

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

SOCI 4170B: Community Engaged Sociology

Winter 2023, Mondays, 11:35am to 2:25pm

- Instructor:** Deborah Conners
Email: deborah.conners@carleton.ca
Office hours: Tuesdays 10:45am to 11:45am (TBC) by appointment or chance. You may call me during my office hour or let me know if you want to talk with me and we will set up a time for a phone call or in-person meeting. My number will be posted on Brightspace.
- Teaching Assistants:** This course will be taught using a team-based teaching approach. The instructor and each of the T.A.s will lead one of three student teams. Our T.A.s are:
Josh Hawley josh.hawley@carleton.ca
Jaclyn Tompalsky jaclyntompalski@cmail.carleton.ca
- cuPortfolio support:** <https://carleton.ca/cuportfoliosupport/help/>
- Prerequisite(s):** Third-year or fourth year standing, or permission from the instructor of SOCI 4170.
- Method of delivery:** This course will be an in-person course: we will meet for 3 hours each week. You will also have both individual and group learning tasks to complete on your own time. These will be posted on Brightspace by the week.
- Attendance:** This is an interactive course with high levels of engagement required. Your presence in class is required for your success *and the success of your team*. Plan to be at every class. If this will not be possible for you to do given your other commitments, consider taking the course in another term.

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin Nation. For more information see: <https://carleton.ca/indigenous/resources/territory-acknowledgement/>

Course Description

Welcome to Community Engaged Sociology! As you will discover, this course is very different from most of the courses you have taken so far in your undergraduate degree. We will not confine ourselves to studying sociology, we will be doing it! This course will not be heavy in readings and lectures; rather it will provide you with opportunities to learn while engaging with the community in different ways. For example, we will have opportunities to be in spaces where we can see social processes unfolding. Rather than reading about social problems, we will meet people who have experienced or witnessed them directly.

This is a team-based course. The class will be divided into three 7 to 9-person teams that will each work with the instructor or a graduate student team leader. Each team will work in partnership with a community organization. You will be learning about the social problems that these groups are working to address as well as helping them by working on projects that directly advance their goals. Specific readings, activities and assignments will vary depending on the team, although each team will perform about the same amount of work.

We expect this course to be exciting and rewarding as well as demanding commitment, time, and teamwork. Much of the teamwork will be done in class time with your team leader and with the support of the instructor, which adds an element of accountability often not present in course-based group work. Individual assignments based on 'book learning' are positioned outside class time. If you have any suggestions or issues you want addressed as we go along, please let us know and we will do our best to address them. Past years' students have said that this course was a unique opportunity to apply what they had learned in their sociological training and to gain hands-on experience. We are certain that those who are prepared to put in the effort will have an extremely rewarding experience.

Success in this course relies on your PRESENCE DURING CLASS TIME and at other events to (i) have the experiences of engagement with the social issue you are studying that are provided, and (ii) to be part of the work of your team. Attendance and participation will be noted each week and will inform your final mark. If you are unable to attend a class or a meeting, it is important that you let your colleagues know, just as, if you could not get into work for your shift, you would let your supervisor know.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students who successfully complete the course activities will be able to:

1. Use theoretical and community-based experiential learning to develop (a) your sociological understanding of a specific social justice issue and, (b) the community-based approaches being taken to confront this issue.
2. Use your enhanced sociological understanding to describe the gaps that can exist between stereotypical understandings of a social issue and the lived realities of people experiencing those issues.
3. Engage productively with your student team while contributing to a positive team experience.
4. Design, plan and conduct a small community-based social action intervention in concert with others.
5. Communicate your learning in an engaging and persuasive way with a non-academic audience.
6. Use reflection to improve your teamwork and social advocacy skills.

Organizations and projects

Each student team will work with an organization to design and complete a social action project, such as a public event or campaign with a corresponding social media component. The three organizations for this term are:

Centretown Tenant Organization

Rent has skyrocketed in Ottawa over the last five years and so has displacement. Mass evictions have taken the form of demovictions, like in Herongate, and renovictions, like in Sandy Hill. Landlords have a financial incentive to displace tenants, and as a result tenants are pushed into more and more precarious housing situations. Tenants in neighbourhoods across the city are fighting back against this type of exploitation through organizing and direct engagement with their landlords. Centretown Tenant Organization is a new group of working-class people who are in need of student assistance and expertise to develop outreach and education strategies, identify key issues among neighbourhood tenants, and grow the organization.

Criminalization and Punishment Education Project (CPEP)

CPEP is a non-profit working group started by students and professors from Carleton University and the University of Ottawa that works with community members and people with lived experience of imprisonment. The group aims to fight, reduce, and ultimately end incarceration and the harms of jails and prisons. Students on this team will educate themselves and members of the public about these issues and the prison system.

Hassan Diab Support Committee

Thirteen years ago, France requested the extradition of Carleton University lecturer Dr. Hassan Diab, for a terrorist bombing that took place 40 years earlier. Canada's Extradition Act requires Canada to comply to extradition requests without reference to the actual evidence in the case (or not!). The politicization of Diab's case meant that he spent 3 years in a French jail although the French judiciary, upon review of the case, repeatedly said there was no evidence to warrant proceeding to trial. When Hassan was returned to Canada, our Prime Minister said that what happened to Hassan should never have happened and that we needed to make sure it never did again. But now, in response to public pressure from the families of victims of the bombing, France has announced that there will be a trial. Students on this team will be undertaking essential work to (a) keep Hassan Diab in Canada and free of the oppression he and his family have suffered, and (b) address deficiencies in Canada's Extradition Act that has led to this and other historical injustices.

Our Work Together

This course requires you to work closely with your teammates and with members of the larger community outside Carleton. You have studied oppression and marginalization in your earlier courses – here you will interact with people who have experienced these forces firsthand – including students in our course. The teaching team asks that you carefully consider your wording as you interact with each other and community representatives. If you need support to think through how to engage with others, what words to use, how to intervene in a situation, how to respond to someone else's questions or comments, how to set a boundary, or if you are hurt by someone else's comments or behaviours, we invite you to talk to your team or your team leader or the instructor. This course is about engaging in social justice work to enhance diversity and inclusion. We are all learning together. We can do so with compassion while being direct in our engagement with issues that may arise. It is our hope that we can use this time together to learn more about how to create and sustain inclusive and safer environments.

Required Readings

Each team has a specific set of readings which are posted in ARES in Brightspace. Readings are completed in the first few weeks to gain background into the issues and to inform project planning.

Course Activities and Evaluation

Two projects comprise the main deliverables for this course: a social action project to be completed in teams, and a set of individual writing assignments. The social action project will provide you with the opportunity to see and contribute to social justice work being done in the local or global community. The individual writing assignments provide a place for you to integrate, demonstrate and reflect upon the learning from the experiential work. At the end of term your team will present its work to the rest of the class, and you will complete a self- and team member assessment of participation.

The teamwork required in this course does mean that you must have availability to meet with your team. Much, but not all, of this teamwork can be done in the 3 hours of scheduled class time. While students are expected to participate in some activities of the organizations they are working with, in order to learn about their work, it is understood that students may have scheduling conflicts with specific events.

A note about deadlines: This is a fast-moving course and each piece builds upon the others. As well, your work contributes to your team moving forward. Please take the time at the beginning of the term to look at your

overall schedule and make space to do each assignment (for this course and your others) in the expected time frame. If you find an issue (e.g. you have assignments due in every course in the same week as we have project deliverables) talk to your team leader immediately for some help in problem solving. If you find yourself at risk of not making a deadline during the term, **negotiate this with your team and team leader** so that the work can get done to everyone's satisfaction. Life happens, and the more notice your team has, the better opportunity for them to help solve the problem of how the work can still proceed in a timely way. These conversations can even be an opportunity for an improvement in the approach being taken. Your team leader will note, with your input, the impact (negative or positive) your missed deadline had on the team's work and therefore what impact it should have on your mark. Without negotiation, missed deadlines will result in a 2% reduction in your mark per day.

Assignments (See full syllabus and assignment descriptions document for details)

The learning experiences in this course are based on experiential learning principles giving you community engaged learning experiences followed by the opportunity to integrate the transferrable knowledge gained. The assignments support you to build on your academic skills, to first research the social issue you will be addressing, and then iteratively (i) engage with the issue experientially with a team and (ii) individually in integrative exercises. We begin the term with readings and guest speakers, then develop a project plan, reflect at mid-term on the experience and the learning gained in creating the plan, carry out the plan in a community-based project, and finally reflect on the learning and experience at the end of the term.

Submissions by week (draft):

Schedule to be confirmed for each team in consultation with organization

Submitted to	Week	Assignment	Worth
Brightspace	Week 2	Literature discussion-week 2 (Individual)	5%
Brightspace	Week 3	Literature discussion-week 3 (Individual)	5%
Brightspace	Week 4*	Literature - issue analysis-week 4 (Individual)	5%
Brightspace	Week 5*	Plan for social action project (Team)	10%
Brightspace	Week 8	Mid-term submit of cuPortfolio (Individual)	10%
Team leader	Week 11	Social action project (Team)	40%
Brightspace	Week 13	Class presentation (Team)	5%
Brightspace	Week 13+	Final public project report (Team)	5%
Brightspace	Week 13+	Final submit of cuPortfolio (Individual)	10%
Brightspace	Week 13+	Participation assessment (Individual)	5%

** indicates a due date other than the class date; '+' = later in the week of; TBN = To be negotiated within team*
Without negotiation, missed deadlines will result in a 2% reduction in your mark per day.