



## *New Topics in Sociology* **Sociology 297H1-F: Canadian Society**

Class Time: Thursdays 6-8pm  
Location: SS1071  
Instructor: Dr. Mitch McIvor  
Email: [mitchell.mcivor@utoronto.ca](mailto:mitchell.mcivor@utoronto.ca)  
Office Hours: Fridays, 1:30-3pm on Zoom (link: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89798079840>)  
\*beginning Friday Sept.16

### **1. Prerequisites:**

The prerequisite for taking this course is SOC100. Students without this prerequisite will be removed from the course without notice by the department. *Sorry, they make me put this on here.*

### **2. Course Overview:**

This course uses a Sociological approach to understand current Canadian society, Canada's role in global politics, and how Canadian social policies compare to the policies of other countries around the world. The topics considered in the course include economics, politics, happiness, health and mental health care, crime and punishment, tolerance for diversity, education, and more. The most current Canadian research and global comparative research are explored to ensure students leave with a thorough scientific awareness of where Canada is, where it is going, and what they think the best policies for Canada are moving forward.

### **3. Course Objectives:**

- (1) To learn about current issues facing Canada;
- (2) To hone critical thinking;
- (3) To improve writing skills;
- (4) To improve scientific literacy for the purpose of making evidence-based decisions and recommendations (i.e. applying academic research to life outside academia);
- (5) To have an enjoyable learning experience.

### **4. Course Readings:**

All course material will be free and available on Quercus or electronically through the University of Toronto library website. Students are also encouraged to use the library and library website while engaging in their independent project. No textbook or paid materials are required for this course. The article to be read for each lecture will be posted by Monday morning.

## 5. Course Evaluation & Requirements:

Assignment	Weight
i. Class Attendance	12 x 1% each.....12%
ii. Class Participation	12 x 1% each.....12%
iii. Reading Responses	10 x 1% each.....10%
iv. Essay(s)	1 required, up to 3 possible...66%
<b>Total: 100%</b>	

### **5-i: Class Attendance (12% of final grade):**

Each class you attend on time you will receive full points (1/1). If you miss class then you will receive 0/1, unless you email and explain the extenuating circumstances beyond your control that led to missing class, in which case the 1 point you missed will be replaced with your essay(s) grade; for example, if your essay grade or the average of multiple essays grade was 80%, you would get 0.8/1 for the class or classes you missed for valid reasons.

### **5-ii: Class Participation (12% of final grade):**

Each class we will have multiple discussion/reflection questions. You will be required to write your responses to these questions on a piece of paper that will be turned in at the end of each class. You will receive full points for these as long as you complete all questions and put in an 'honest effort' in the writing of your answers. Missing this participation due to missing class will be handled the same as the attendance grades; i.e. 0/1 for unexcused absence, replacement with essay(s) grade for excused absence due to extenuating circumstances beyond your control.

### **5-iii: Reading Responses (10% of final grade):**

For each class (minus Lecture 1) I will assign for reading a scientific journal article on the topic being taken up (these will be posted to Quercus by Sunday of each week). This component requires that you read the article and write a 2 page (min) to 3 page (max) double-spaced response (12 point Times New Roman Font and normal margins must be used). Your response should include an Intro, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. The three body paragraphs should concisely answer the following questions:

1. What did you see as the main strength or strengths of the reading?
2. What did you see as the main weakness or weaknesses of the reading?
3. What does the reading tell us about how to improve Canada in the area being discussed for the week? (For example, if the week's topic is Economic Inequality, then what does the reading tell us about how we can improve economic inequality in Canada?)

You can submit a reflection for 10 of the 11 substantive lectures (only Lecture 1 is considered non-substantive), which means you have one week of your choice off from the reflections. Responses are due in electronic form on Quercus and must be submitted by the start of class (i.e. 6pm). You can choose not to do some or not to do all of the reading responses (i.e., these responses are voluntary), in this case their weight will shift to your essay grade.

**5-iv: Essay(s) (minimum 66% of final grade):**

The primary component of your grade in the course will be derived from an academic essay or essays. Your essay(s) can be written on any of the substantive topics we cover. The one rule is that the due date of the essay will depend on the topic or topics that you choose to write on. More specifically, each essay is due at the start of class (i.e., 6pm) in which the topic you write on is being covered; for example, an essay on tolerance would be due in week 6 by the start of class (i.e. 6pm on October 13), an essay on politics would be due in Week 9 by the start of class (i.e. 6pm on Nov.3), and so on. This gives you flexibility in that you can choose what week or weeks works best for you to write your essay.

Finally, while writing one essay is required, you are also given flexibility in the opportunity to submit more than one essay. In that regard, here are your options:

- Submit one essay, in which case it will comprise the entire 66% of your final grade;
- Submit two essays, in which case your grade will be the average of your two essay grades (for example, if you scored a 70% on the first essay and an 80% on the second, then your grade would be 75%);
- Submit three essays, in which case your lowest essay grade will be dropped (for example, if you score 70% on the first essay, 75% on the second essay, and 80% on the third essay, then the 70% grade will be dropped and your grade would be the average of the higher two—i.e., here 77.5%).

PLEASE NOTE: if you are worried about grades, this means that you should submit an essay early. Essays are due in electronic form on Quercus and must be submitted by the start of the class (i.e. 6pm).

The essays must be 4 double spaced pages long, they MUST include a works cited page and at least 10 academic sources, and they should include the following sections:

- A one paragraph intro with a clear thesis;
- Three paragraphs outlining how Canada is doing on the issue in question compared to other countries OR how Canada has changed over time when it comes to the issue in question (how you choose to define the scope of the issue is up to you);
- Three paragraphs on what Canada can do to improve on the issue that displays evidence-based decision making;
- A one paragraph conclusion.

**6. Course Policies & Important Information for Students:**

**6-i: Quercus:**

Quercus will be an important resource during this class. The syllabus can be downloaded as an electronic copy from the course site on Quercus and I will post the lecture material on Quercus the night before each lecture. Quercus will also be where you find assignment instructions and where assignments are submitted.

### **6-ii: Lecture & Attendance:**

Full and complete attendance (on time) is required to do well in this course and is my expectation. Students are responsible for being aware of what is said in class (including administrative announcements) as well as for the content presented in class. To do well in the course students will need to attend class and take notes. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to find a fellow student willing to share notes (the instructor will provide their notes that lecture is based on but class discussions will move beyond these).

### **7-iii: Academic Dishonesty**

University policy on academic dishonesty must be strictly followed and cheating will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: 'Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty'), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. You should familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

### ***Ouriginal***

Students will be required to submit their assignments to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>). For some of your assignments, we will be using the software Ouriginal. It uses text matching technology as a method to uphold the University's high academic integrity standards to detect any potential plagiarism. Ouriginal is integrated into Quercus. For the assignments set up to use Ouriginal, the software will review your paper when you upload it to Quercus. To learn more about Ouriginal's privacy policy please review its Privacy Policy.

### **7-iv: Emails**

Students are encouraged to email the instructor with questions or problems related to the course but please strive to be professional in your emails. When emailing include "SOC297" and a brief description in the subject line, so your email can be easily prioritized. Emails will typically be answered within 48 business hours (i.e. not including weekends). It is strongly preferred that you use your university associated email and please follow appropriate contextual email etiquette—have an appropriate opening (ex: Hi, Good morning) and closing (ex: Thank-you, Sincerely), use proper spelling and grammar, and avoid using acronyms (ex: ttyl, fwiw, imo, asap, etc.). Keep in mind that for simple questions, email is the preferred method of communication. For longer questions, however, students should attend office hours or ask during lecture time.

### **7-v: Late Policy**

As a general rule given the make-up of the course, late assignments are not accepted. Special accommodations may be made in cases of extenuating circumstances

**7-vi: Accessibility Accommodations**

If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, Accessibility Services is your home base for support. It is important to contact the office as soon as possible so that accommodations for your needs are in place before classes start. All information about your disability is confidential and won't be shared with units outside of Accessibility Services without your consent. Accessibility services can be contacted by e-mail ([www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca)) or alternatively you can reach them by phone at 416-978-8060. If you require an accommodation, please forward the instructor your AS letter of Academic Accommodations as soon as possible.

**7-vii: Illness Related Accommodations**

If you require accommodation due to illness you will need to have an original Verification of Student Illness or Injury form completed by a doctor on or before the day of the course activity you require accommodation for (you may find the form at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)). All documentation must be received via email or in a sealed envelope addressed to the course instructor. PLEASE NOTE: These procedures are temporarily altered due to COVID, please see the link for current procedures.

**7-viii: Other Accommodations**

Your college registrar's office is there to support you in the event of an illness, personal, or family related emergency or issue that is hindering your success as a student. If there is an ongoing issue that hinders your studies, please contact your registrar as they will be able to connect you with appropriate resources and supports and can provide documentation to your instructors that will aid in receiving accommodations.

**8. Course Schedule**

September 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Week 1	5	6	7	8 University Classes Begin  Lecture 1: Intro to Class	9	10
11 Week 2	12	13	14 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	15 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 2: Work & The Labour Market	16  Prof McIvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>1</sup>	17

<sup>1</sup> Zoom link to attend is: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89798079840>

September 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
18  Week 3	19	20	21 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	22 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 3: Economic Inequality	23  Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>1</sup>	24
25  Week 4	26	27	28 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	29 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 4: Gender Inequality	30  Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>1</sup>	1

October 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2  Week 5	3	4	5 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	6 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 5: Indigenous Inequality	7  Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>2</sup>	8
9  Week 6	10 Thanksgiving No Classes	11	12 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	13 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 6: Tolerance	14  Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>2</sup>	15
16  Week 7	17	18	19 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	20 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 7: Crime and Punishment	21  Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>2</sup>	22

<sup>2</sup> Zoom link to attend is: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89798079840>

October 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23  Week 8	24	25	26 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	27 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 8: Happiness	28 Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>2</sup>	29

November 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30  Week 9	31	1	2 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	3 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 9: Politics	4 Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>3</sup>	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Reading Week- No Classes						
13  Week 10	14	15	16 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	17 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 10: Government Spending	18 Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>3</sup>	19
20  Week 11	21	22	23 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	24 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 11: Education	25 Prof Mclvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>3</sup>	26

<sup>3</sup> Zoom link to attend is: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89798079840>

November 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27  Week 12	28	29	30 Possibility to submit essay on this week's topic by 6pm tomorrow →	1 Reading Response Due @ 6pm  Lecture 12: Business	2  Prof McIvor online office hours 1:30-3pm <sup>3</sup>	3

December 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	5	6	7	8 University Classes End (i.e. no class)	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 University Closed until January 1 <sup>st</sup>	22	23	24

## 9. Resources

### Department of Sociology – University of Toronto

Course offerings, programs, faculty, old syllabi, etc

[www.sociology.utoronto.ca](http://www.sociology.utoronto.ca)

### Writing Support in Faculty of Arts and Science

Writing is a key part of a university education. The Faculty of Arts and Science at UofT has several initiatives which every students could benefit from looking into. Here is a series of writing-related resources available in Arts and Science.

1. Students can find information about college writing centres at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>
2. The home page for the website “Writing at the University of Toronto” is [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca). This includes:
  - More than 60 advice files on all aspects of academic writing available at [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice). A complete list of printable PDF versions are listed at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/about-this-site/pdf-links-for-students>



- Students will want to check out the “How Not to Plagiarize” and other advice on documentation format and methods of integrating sources; these are listed at [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources).
3. Writing Plus workshop series, described at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus>
  4. Information about the English Language Learning program (ELL) is available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>. Sample of activities:
    - the Communication Cafe, which meets weekly at four different times and locations for the first five weeks of each term for practice with oral skills such as class discussion and presentations
    - Reading eWriting, an online program that helps students engage course readings more effectively.

#### **Other University Student Services:**

**Academic Success Centre:** Workshops and individual support for learning skills including time management, memorization, exam preparation, note-taking, stress management. <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success/>

**Campus Safety:** For security and safety concerns. Emergencies requiring immediate response from Metro Police should go through 911, but Campus Police can respond promptly to less extreme situations. The officers are experienced in dealing with students. Non-urgent: 416-978-2323 & Campus Urgent: 416-978-2222 or 911

**Career Centre:** Research tools, workshops, & advice on choosing and preparing for careers; on-campus employment and work study listings. <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/career-exploration-education/>

**Centre for International Experience:** Logistical and social support for international students; information and support for international student exchange students, both inbound and outbound. <https://internationalexperience.utoronto.ca/>

**Family Care Office:** Help and support for those with dependants, either younger or older <https://familycare.utoronto.ca/>

**First Nations House:** Culturally relevant services for Indigenous students and learning opportunities for all students to engage with Indigenous communities at UofT and beyond. <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/first-nations-house/>

**Health & Wellness:** Provide a range of health services for physical and mental health, as well as wellness programs <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>

**Ombudsperson:** Offers confidential advice to students, faculty and staff. Assists students to engage with administrative structures, usually after all normal channels have been exhausted. <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/ombudsperson>

**Student Crisis Response:** For student crisis situations involving disturbing behaviour or references to suicide or violence, call 416-946-7111 during business hours. For after hours emergencies, call Campus Safety at 416-978-2222 or Metro Police 911. <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/faculty-support-for-responding-to-distressed-students/>

**Student Housing Service:** Assistance for students in finding off-campus housing. <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/housing/>

**Student Mental Health Resources:** This is a hub for tools, strategies, and experts to meet your mental health needs. <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/>