6-12 | The Process of Legitimation | Ch. 13 | Internet Activity 6 Video
| Week Thirteen| Nov.13-19 | The World Stratification System Dominance and Competition | Ch. 14 | Internet Activity 7
| Week Fourteen| Nov. 20-26 | Social Stratification in Japan and Germany | Ch. 15 Supp. Article | Essay 3 Due - Due by Nov.27th
| Week Fifteen| Nov. 27 - Dec. 5 | World Stratification and Globalization | Ch. 16 | Final Quiz Ch. 9-16
|            |            |                               |       | Open Nov.28-Dec.7th

**Contacting the Instructor/Instruction Availability**

If you may have questions or concerns, you can contact me by my USD email address or the course email (not the course pager): Stephanie.spars@usd.edu. I will be happy to respond and will do so within a reasonable time (from instantly to around 48 hours, depending on my schedule and my proximity to a computer). As this is an online course contact is solely through email or D2L.

**Study Suggestions**

How can you successfully complete this course? The following guidelines will help you achieve your goals.

*Read your syllabus.* The lesson introduction and reading assignments are your “lecture” for a lesson. I suggest reading the introduction twice, before beginning your assignment and then once again after reading the chapter to help clarify key points.

*Read each text assignment carefully.* Many students find it helpful to take notes as they read and reread their assignments. In these notes, include any points that are unclear or about which you have questions. If you cannot find the answers to these questions, feel free to e-mail me.

*Ask questions by e-mail.* Since we will not be meeting each week as we would in a course taken in residence, I cannot see the puzzled look on your face when a concept is unclear. Please feel free to ask me to clarify anything you do not understand.

*Set aside time for the class.* Online study courses require you to take the responsibility for completion of the course. This takes self-discipline and time. Set aside time each week to work on this course just as you would for a course take in residence. You will successfully complete this course once you make a commitment to it.
Technical Standards and Issues

To take the course successfully, you will need to use a computer with the appropriate technology to access D2L. Of course, if you are reading this now, you probably do! If you need other technological help, contact the ITS Help Desk at 877‐269‐6837, 605‐658‐6000, or through the HelpTicket system: https://apps.usd.edu/helpdesk/requests

Please remember that it is up to you to sort out any technological problems, so I would advise you to test the system as soon as you sign up so that you are ready to go on the first day of the semester. Just to give you a sense of balance, please be aware that the D2L system is not perfect either (e.g., see suggestions on the D2L site about using a Firefox browser if you have Internet Explorer 10+ on your computer, and comments about the server being either slow or down at certain times). So make sure in advance that you have the right computer and know the quirks of the system.

I also expect you to save and back up any files you create out of D2L for this course as you work on them. Your word processor will have several options for doing this. The simplest is to hit that little floppy disk icon (or other icon for saving a document) on your word processor now and again. You can usually recover a document that you have saved at least once, but if you have not saved a version, it’s gone (well, there are programs that will find data outside files on a hard drive)! We have all had the horror of computer hang-ups, crashes and other glitches, and so you are forewarned – no ‘virtual dog/cat ate my virtual homework’ excuses allowed.

University Course and Exam Policies

The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.

Early Alert and Deficiency Grades

University policy requires instructors to submit Early Alert and Deficiency grades for students performing at the D level or below in a course. A student will receive an Early Alert report if the student has not completed the required postings by the Early Alert deadline. A student will receive a Deficiency at midterm if the student has not completed the required postings and/or received a grade of D or less on the midterm exam.

Instructor Initiated Drop

An Instructor Initiated Drop will take place if the student has not submitted required coursework as per the syllabus schedule by the fourth week of class. A student may also be dropped by the instructor for plagiarism or cheating as per College of Arts and Science policy.

Incomplete

The grade Incomplete (I) is given at the discretion of the instructor and only if arrangements are made by the student with the instructor for completing the course before the last day of the semester. The student must have completed all course requirements except for the final examination to be considered for the grade of Incomplete. A student then must complete the course before the end of the next semester or the grade automatically changes to F.
Course Evaluation
Students may be asked to evaluate the course using the institutional form as per the directives of the University.

Other Course Policies
I do not accept late submissions. If your request is due to extenuating circumstances which are medically related, you will be required to submit supporting documentation.

Policies and procedures covering this course are detailed in the Internet Study Student Handbook.

University’s Academic Dishonesty Statement
The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook, and South Dakota Board of Regents policy 2-33 www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-33.pdf.

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- Given a zero for that assignment.
- Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- Reported to the program which the student is majoring and that department may take additional action
- Dropped from the course.
- Failed in the course.

Academic Dishonesty: acts of dishonesty, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Cheating, which is defined as, but not limited to, the following:
   a. use or giving of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examination;
   b. use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments: or
   c. acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the institutional faculty or staff.
2. Plagiarism, which is defined as, but not limited to, the following:
   a. the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment consistent with the practices of the discipline;
   b. the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers of other academic materials.
3. Other forms of dishonesty relating to academic achievement, research results, or academically related public service.
4. Furnishing information known or believed to be false to any institutional official, faculty member, or officer.
5. Forgery, fabrication, alteration, misrepresentation, or misuse of any document, record, or instrument of identification, including misrepresentations of degrees awarded or honors received.
6. Tampering with the election of any institutionally recognized student organization.
7. Claiming to represent or act in behalf of the institution when not authorized to represent or to act.

Goals of the South Dakota System General Education Requirements

This class fulfills the following Goals of the South Dakota System General Education Requirements:

GOAL #3: Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

| 1. Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology and theories of sociology from different spatial, temporal, cultural and/or institutional contexts | Weekly readings, video selections, online discussions, multiple choice exams, three essays, and seven activities. |
| 2. Apply selected sociological concepts and theories to contemporary issues | Weekly readings, video selections, online discussions, multiple choice exams, three essays, and seven activities. |
| 3. Identify and explain the social or aesthetic values of different life ways and segments in society | Weekly readings, video selections, online discussions, multiple choice exams, three essays, and seven activities. |

In addition, as a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the following Learning Outcome:

| 5. The allocation of human or natural resources within societies | Weekly readings, video selections, online discussions, multiple choice exams, three essays, and seven activities. |
| 6. The impact of diverse philosophical, ethical or religious views | Weekly readings, video selections, online discussions, multiple choice exams, three essays, and seven activities. |

Freedom in Learning
Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

Disability Accommodation
Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate accommodations.
and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Please note: if your home institution is not the University of South Dakota but one of the other South Dakota Board of Regents institutions (e.g., SDSU, SDSMT, BHSU, NSU, DSU), you should work with the disability services coordinator at your home institution.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director  
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center  
(605)677-6389  
E-mail: disabilityservices@usd.edu

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence**  
The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.

**The Division of Continuing & Distance Education has the following student support services:**  
For information about the university's technical, academic, and student support services, as well as how to take advantages of these services, please refer to the Online Student Handbook (see below). This document also contains important information pertaining to minimum technology requirements, registration information, as well as other university services and policies.

The Division of Continuing and Distance Education (CE) also offers a comprehensive guide and other guides/ aids to the many student services available to distance learners:  
[http://www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/student-resources.cfm](http://www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/student-resources.cfm)


To access the course:  
[https://d2l.sdbor.edu/](https://d2l.sdbor.edu/) or [https://my.usd.edu/uPortal/f/welcome/normal/render.uP](https://my.usd.edu/uPortal/f/welcome/normal/render.uP)