

# Social Inequality, Social Justice, and Social Action Winter 2024

## SDS 331R / SWREN 331R

Published Dec 13, 2023

### Class Schedule

Course	Meet Days	Meet Time	Location	Instructor(s)
<b>SDS 331R / SWREN 331R 081</b> [LEC]			ONLN - Online	C. Fortier <i>craig.fortier@uwaterl...</i>

schedule data automatically refreshed daily

### Instructor & TA (Teaching Assistant) Information

Use the LEARN Course Discussions forum to communicate with your instructor and classmates. Discussion topics can be accessed in LEARN by clicking **Connect** and then **Discussions** on the course navigation bar in LEARN.

For questions of a personal nature, please email your instructor:

Instructor: Craig Fortier

[craig.fortier@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:craig.fortier@uwaterloo.ca) (mailto:craig.fortier@uwaterloo.ca).

Your instructor and TAs check email and the **Ask the Instructor** discussion topic in LEARN frequently and will make every effort to reply to your questions within 24–48 hours, Monday to Friday.

### Course Description

#### *Calendar Description for SDS 331R / SWREN 331R:*

This course examines the hidden causes of inequality and associated social injustices. It provides a snapshot of main issues associated with modern society and the evidence that ties them to persistent inequality and injustice. The course reviews not only the major types of inequality but also social and public policy responses to them. [Note: Formerly ISS 331R. SWREN 331R is available only to students who have been given conditional admission to the BSW program; such students must have already completed their first undergraduate degree.]

SDS 331R: Prereq: Level at least 2A

SWREN 331R:

The goal of this course is to delve into the radical imagination. We explore how communities (past and present) have resisted, challenged, and dismantled systems of power and oppression. By examining social inequality on both a structural and interpersonal level, we investigate how our daily interactions and relationships resist, reinforce, and respond to the structures of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, settler colonialism, white supremacy, and ableism in our social contexts. We also discuss how communities and individuals imagine and bring about new ways of being in the world.

Along the way, we will stumble upon a number of important questions: What are the various ways that activists, academics, and others come to understand and define social justice? Where do ideas for social change come from and

how does this change take place? How do "regular folks" resist, imagine, and bring about change while faced with exploitation, oppression, and violence? What is the role of government and public policy in maintaining and/or achieving social justice? How do people form relationships of solidarity across differences in power, culture, identity, and positionality?

## Pedagogy

---

This course is developed under the premise that **knowledge** is created and generated in multiple ways (i.e., through oral traditions, land-based traditions, lived experiences, spirituality and ceremony, scientific and academic research, etc.) and that we must resist the colonialist limits of Western ontologies that delegitimize other ways of knowing and being. As such, the readings, activities, videos, and assignments that I have curated in this course will draw on these various ways of knowing and learning. Each week will combine a mix of reading, viewing/listening, discussion, case studies, and short answer/self-reflection.

Despite being a virtual course, your **interactions** with other humans, non-human beings, and the earth are foundational to engaging with the course materials. This engagement could be rooted in the communities in which you have developed relationships (i.e., work, family, social organizations, activist groups, ethnocultural and/or religious communities, recreational/artistic/sporting communities, etc.). It might also develop through active engagement in a social movement/group that you have identified as being of particular interest to you in this course.

As an online course, I would like to create a virtual space that opens up **discussion** between you and your classmates. This will be a place to grapple with the course materials in a respectful and thoughtful manner—it is not the same as Twitter or the Facebook comments section—but rather a space for careful, humble, and serious discussion and debate. It should be a place where you are open to being challenged about your politics and positions, but also a space where your critiques should be tempered by your understanding that folks are entering this space with a desire to learn and change. This means that we should attempt to create a space of care, mutual respect, accountability and trust—this is very difficult to do in online spaces.

While this is a space of learning, it is also a space that seeks to resist the structures of oppression that permeate our day-to-day interactions. As such, I urge all students to be self-reflexive about behaviours or comments that have been identified as patriarchal, misogynist, classist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, etc. We are all in a process of learning and unlearning these logics that dominate our society, so there is no expectation here that anyone is self-actualized and perfect—all I ask is that you are mindful of how what you think, say and/or the way in which you interact with others is circumscribed by these forces. As Karl Marx once eloquently put it, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas."

## Learning Outcomes

---

### By the end of this course students should be able to:

have KNOWLEDGE of the historical origins of contemporary power structures and COMPREHEND how these structures of social inequality impact our day-to-day lives;

be able to critically ANALYZE the way in which public policy creates social inequality and also plays a role in supporting social justice;

have KNOWLEDGE of how social movements seek to create social change and APPLY these goals, strategies, and tactics of collective action to real-world scenarios;

have the ability to SYNTHESIZE a myriad of individual and personal problems to place them within a broader structural and intersectional social context in order to contribute to grassroots social movement; and

be able to EVALUATE goals and strategies for social change to determine their effectiveness, their weaknesses, the barriers that they face, and the opportunities that they present.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Please see the Course Schedule in LEARN for complete details.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Module</b>	<b>Activities and Assignments</b>
Week 1	Introduction: The Radical Imagination	Introduce Yourself
		Discussion 1
Week 2	Capitalism and Social Inequality	Discussion 2
Week 3	Capitalism, Social Justice, and Public Policy	Discussion 3
Week 4	Settler Colonialism and Social Inequality	Discussion 4
		Assignment 3: Oral History Proposal
Week 5	Settler Colonialism, Social Justice, and Public Policy	Discussion 5
Week 6	Race, White Supremacy, and Social Inequality	Assignment 1: Double Take 1
Week 7	Race, Social Justice, and Public Policy	Discussion 6
Week 8	Gender, Heteropatriarchy, and Social Inequality	Discussion 7
Week 9	Heteropatriarchy, Social Justice and Public Policy	
Week 10	Disability and Social Inequality	Assignment 2: Double Take 2
Week 11	Disability, Social Justice, and Public Policy	Discussion 8
Week 12	Conclusion: The Radical Imagination Revisited	Assignment 3: Oral History Interview and Social Movement Analysis
There is no final examination for this course.		

## Texts / Materials

<b>Title / Name</b>	<b>Notes / Comments</b>	<b>Required</b>
Fortier, C. (2017). <i>Unsettling the Commons: Social Movements Within, Against, and Beyond Settler Colonialism</i> . Winnipeg: ARP.		Yes

Title / Name	Notes / Comments	Required
Maynard, R. (2017). Policing Black lives: State violence in Canada from slavery to the present. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.		Yes
Walia, H. (2013). Undoing border imperialism. Oakland: AK Press.		Yes

See the **Readings** page in LEARN for additional assigned readings from the required textbooks, Course Reserves or provided as links within LEARN.

For textbook ordering information, please contact the [W Store | Course Materials + Supplies](https://wstore.uwaterloo.ca/) (<https://wstore.uwaterloo.ca/>).

[Course reserves for students](https://uwaterloo.ca/library/services/course-reserves-students) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/library/services/course-reserves-students>) are used in this course. Course Reserves can be accessed using the **Library Resources** widget on the **Course Home** page in LEARN.

## Student Assessment

Component	Value
Introduce Yourself	Ungraded
Individual Reflections	Ungraded
Assignment 1: Double Take 1	25%
Assignment 2: Double Take 2	25%
Assignment 3: Oral History Proposal	5%
Assignment 3: Oral History Interview	10%
Assignment 3: Social Movement Analysis	25%
Discussion Posting Participation	10%

## Assignment Screening

No assignment screening will be used in this course.

## Administrative Policy

### Late Policy

Please note that all assignments are expected to be submitted on time. If you encounter circumstances that you feel may cause you to be late in submitting any particular assignment you should contact me immediately, explain the circumstances, and we may negotiate an extension. To do so, you must be in contact with me **at least 48 hours prior to the deadline** to request an extension. ©University of Waterloo

Late assignments will be accepted up to a week beyond the deadline at a penalty of 2% per day. After the fifth day, late assignments will not be accepted for any reason except those outlined in the University of Waterloo calendar (e.g., medical or family emergencies, or some other such event) and will receive a grade of 0. If an extension is granted, students are expected to submit their assignment at the agreed upon time and date, with the appropriate documentation. Please review the Waterloo policy regarding accommodation for illness for unforeseen circumstances.

## Intellectual Property

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor, which can include:

- lecture handouts and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- lecture content, both spoken and written (and any audio or video recording thereof)
- questions from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams)
- work protected by copyright (i.e., any work authored by the instructor)

Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g., uploading lecture notes or assignments to an online repository) is considered theft of intellectual property and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline. Students who become aware of the availability of what may be their instructor’s intellectual property in online repositories are encouraged to alert the instructor.

## Department Policies

---

### Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the Waterloo [Academic Integrity](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>)\_webpage for more information.

Students should also be aware that copyright laws in Canada prohibit reproducing more than 10% of any work without permission from its author, publisher, or other copyright holder. You can view the [Fair Dealing Advisory](https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-guidelines/fair-dealing-advisory/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-guidelines/fair-dealing-advisory/>)\_webpage for more. Violation of Canada’s Copyright Act is a punishable academic offence under Policy 71 – Student Discipline.

### A Respectful Living and Learning Environment For All

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.
2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy..
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions..
4. If you experience or witness either harassment or discrimination, see Renison's [Harassment and discrimination](https://uwaterloo.ca/renison/current-students/harassment-and-discrimination/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/renison/current-students/harassment-and-discrimination/>)\_information for guidance.

### Short-Term Absences

Review the University of Waterloo's [Accommodations](http://ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/page/Acad-Regs-Accommodations) (<http://ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/page/Acad-Regs-Accommodations>)\_policy for more details.

Additionally, undergraduate students have the option to self-declare a short-term absence during the formal lecture period by following the [Undergraduate student short-term absences](https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/current-students/undergraduate-student-short-term-absences) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/current-students/undergraduate-student-short-term-absences>)\_policy outlined by the Registrar’s Office.

Please follow the instructions above and contact your instructor for applicable accommodations.

## Territorial Acknowledgement

---

With gratitude, we acknowledge that Renison University College is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Hodihošyó:ni, and Attawandaran (Neutral) Peoples, which is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River from mouth to source. Our active work toward reconciliation takes place in all corners of our campus through research, learning, teaching, community building and outreach. We are guided by the work of our Reconciliation and Re-storying Steering Committee and Anti-Racism and Decolonization Spokesouncil, as well as the [University of Waterloo's Office of Indigenous Relations](https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous>).

*Within the course content and activities, students will be engaging with the meaning and responsibilities that come out of territorial acknowledgements in the weeks covering settler colonialism.*

## University Policy

**Academic integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties>).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/>), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.