

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, Fall 2023
New Topics in Sociology:
SOC351H1F - Experimental Research on Discrimination

Schedule: Wednesday 1:10 pm-4 pm

Professor: Heiko Beyer - heiko.beyer@utoronto.ca

Munk School for Global Affairs and Public Policy, 1 Devonshire Place, Room 219N

Face to Face Office Hours: Wednesday 10 am – 11 am or by appointment

Email Office Hours: Tuesday 10 am – 11 am

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OVERVIEW AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Central topics of this seminar are acts of individual, collective, and institutional discrimination against ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities, women, and people with disabilities. After specifying the concept of “discrimination” and the features of experimental designs, we will read and discuss empirical studies which have used experiments to investigate discrimination. The course covers different phenomena of discrimination as well as different types of experiments.

Course Prerequisite: The **prerequisites** to take this course are SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 and two of SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1. Students without one of these prerequisites will be removed from the registration list at any time discovered and without notice.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will acquire knowledge about the conceptual foundations of discrimination theory
- Students will acquire knowledge about the methodological specifications of experimental designs, and the advantages and challenges of this empirical method
- Students will become familiar with important empirical findings about the scope, causes and consequences of discrimination in different world regions (with special emphasis on Europe)

Special needs: If you require accommodations or have any **accessibility concerns**, please visit: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca as soon as possible. If you have documentation that you are a special needs student and/or using accessibility services, please see Professor Beyer to discuss how best to assist you in the course. She needs to know in order to ensure that Tests and Exam Services have the required materials in time for you to take tests or exams there.

Class Structure and Expectations: This is a three-hour class. At the beginning of the session, we will recap the main topics we discussed in the previous session. To be prepared, make sure you review your notes and material of the previous meeting. After that, Professor Beyer will give a brief introduction to the topic of the day's session. The core of our discussion will be focused on understanding and critically discuss the main points of the texts assigned for this session. So, it's important that you read those texts beforehand. The last part of the session will be dedicated to tutorials, where a teaching assistant will cover specific study techniques and methods for academic work.

Students are expected to **read the course material** before each class and to attend each class. Attendance is very important, both in terms of class participation and discussion and because classes are designed to supplement as well as clarify readings (e.g., if you miss classes, you have missed valuable material). For these reasons, you should not take this class if you routinely **miss sessions**.

Note on readings: Some readings contain **tables** that rely on advanced statistical knowledge for interpretation. There is no need to spend too much time on these tables. Simply stick with the text and try to understand the reading's substantive message.

TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

September 13: *Introduction*, Tutorial: *Reading empirical studies*

September 20: *What is discrimination?*, Tutorial: *Choosing a research topic*

September 27: *What are experimental designs?*, Tutorial: *Writing a term paper outline*

October 4: Tutorial (3 hours): *Finding relevant research literature*

October 11: *Field Experiments 1*, Tutorial: *How to structure a research paper*

October 18: *Field Experiments 2*, Tutorial: *How to avoid academic misconduct*

October 25: *Laboratory Experiments 1*, Tutorial: *Using ChatGPT and other generative AI*, Assignment: *Write an outline of your term paper*

November 1: *Laboratory Experiments 2, Tutorial: How to give a good presentation*

November 8 reading week – No class

November 15: *Survey Experiments, Tutorial: How to provide effective peer feedback*

November 22: *in-class test*

November 29: *Paper presentations with student comments I*

December 6: *Paper presentations with student comments II*

LEARNING COMPONENTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class and tutorial participation. While class attendance will not be checked and noted, it is strongly recommended that you attend class and tutorials regularly. Professor Beyer's input will introduce material not covered by the readings, and elaborate on the assigned texts. Attendance in the tutorial is mandatory and will be checked and noted. Your participation in class discussions is expected.

Assignment: Outline for term paper. This 750-word (PLUS references) outline should include the research question, and theoretically derived hypotheses, as well as an outline of the structure of the paper and a list of additional (to class readings) books and/or articles you plan to include in your paper (worth 15% of the final grade). Outlines will be graded and returned in class on November 1.

Readings. We will read two journal articles per week. The lectures build on this literature, and it is expected that you have read the assigned texts ahead of class. Please bring a copy of the assigned readings with you to class. It is critical that you keep up with these readings. They form the basis for the writing assignments and are part of the material covered by the in-class test.

In-class Test. There will be one in-class test in the session on November 22. You will have 2 hours and 50 minutes to complete the test. The test will consist of multiple choice and essay questions. You will be asked to synthesize the readings, and course material discussed in class to fully answer the questions. Readings and lectures are part of the test material. The in-class test will cover all assigned readings for this class (worth 25% of final grade). The in-class test will be graded and returned in class on December 06.

Term paper. For this class, you are expected to write a 2,500-word paper based on the course readings and further literature. The paper is supposed to formulate a clear research question, derive empirical hypotheses from theoretical approaches and design an experiment which could be used to test the hypotheses. It is neither necessary to actually apply this experiment nor to gather real data. You may choose any topic out of the field of discrimination research but your empirical design has to be an experimental one. There will be a separate handout with more specific instructions handed out in the second week of class (in total worth 40% of the final grade).

Presentation of term paper: You will present your paper during class on November 29 and December 6. Students will be allocated to one of these dates during the first class on a voluntary basis. Students will give a 7-minute presentation of their paper and receive a 3-minute feedback by another student (presentation worth 15% of the final grade, comment worth 5% of final grade).

Requirement	Fraction of final grade	(due) date
Assignment: Proposal for term paper	15%	October 25*
In-class test	25 %	November 22
Term paper	40 %	November 29*
Presentation of term paper	15 %	November 29 or December 06
Comment on another students' term paper	5 %	November 29 or December 06
Pick up date for term papers		December 13 during office hours (or individual appointment)

* You have to submit the proposal and the term paper as a hardcopy in class. In addition, they have to be submitted electronically on Quercus by the end of the day they are due.

Course Grades are calculated using a 100-point scale. This point scale is used in the test and the assignment. The weighted sum at the end of the course is then translate into the letter grade used by the University of Toronto as follows:

90-100 = A+ 77-79 = B+ 67-69 = C+ 57-59 = D+
 85-89 = A 73-76 = B 63-66 = C 53-56 = D
 80-84 = A- 70-72 = B- 60-62 = C- 50-52 = D- 49 or below = F

COURSE ASSIGNMENT AND PENALTIES FOR MISSED DEADLINES

You are asked to complete your proposal for the term paper by October 25 and the term paper by November 29. You are asked to **turn in the assignments twice**. One is a **hard copy**, given to Professor Beyer personally in class on November 29. The second copy is to be turned in via **Quercus** (submitted by 11:59 pm on November 29). Assignments not submitted via Quercus will receive a grade of zero (0 %). There is a penalty for late submission of 10% per day.

Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and also declare their absence on the system (ACORN). (NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms). Students who miss the test, or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

By uploading your term paper to Quercus students will 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 your term paper, 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](#).

Students not wishing their assignment to be submitted through Ouriginal will not be assessed unless a student instead provides, along with their work, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own.

All assignments should be **written in English**. If you have difficulties in writing, please check www.writing.utoronto.ca. Also see these tips: <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs/>. I encourage you to use the university's writing resources, which are described on their website.

See: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus>

Also see: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic offenses include **plagiarism and re-submitting works submitted in other classes**. Academic offenses will not be tolerated and students who commit academic offenses will face serious penalties. By enrolling in this course, students agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar.

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication and punishment. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Penalties can be severe, including a grade of zero (0) for the assignment or for the course and a notice of plagiarism may be placed on your transcript.

You are expected to have read and be familiar with the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>) and Code of Student Conduct (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-student-conduct-december-13-2019>)

As a student in this course, you are expected to inform yourself on how not to plagiarize. Please see <http://onereach.library.utoronto.ca/faq/how-do-i-avoid-plagiarism>.

Remember, that submitting someone else's work as your own constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism includes unacknowledged text, using another person's paper, and/or purchasing a paper, even if you use only part of such material. Using substantial amounts of web-based text or extensive use of quotations also can constitute plagiarism. Please also be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN ASSIGNMENTS AND TERM PAPERS

Students are encouraged to make use of technology, including generative artificial intelligence tools, to contribute to their understanding of course materials. Students may also use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, in this course as learning aids or to help produce assignments. However, students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit. Students must submit, as an appendix with their assignments, any content produced by an artificial intelligence tool, and the prompt used to generate the content. Any content produced by an artificial intelligence tool must be cited appropriately (please use this style guide: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>). Students may choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Note that some generative AI applications may

require a subscription fee. Please feel free to opt-out of using a system if they have concerns about the cost, privacy, security or other issues related to the technology.

OTHER THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record one or more lectures or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission, and may not do so unless permission is granted. ***It is absolutely forbidden for a student to*** publish an instructor's notes, to place them on a website or sell them in other form without formal permission from the instructor.

Course Website: This website is open to students enrolled in the course. On it you will find the course Syllabus (this document); announcements as they are made; grades; and lecture relevant slides. Remember although the lecture material in the course is made available to you for academic purposes, it is copyrighted.

OTHER COURSE RELATED INFORMATION

I encourage you to come by my office – or to contact the TA – to discuss matters of concern. If you cannot make it during scheduled **office hours**, please let me know and we can make an appointment. **If you don't understand a concept: ask in class, I will always be happy to explain things again, but please do not ask me these questions during office hours or by e-mail!**

E-mail office hours: if you contact me via e-mail, please be aware that I have “e-mail office hours” and will be answering course related e-mails only during this time. **I do not answer to e-mails with questions that are answered in the syllabus.**

You are required to use your **U. of T email address** for course related e-mails. The university advises faculty not to reply to e-mails that use Gmail, yahoo etc. or other web accounts. Please indicate the course number (SOC351H1F) and a brief reason in the subject header.

SOC351H1 READINGS (all readings are required)

September 13: *Introduction*

Tutorial: *Reading empirical studies*

September 20: *What is discrimination?*

Readings:

- Feagin, Joe R., and Douglas L. Eckberg. 1980. "Discrimination: Motivation, action, effects, and context". *Annual Review of Sociology* 6:1–20.
- Small, Mario L., and Devah Pager. 2020. "Sociological Perspectives on Racial Discrimination." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 34(2):49–67.

Tutorial: *Choosing a research topic*

September 27: *What is an experimental design?*

Readings:

- Box, Joan Fisher. 1980. "R.A. Fisher and the Design of Experiments, 1922–1926." *The American Statistician* 34(1):1–7.
- Jackson, Michelle, and D. R. Cox. 2013. "The Principles of Experimental Design and Their Application in Sociology". *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:27–49.

Tutorial: *Writing a term paper outline*

October 4: tutorial only! (class commences at 2:30p.m.): *Finding relevant research literature*

October 11: *Field Experiments 1 (lost letter & helping behavior experiments)*

Readings:

- Ahmed, Ali M. 2010. "Muslim Discrimination: Evidence From Two Lost-Letter Experiments." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 40(4):888–98.
- Zhang, Nan, Amelie Aidenberger, Heiko Rauhut, and Fabian Winter. 2019. "Prosocial Behaviour in Interethnic Encounters: Evidence from a Field Experiment with High- and Low-Status Immigrants." *European Sociological Review* 35(4):582–97.

Tutorial: *How to structure a research paper*

October 18: *Field Experiments 2 (audit studies & correspondence test)*

Readings:

- Rivera, Lauren A., and András Tilcsik. 2023. "Not in My Schoolyard: Disability Discrimination in Educational Access." *American Sociological Review* 88(2):284–321.
- Beyer, Heiko, and Rumi Pfleger [under review]. Unshared Spaces: Housing Discrimination against Trans and Non-Binary People in Germany, unpublished manuscript

Tutorial: *How to avoid academic misconduct*

October 25: *Laboratory Experiments 1 (implicit association test & eye tracking experiments)*

Readings:

- Greenwald, Anthony G., Debbie E. McGhee, and Jordan L. K. Schwartz. 1998. "Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: The implicit association test." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74(6):1464–80.
- Lahey, Joanna N., and Douglas R. Oxley. 2021. "Discrimination at the Intersection of Age, Race, and Gender: Evidence from an Eye-Tracking Experiment." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 40(4):1083–1119.

Tutorial: *Using ChatGPT and other generative AI*

Assignment: Write an outline for your term paper

November 1: *Laboratory Experiments 2 (game theoretical experiments)*

Readings:

- Pecenka, Clinton J., and Godfrey Kundhlande. 2013. "Theft in South Africa: An Experiment to Examine the Influence of Racial Identity and Inequality." *The Journal of Development Studies* 49(5):737–53.
- Andreoni, James, and Ragan Petrie. 2008. "Beauty, Gender and Stereotypes: Evidence from Laboratory Experiments." *Journal of Economic Psychology* 29(1):73–93.

Tutorial: *How to give a good presentation*

November 8 reading week – No class

November 15: *Survey Experiments (Factorial Survey & Choice Experiment)*

Readings:

- Fekjær, Silje, Einar Øverbye, and Lars Inge Terum. 2023. "Who Deserves to Be Sanctioned? A Vignette Experiment of Ethnic Discrimination among Street-Level Bureaucrats." *Acta Sociologica* 00016993231156486.

- Liebe, Ulf, and Heiko Beyer. 2021. "Examining Discrimination in Everyday Life: A Stated Choice Experiment on Racism in the Sharing Economy." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47(9):2065–88.

Tutorial: *How to provide effective peer feedback*

November 22: *in-class test*

November 29: *Paper presentations with student comments I*

December 6: *Paper presentations with student comments II*