

# **Law and Social Inequality**

## **School of Leadership & Social Change**

### **General Information**

Course #: Sociology 3360G

Section #: 530

Term: Winter 2023

Course Day and Time: Wednesdays, 11:30 am-2:20 pm

Course Location: Online, Synchronous

Zoom Link: In Owl. You must use your uwo account to access.

Camera Policy: In order to facilitate discussion and collegiality, cameras must be on during class.

### **Instructor Information**

Name: Lisa Macklem

E-mail: [lmackle2@uwo.ca](mailto:lmackle2@uwo.ca)

Office hours: On Zoom (link on Owl), Wednesdays 5pm – 6pm and other times by appointment

### **Important Course Information**

This is an online, synchronous course with some asynchronous features, for example videos/podcasts and potential forum discussions.

### **Course Description**

What social forces are influential in designing the law? To what extent does the law reflect and reinforce inequalities of “race”, gender, class, sexuality, age and ability (and their many intersections)? To what extent can the law be utilized to bring about social change? How are law and politics related?

This seminar-style course is a critical investigation of the law-society relationship. Specifically, in relation to social inequality, law is analyzed in a way that highlights its dual, contradictory nature. That is, in theory, law offers the promise of equality. However, in practice, law often reinforces and perpetuates social inequality.

This course explores the origins and operation of law, as well as the possibility for change and reform through law by investigating the following topics through an intersectional lens: criminalization of class, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation; Indigenous people and the law, immigration law, gender bias and the law, hate crimes, law and policing, youth and the law, disability and the law, and opportunities for change.

### **Prerequisites**

Sociology 1020 or 1021E and enrolment in 3rd or 4th year Sociology.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. **Demonstrate** understanding of theories related to law and social inequality.
2. **Analyze** the ways in which law reflects and reinforces inequalities of race, gender, class, age, sexuality and ability.
3. **Illustrate** ways in which the law may be utilized to bring about social change
4. **Collaborate** with classmates to design and submit a project that bridges classroom content with an “out of classroom” experience.

## Brescia Competencies

The Brescia Competencies are the building blocks of your Brescia experience. They help you to think critically and participate actively in society – attributes you will apply throughout your entire life. Regardless of what degree you choose, these skills, values, and abilities prepare you to lead with wisdom, justice, and compassion in a changing world. Throughout this course, students will work towards developing the following Brescia Competencies:

**Communication:** includes the articulation of one’s ideas, developing informative and persuasive arguments in all forms of communication, understanding the communication context. Students will also develop interpersonal communication skills including working with others in groups, sharing opinions, resolving conflicts, offering ideas, listening to others, asking questions, and demonstrating effective nonverbal behaviours.

**Critical Thinking:** the ability to engage in thinking characterized by the rational, informed, independent, and open-minded exploration of issues, ideas, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion.

**Inquiry and Analysis:** the ability to reach informed decisions by breaking down complex issues, exploring evidence, and describing relationships among persons, things, or events.

**Problem Solving:** the ability to create and execute a strategy to answer a question or achieve a goal. Includes being able to anticipate the consequence of a potential solution, select a strategy among several alternatives, and decide when an acceptable outcome has been reached.

**Self-Awareness and Development:** the ability to draw meaning, knowledge and value from honest and fair reflection and self-evaluation. Students are able to recognize their values and their impact on other and make a commitment to personal growth.

**Social Awareness and Engagement:** the ability “to understand and respond to the needs of others” (Daniel Goleman). To do so, students need to develop an understanding of the interrelationship between individual and society. They come to see how their actions influence, and are influenced by, other people, social institutions, and social structure. They appreciate the diverse standpoints and cultural experiences of others and attempt to see things from different perspectives. Socially aware and engaged students demonstrate knowledge of contemporary social problems and propose solutions for dealing with these issues. They have the ability to reflect on the impact they have on others. They are able to work with a diverse group of people in intercultural contexts to develop and implement social justice initiatives and enact positive social change.

**Valuing:** the ability to make decisions or choose actions based on the consistent application of moral principles and ethical codes. Students must also be able to understand the ideas informing one’s beliefs and be accountable for their actions.

## Required Course Materials

Perry, Barbara. (Ed.) *Diversity, Crime and Justice in Canada. (3rd Ed.)* Don Mills ON: Oxford University Press, 2020 (please note this book can be “rented”- in e-book form, here:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/diversity-crime-and-justice-in-canada-barbara-perry-v9780199037186>

Other materials and articles will be made available via Owl from time to time.

## Contact Information

The best way to reach me is via email at [lmackle2@uwo.ca](mailto:lmackle2@uwo.ca). I will respond within 48 business hours (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm). And likely more quickly...

## How the Course Works

All course materials (PowerPoints, extra readings, and assignment sheets) will be uploaded on Owl under “Resources.” Assignment sheets and will also be available under the Assignments tab, and this is where you will submit them.

We will strive to build community together online in different ways. The success of this course depends on YOU. Having your camera on will help us all connect with each other. You will be asked to collaborate with peers, have opportunities to participate in our synchronous time each week, and reflect on course materials via forums. Here is what to expect:

1. We will have synchronous time together beginning at 11:30 am every Wednesday. There will be short PPT lectures from me, lots of room for discussion, and beginning in week 4, the addition of peer teaching/learning with group seminar presentations.
2. Learning content that you work through on your own (e.g., videos to watch, podcasts, readings, reflection exercises, and/or forum discussions) will be posted on Owl, under the Resources tab.
3. In some lessons, I may include supplementary material if you would like to learn more. These materials will also be helpful for your essays. I will indicate when these are not mandatory.
4. I hope to have some guest lecturers to bring real world experiences into the class. TBA

## Expectations of Students

All students are expected to engage in a respectful manner. This includes all interactions with peers, as well as communications with your professor both in class and on-line. We can have different opinions and lived experiences that mean we move through (and experience) the world in different ways. Participation is important in this class -- feel free to speak your mind, but harmful or disrespectful language/behaviour will be shut down immediately.

**Students are expected to check their UWO email for announcements DAILY.**

(There won't be daily announcements, but it is important that you see them asap when there are some. This should be a given...) Students are expected to be familiar with Brescia's Academic Policies and Regulations.

## Copyright and Intellectual Property

PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines, and other components of the course materials are typically the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, videorecording, photographing, sharing on social media, or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited. Such action may be considered a Code of Conduct violation and lead to sanctions.

<b>Assignments &amp; Grading Structure: Component</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Date/ Deadline</b>
<b>Critical Essay</b>	30%	Feb. 17
<b>Group Seminar Presentation</b>	30%	Ongoing
<b>Participation</b>	10%	Ongoing
<b>Final Exam</b>	30%	TBD – During final exam period

Detailed descriptions of assignments will be posted on Owl and discussed in class.

## Policy Statement Regarding Essay Courses

Sociology 3360G is designated as an essay course. According to Western University's regulations for essay courses, all half courses, designated at the 100 level or above, must include written assignments (excluding examinations) totalling at least 2500 words. Additionally, according to this regulation, students are required to demonstrate competence in essay writing in order to pass the course.

## Course Content

The following is an outline of topics to be covered in this course. While I have provided a weekly schedule to help keep you on track, please note that many of these topics overlap and will feature in lectures throughout the term. The following course outline is subject to revision. Throughout the term, circumstances may arise that will alter the ordering of the topics, the pace at which we move through the material and so on. It is your responsibility to do the required readings, to attend class and to participate in the seminar presentations of your colleagues. If, for whatever reason, you are unable to attend class, please consult your peers in order to catch up on any administrative details, or course content that you may have missed. Our course Owl site will have a general forums tab where you can post requests, ask questions of your peers etc.

This outlines the chapters due from your text each week. Other readings will be posted on Owl, and you will be notified in class of any upcoming additional readings. <b>WEEK</b>	<b>WEEKLY TOPICS &amp; IMPORTANT DATES</b>	<b>REQUIRED READINGS</b>
January 11	Course Introduction: Administrative details and Introductory Lecture	Chapter 1
January 18	Theoretical Approaches to the Sociology of Law	Chapter 2
January 25	Theoretical Approaches continued...	Chapter 3
February 1	Criminalizing Class <b>Group Seminars begin</b>	Chapter 9
February 8	Criminalizing race/ethnicity/religion	Chapters 7,8
February 15	Criminalizing race/ethnicity cont.  Immigration Law  <b>Critical Essays Due (Feb 17)</b>	Chapter 5
February 22	Reading Week	No readings
March 1	Policing and Justice	Chapter 6
March 8	Criminalization of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community	Chapter 11
March 15	Women and the Law	Chapter 10
March 22	Disability and Justice	Chapters 14, 15
March 29	Indigenous People, Colonialism and Criminal Justice:  Alternative Models of Justice: Restorative Justice, Abolition	Chapter 4, 16, 17
April 5	Review for exam	

## Detailed Assignment Instructions:

### 1. Group Seminar Presentation (30%)

**20%– Seminar Grade 10%- 2 page summary of key points from the seminar**

Working in groups of 3 or 4 you will provide the class with a group seminar presentation of one of the chapters in our text. These will be approximately 40-45 minutes (including engagement with classmates). These will be completed synchronously via Zoom during our lecture time – you can do a PPT and share your screen, create a podcast, video that we can play etc. If you have other presentation ideas, approach me!

Seminars will begin in week four to give you some time to settle in. You will be placed in groups randomly (and chapters randomly assigned) and will be able to make introductions in Forums created expressly for this purpose. Peer evaluations will be considered in assigning individual marks for this project. Further instructions on the presentation will be provided in class and via Owl.

### 2. Critical Essays (30%):

**Due: Friday February 17, 2023**

**7 double-spaced pages and properly referenced (APA Documentation).**

Your essay should include at least 5 additional **scholarly** references, beyond the required course texts.

Consistent with the theme of this course, your essay should explore some dimension of inequality in relation to law. You have a great deal of latitude to pursue a topic that is of interest to you. This course is also focused on meaningful change. Thus, part of your challenge will be to think about recommendations and alternatives e.g. defunding, abolition, restorative justice, or other ideas you find while researching. For those of you who are less certain about a topic, you might use the following suggestions as a guide:

- Policing (e.g., racial profiling, Sammy Yatim, G20, Dafonte Miller)
- Immigration (e.g., how have the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> shaped Canadian immigration? E.g., the Mahar Arar Case)
- Indigenous People (e.g., Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Dudley George, Idle No More, Landback, Wet'suwet'en, Helen Betty Osborne)
- Miscarriages of justice– e.g., the case of Steven Truscott
- Gender and/or sexual-based violence against women
- Crimes against the Elderly – (e.g. Elizabeth Wettlaufer case)
- Homophobia, Transphobia, and hate crimes
- Treatment of offenders within prison (e.g., Ashley Smith Inquest)
- The challenges associated with criminal insanity as a defence (e.g., the case of Luka Magnotta)
- Cyber-bullying (e.g., Rehtaeh Parsons, Amanda Todd)
- “Occupy” (Wall Street) movement
- Environmental crimes/Green criminology

You will critically investigate the effectiveness of the law in relation to your chosen topic and case study. Does the case study suggest that the law promotes justice and fairness for all? Or alternatively, does the case study provide evidence of how the law, in practice, perpetuates social inequality? Are their recommendations that evolved out of your case study? If so, evaluate them. If not, what would you recommend and why?

### 3. Final Exam (30%)

Your exam is a final, comprehensive exam that will be uploaded to Owl. Exact format and due date to be determined – see final exam schedule.

#### *A Note on Plagiarism*

Plagiarism occurs when a person falsely presents someone else's ideas as his/her own work. This misrepresentation constitutes theft. It is unethical, dishonest, and ultimately destructive – it shows disrespect toward your peers, your instructor, your institution, and the intellectual community with which you are in dialogue. Most significantly, it whittles away at your own integrity and self-worth. Earning a degree is an achievement of the whole person – it reflects a development in spiritual, intellectual and ethical maturity. If you are tempted to breach the premise of trust on which our academic conversation and growth are based, you will suffer severe professional as well as personal consequences. Plagiarism will be addressed thoroughly in class; please also consult university resources. If any doubts remain, however, please see me *before* you hand in your work.

#### Academic Accommodation

For course components worth 10% or more of the total course grade, please see the Academic Policies and Regulations section at the end of this course outline or consult the Academic Calendar.

For course components worth less than 10% of the total course grade, documentation is not required. Whenever possible students should provide notification in advance of due dates or absence. If advance notification is not possible, the course instructor should be contacted within two business days.

#### Technical Requirements:



Stable Internet Connection



Laptop or Computer



Working Microphone



Working Webcam

Students can phone into zoom if they are experiencing technical difficulties. Students should also consult Western Technical Services (<https://wts.uwo.ca/>) with any technical problems they encounter – I can't help!



## 2022-23 Brescia University College Academic Policies And Regulations

### 1. Policy Regarding Academic Accommodation

The complete policy regarding Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students can be found at

[https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_135](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_135)

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services

([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_10](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10)).

Personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are not grounds for academic accommodation.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;

2. For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

#### **Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence**

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation must be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. An SMC can be downloaded from [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf);



2. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period;

3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;

4. Students must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;

5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

## **2. Academic Concerns**

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor

([https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment\\_services/academic\\_advising/book\\_an\\_appointment.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment_services/academic_advising/book_an_appointment.php)).

If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please contact your Academic Advisor or see the list of sessional dates in the Academic Calendar

(<https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>

). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.

## **3. Absences**

**Short Absences:** If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Please note that for asynchronous online courses, attendance or participation requirements may be different than for synchronous or in-person courses.

**Extended Absences:** If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work, and arrange academic accommodations if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory ([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_64](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_64)).

#### **4. Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at: [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20).

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

#### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

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.

### **Computer-marked Tests/exams:**

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

## **5. Procedures For Appealing Academic Evaluations**

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

[https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14).

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

## **6. Prerequisites**

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written Special Permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

## **7. Support**

### **Support Services**

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Development & Success at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>).

## **Mental Health and Wellness**

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through Health & Wellness at Brescia,

[https://brescia.uwo.ca/student\\_life/health\\_and\\_wellness/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/student_life/health_and_wellness/index.php)

and Health and Wellness at Western, [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html).

## **Sexual Violence**

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at [https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe\\_campus/sexual\\_violence/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe_campus/sexual_violence/index.php).

---

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy, and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.

---