

Intersectionality
Sociology 4210
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00pm to 3:20pm
Wooten Hall 216

Professor: William “Buddy” Scarborough

Email: William.Scarborough@unt.edu

Office: Sycamore Hall 288C

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00pm to 1:50pm; 3:30pm to 4:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the theories, epistemologies, methods, and the general paradigm of intersectionality. The aim will be on applying intersectionality to better understand the processes contributing to patterns of inequality. Throughout the course we will discuss and interrogate contemporary social problems. We will engage with social theory in order to adopt lenses by which we can view social issues in useful ways. We will also conduct research, analyzing data to generate new knowledge on patterns of inequality and their determinants.

In the spirit of intersectionality, I also aim for the course to have social relevance and engage with pressing issues of inequality in our local community and society more generally. We will relate readings to contemporary issues. The course assignments are also designed to have practical relevance to students’ professional, personal, and/or academic goals. I hope that we can translate our academic study to positive social outcomes.

Much intersectional theorizing was inspired by the lived experience of individuals whose voices were not represented in predominant canons. With this wisdom in mind, I encourage students to draw from their lived experience in engaging with texts and theories we cover. In contradiction to the critique that these narratives are “anecdotal”, we will engage deeply with the structural conditions that contribute to our varying histories and standpoints. No student will be required to share anything from their personal lives. Those who do will be respected and encouraged to use their standpoint to build from the theories outlined in the course. At the same time, we must remember that our individual perspectives provide only partial vision, and a clearer view may emerge by engaging with others through text, conversation, and dialogue.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) Students will gain an understanding of the complex and dynamic ways that systems of power interact and intersect
- 2) Students will apply intersectional theory to contemporary social phenomena

GUEST POLICY

Children and dependents are welcome in class. Please do not hesitate if you need to bring your loved ones to class.

SUGGESTED READINGS

All readings listed in the syllabus may be accessed through the UNT library website. All other materials will be posted online (on canvas) or distributed through e-mail.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are four major assignments for the course.

1) Participation

This is a discussion-based course. It is designed so that we not only learn from the readings and instruction, but also from each other. Therefore, it is crucial that students participate in each class. **Students should make an effort to contribute their thoughts at least once every class.** If, for some reason, you are unable to participate in our class discussions, please let me know.

Each class will have an in-class assignment to be completed individually or in groups. These assignments will count for a substantial share of participation.

Throughout the semester, there will likely be instances where some students are unable to attend class for one reason or another. If this happens, you should e-mail me as soon as possible to let me know. Ideally, you will e-mail me prior to class. While it is impossible to list all the potential reasons a student may have for missing class, some of the common ones include being sick (mental or physical health), having issues with transportation, and family responsibilities. There are probably other things that I have not listed or thought of that may be legitimate reasons for missing class. If you are unsure whether your reason for missing class is legitimate or not, please feel free to ask me. If it is a legitimate reason, your grade will not be penalized and we will make a plan to be sure you do not fall behind.

2) Discussion Leaders: Application of Course Readings to Contemporary Issues:

A major aim of this course is to apply sociological concepts and theories to contemporary social topics. In pursuit of this goal, **student groups of two or three** will sign up for a class session where they relate the readings for that class to a pressing social issue. Only one group will present each class. They will do their presentation as a group. Ideally, students will identify a video, newspaper article, blog post, poem, art piece, or some other expression that deals with the topics pertaining to that week's reading. In their presentation, students should give an overview of their application. Then, they should facilitate a class discussion. The discussion should cover how the application relates to course concepts, how it advances or challenges the theories or cover in the class, and/or how it provides new insight to our understanding of intersecting systems of inequality.

Discussion leaders will be graded on the following criteria:

- The application was clearly related to course material for that week

- The discussion expanded our understanding of course concepts by applying them to a contemporary social topic
- The presenter provided guiding discussion questions that engaged students in the class
- The presentation and discussion lasted between 15 and 20 minutes.

3) Course Papers

The course will have three papers with distinct aims.

- 1) ***Uncovering and analyzing social patterns.*** In the first paper, students will document instances of social topics in local Texas communities and analyze their contributing factors through an intersectional lens.

The paper should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced and with at least 2 references from the course readings. It is due on **March 17** on Canvas.

- 2) ***In-Class Paper: Applying Theory.*** The class includes two weeks where we cover theories related sociological topics. At the conclusion of these lessons, I will provide an in-class and take-home (you may take it home if you don't finish in class) paper assignment. I will provide a list of four to six paper prompts. You will choose one and write a 3 to 5-page paper in response.

This paper is due on **April 7** on Canvas.

- 3) ***Final paper.*** Toward the end of the semester, we will discuss additional theories. After covering the main arguments, students will write a paper discussing whether they agree or disagree with the theories and why. Papers should be 4 to 6 pages double-spaced.

This paper is due **May 4** on Canvas.

4) Presentations

Students will choose one of the papers they wrote in this course and present them to the class. Presentations may use one to five PowerPoint slides. They should last five minutes. The aim is to teach the class something new that we can learn from your paper.

Half of the class will present on April 27. The other half will present on May 2.

GRADES

The course grade will be weighted across the following assignment groups:

Participation and In-Class Activities: 20% of grade

Discussion Leader in Application of Course Materials: 15% of grade

Course Papers: 60% of grade, broken down as follows:

Paper 1: 20%

Paper 2: 20%
Paper 3: 20%
Presentation: 5%

LATE ASSIGNMENT AND GRADE POLICY

If there are extenuating circumstances preventing submission of assignments, please let me know. I will make every effort to accommodate students. Assignments submitted more than two weeks late or after May 11, whichever is earlier, will receive a zero unless specific accommodations have been arranged.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades may only be assigned when the student is making satisfactory progress until the request for an incomplete is made. Incompletes will only be offered with medical documentation or other documentation that a highly unusual circumstance beyond the student's control (e.g. the death of a loved one) has made finishing the semester impossible. All requests for incompletes must be made prior to the final examination.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Visit the UNT Learning Center

The UNT Learning Center provides a variety of free academic support programs from tutoring and supplemental-instruction services to academic skills workshops and coaching. **Contact Information:** Phone: 940-369-7006 | Email: Learning.Center@unt.edu | In-person: Monday through Friday, from 8a - 5p, Sage Hall, Room 170. For more information about the services provided, visit the LC online: learningcenter.unt.edu.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive a zero in the assignment and potentially a zero in the course and administrative action from the university.

ADA Accommodation Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648.

Religious Holidays

If you wish to observe a religious holidays, notify me by the tenth day of the semester of the date when you will be absent unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the semester. In such cases, you should notify me at least five days in advance of the date when you will be absent. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize you for missing the class, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, give you an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed by those students in attendance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings associated with each class are posted on canvas.

I. INTRODUCTION: DEFINING INTERSECTIONALITY

January 17, 2023: Introductions

January 19, 2023: Purpose and Vision

January 24, 2023: Introduction to Intersectionality

January 26, 2023: Defining Intersectionality

January 31, 2023: Legacy of Power

February 2, 2023: Intersections of Power

February 7, 2023: Portal to Texas History Workshop

February 9, 2023: Social Explorer Workshop

February 14, 2023: Intersections

February 16, 2023: Intersections o

February 21, 2023: Lab

February 23, 2023: Lab

February 28, 2023: Institutional Dimension

March 2, 2023: Symbolic Dimension

March 7, 2023: Individual Dimension

March 9, 2023: Lab time for Social Explorer Analysis

March 14, 2023: No Class, Spring Break

March 16, 2023: No Class, Spring Break

March 21, 2023: Economic Theories

March 23, 2023: Economic Theories

March 28, 2023: Social Theories

March 30, 2023: Social Theories

April 4, 2023: In-Class Paper Assignment

April 6, 2023: In-Class Paper Assignment (continued)

April 11, 2023: Social Movements

April 13, 2023: Social Movements

April 18, 2023: Social Movements

April 20, 2023: Paper Prompt

April 25, 2023: Looking Back and Looking Forward

April 27, 2023: Presentations

May 2, 2023: Presentations

May 4, 2022: Conclusions