Business 9861 – Inequality, Diversity, and Business

Winter 2021

Professor Bob Andersen
Office No. 4368, Ivey Building
Tel. Number: 519-661-2111
bob.andersen@ivey.ca

Faculty Assistant: Sarah Whittaker
Tel. Number: 519-661-2111 x84210
swhittaker@ivey.ca

Fridays 8:00am – 11:00am
Location: Virtual seminar (Zoom links on the course homepage)

Course homepage: https://learn.ivey.ca/courses/3134

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Tremendous increases in economic inequality and diversity have posed significant challenges for nearly all modern capitalist societies. How are “opportunities”, both within organizations and in society more generally, created and constrained by social stratification? Does inequality and diversity affect innovation and productivity? As government and business leaders grapple with how to respond to these questions, it is important that they understand how society is stratified, how this stratification is perpetuated, and its consequences. Specific topics to be covered are stratification and social mobility; cultural and social capital; labour market discrimination; the relationship between inequality and attitudes; diversity and innovation; and the ways in which equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) have been tackled in organizations.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course will challenge you to consider how stratification is produced in modern capitalist societies, how businesses contributes to it, and why it is important that business leaders pay attention to it. It will also challenge your ability to evaluate empirical research on this topic. Give that this is a seminar course, you will be expected to contribute informed and critical discussion of the readings and issues they cover.
3. METHODS OF EVALUATION

Grades in this course will be based on five elements:

1. Oral participation (10%) - Weekly
2. Position papers (10%) - Due at noon on Thursday before class (London, ON time)
3. Seminar Moderator (20%) - Dates to TBD
4. Paper Proposal (10%) - Due Friday, February 19, 2021 at 3pm (London, ON time)
5. Final Term Paper (50%) - Due Friday, April 9, 2021 at 3pm (London, ON time)

All written components for the course must typed, double-spaced and in 12-point font, and submitted in PDF format. They must be sent uploaded to the course Learn site (https://learn.ivey.ca/courses/3134) before their deadline (see above). For all written assignments, please include a cover page that clearly states your name and student number, the date it was submitted, and the title of the assignment (the cover page does not count as part of the required length for the assignments).

3.1 Oral Participation (10%)

This course will only be successful if everyone participates in class, and thus I will not go easy on oral participation grades. If you don’t participate regularly, you will get a poor grade. Opinion alone is not good enough, however. I expect you to draw on evidence from the required readings to support your arguments. I will also be looking for students to “think outside of the box” and give good logical arguments based on personal experience, previous education, and knowledge of current affairs. In short, you will be evaluated on your ability to critique the readings (including theory, methods and conclusions) and to put their findings in a wider context.

3.2. Position Papers (10% - 10 papers x 1 grade each)

You are required to write 10 position papers on the required readings. These weekly papers are due before noon (London, ON time) on the Thursday before the class that deals with the corresponding reading. Late papers will not be accepted. Each position paper must be at least one page in length and no more than two pages in length (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font; not including the title page). Papers outside of these limits will not be accepted.

The position papers are worth a total of 10 grades (i.e., one grade each). You will receive a single grade for each satisfactorily completed paper that is submitted on time. If I don’t think enough effort has gone into a paper, you will receive a grade of 0 for that week. In short, if you satisfactorily complete all 10 position papers, you will receive 10/10 for this element of the course. There are 11 weeks with required readings, meaning that you have
one week free from writing a position paper. The decision as to which week you don’t submit a position paper is yours.

Position papers should not simply summarize the week’s readings. Instead, they should point out the essential findings of the required readings, draw connections with other research, and critique the papers’ methods and theoretical approaches, and raise problems or questions that are meant to stimulate seminar discussion. You should be critical! The position papers must also include at least three questions based on the readings that you plan to consider for seminar discussion.

3.3 Seminar Moderator (20%)

Aside from the regular oral participation in weekly seminars, each student will play the role of moderator on two occasions. Each of these occasions is worth 10 percent of your final grade (i.e., together they are worth 20 percent in total). The specific dates (and associated readings) that each person will moderate will be determined during the first seminar in January.

The goal of the seminar moderator is to encourage discussion around the major ideas and evidence of the week’s readings. You should start with a brief summary of the papers—largely with the goal of tying them together under a theme(s)—but this should be no longer than 10 minutes in length. You should not lecture. While it is a good idea to have personal notes to guide your discussion, and you are welcome to share a slide or two to clarify a point, you should not give a complete PowerPoint presentation or provide extensive handouts. Your primary role is to encourage informed discussion and debate. A good moderator will ensure the discussion includes the following:

- A critique of key terms and arguments;
- An evaluation of the data and methods used to support claims;
- Situation of the readings in the larger context of research in the area, related research and, when appropriate, current affairs.

3.4 Paper Proposal (10%)

The paper proposal must be no more than five pages in length (excluding the title page and reference list, 12-point font, double-spaced). It is due no later than February 19, 2021 at 3pm (London, ON time). Only under exceptional circumstances will late papers be accepted.

The paper proposal provides a means for me to assess your progress and provide guidance on the development of the final paper. The proposal should include a description of the purpose of the paper, a justification for studying the topic (how does it relate to business and/or management), a brief discussion of some of the relevant research you will consult, and a full length reference list of research that you plan to discuss (this should provide the
basis of the final reference list for the final paper). Include only references that you will cite in the paper and be sure to cite them properly. Your proposal should provide a brief discussion of the argument the paper will make. See the section below on the final paper for details on choosing your paper topic.

3.5 Final Term Paper (50%)

The final paper should be between 18 and 20 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, not including the title page and reference list). It is just as important to keep the paper less than 20 pages as it is to ensure that you have more than 18 pages. The paper is due on Friday, April 9, 2021 at 3pm. Late papers will not be accepted.

Criteria for final paper

The final paper, and its related proposal, must have clear relevance to business and/or management. It must also be related to at least one of the weekly topics covered in this course. I strongly urge you to consult with me about your topic before beginning to write the proposal. You can choose between two types of final paper:

1) **Critical review piece** on the major theoretical and/or methodological developments related to the topic that you choose. While you should be sure to include the most important and influential sources in the field, this should not be simply an annotated bibliography. That is, you will be expected to describe how the field has developed, what we know, where there continues to be debate, and areas for future research. In his context, you should also critique the data, methods and theory of the influential works you discuss. While there is no set number of articles that should be discussed, I expect that you will discuss and properly cite at least 25 influential articles published since 2000. As a general rule, I also suggest that you largely focus on articles published in journals on the Financial Times FT50 list ([https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/ft-top50/journals](https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/ft-top50/journals)) or that receive a score of 3 or higher in the Chartered Association of Business School’s Academic Journal Guide ([https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2018/](https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2018/)). You should not ignore influential work published outside of these venues, however.

2) **Empirical research paper** with original analysis and findings on a topic related to a topic(s) covered in this course. You should write this paper with the goal of eventually submitting it to a specific academic journal. In other words, the paper should have an informative literature review, a data and methods section (where the data and statistical methods are clearly described), a results section and a discussion/conclusion section. It is acceptable—and perhaps even preferable—to study a topic that fits well with your planned doctoral dissertation. You will, of course, need to find and secure appropriate data for this type of paper to be
successful. I thus strongly urge you to consult with me about the topic before proceeding with the proposal. I will also be happy to help you along the way. While there is no ‘rule’ on how many articles that should be cited in your literature review—you should properly cite whatever is directly relevant—like above, I suggest that you largely focus on articles published in journals on the FT50 list and/or that receive a score of 3 or higher in the CABS Academic Journal Guide. Again, however, be sure not to ignore important and influential work that was published elsewhere.

Both the final paper and the proposal should be written in a format acceptable for publication in a top academic journal (such as APA style). I expect both assignments to be very polished, so you should start as soon as possible.

4. COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

1. **Jan 8: Introduction**

   No required readings this week.

   *Optional reading:*  

2. **Jan 15: Stratification and Mobility**


3. **Jan 22: Education and Human Capital**


4. **Jan 29: Cultural Capital**


5. **Feb 5: Networks and Social Capital**


6. **Feb 12: Gender and Economic Inequality**


**February 19: Reading week (no class)**

7. **Feb 26: Race, Ethnicity and Immigration**


8. **March 5: Economic Inequality and Attitudes in Cross-National perspective**


9. **March 12: Inequality Reproduction in Organizations**


10. **March 19: Consequences of Economic Inequality for Firms**


11. March 26: Diversity, Networks and Firm Performance


12. April 2: Policy on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion


ACADEMIC OFFENCES: PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

SUPPORT SERVICES: HEALTH AND WELLNESS
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca.

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.
Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are encouraged to register with Student Accessibility Services, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both SAS and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction. For more information, see http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd