

Contemporary Social Structures

Code: 106179
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

| Degree | Type | Year |
|--|------|------|
| Contemporary History, Politics and Economics | FB | 1 |

Contact

Name: Sergi Vidal Torre

Email: sergi.vidal@uab.cat

Teachers

Claudia Brunori

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

- Most of the subjects are taught in English. A B2 level of English of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is required, although no specific test of English proficiency level is held to access the degree.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The objective of the course is to familiarize the students with the main contributions of sociology on the processes of structuring contemporary social inequality. The different theoretical approaches to the structuring axes of inequality (especially class, gender, and ethnicity) and their empirical application will be worked on. The theoretical approaches and the historical framework are basically limited to the formation of Western patriarchal capitalist societies.

Competences

- Contrast the main contemporary political theories.
- Explain and summarise knowledge acquired in English language at an advanced level.
- Manage and apply data to solve problems.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse the different ideological readings of inequality from a comparative perspective.
2. Collect, process and analyse information in a critical manner.
3. Compare the different theoretical focuses on social structure.
4. Define the implications of the main sociological debates on social structure.
5. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
6. Describing and critically commenting the new approaches of demo-liberal thought.
7. Relate definitions and explanations of inequality with general theoretical and methodological debates.
8. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
9. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
10. Write a review of a publication, documentary video or event (conference or seminar) in English adapted to the content of one or more subjects on this course.

Content

1. Functions and dysfunctions of inequality
2. The structure of inequality
3. The ruling class, elites and power
4. Poverty
5. Social Mobility: Trends and patterns
6. Education and reproduction
7. Labour markets and inequality
8. Social capital, networks and attainment
9. Race, ethnicity and migratory origin
10. Gender inequality
11. The consequences of inequality
12. The future of inequality

Activities and Methodology

| Title | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|--|-------|------|----------------------------|
| Type: Directed | | | |
| Training classes and seminars | 53 | 2.12 | 1, 3, 4, 8, 7 |
| Type: Supervised | | | |
| Tutorials | 4 | 0.16 | 1, 9, 2 |
| Type: Autonomous | | | |
| Reading texts, teamwork and report writing process | 87 | 3.48 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 9, 8, 2, 7 |

Lectures

Reading texts
Comments of texts
Empirical analysis of social inequalities

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

| Title | Weighting | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|------|-------------------------|
| Exam | 50% | 1.5 | 0.06 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 2, 7 |
| Individual written evidence | 25% | 3 | 0.12 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 2, 7 |
| Teamwork | 25% | 1.5 | 0.06 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 8, 2, 7 |

Both continuous evaluation and single evaluation consist of submitting 3 pieces of evidence, none of which represents more than 50% of the final grade.

The continuous evaluation will consist of individual assignments (25%), group assignments (25%), and exams (50%).

The single evaluation will consist of writing two reviews of the compulsory readings (10% each), an essay on a specific topic related to the course (30%), and a exam (50%).

At the beginning of the course, a detailed guide of the activities to be carried out and the corresponding deadlines will be provided. Students who opt for the single evaluation must submit all the required evidence on the day of the exam (in January).

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 1/3 of the assessment items.

Remedial: The remedial exam is a comprehensive test that does not replace any required assignments or exercises for continuous evaluation or single evaluation. The minimum grade to be eligible for the remedial exam is 3.5. In order to be eligible for the remedial exam, the student must have been previously evaluated in at least two-thirds of the evaluation activities. The Faculty will indicate through its calendar the dates of remedial exams.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

For this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted exclusively for support tasks, such as bibliographic or information searches, text correction, and other specific situations as indicated by the instructors for particular activities. Students must clearly identify which parts have been generated using this technology, specify the tools used, and include a critical reflection on how these tools have influenced both the process and the final outcome of the activity. Failure to transparently disclose the use of AI in this graded activity will be considered academic dishonesty and may result in partial or total penalties on the grade for the activity, or more serious sanctions in severe cases.

Bibliography

Grusky David B, Weisshaar Katherine R. Social stratification : class, race, and gender in sociological perspective . Fourth edition. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group; 2018.

Grusky David B, Szonja Szelényi. The Inequality Reader : Contemporary and Foundational Readings in Race, Class, and Gender. Boulder, CO:Westview Press, 2011.

León Berna, Javier Carbonell, Javier Soria. La desigualdad en España. Madrid: Lengua de Trapo; 2024.

Requena Miguel, Leire Salazar, Jonas Radl. Estratificación Social. Madrid: Mc Graw Hill; 2013.

Grusky David B. and Weisshaar Katherine R. offer us a sociological perspective on social stratification, including the dimensions of class, race, and gender. The compendium consists of a comprehensive collection of over a hundred classic and contemporary articles. During the course, mandatory readings will be assigned, which will be evaluated, and additional works and resources related to the chapters of this volume will also be recommended. Both the book and online versions are available in the UAB library, providing students with convenient access to this essential resource.

Software

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Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

| Name | Group | Language | Semester | Turn |
|----------------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------|
| (PAUL) Classroom practices | 50 | English | first semester | morning-mixed |
| (TE) Theory | 50 | English | first semester | afternoon |