



**Sociology 4446F/G (570)
Committing Sociology Fall/
Winter 2025-2026**

Instructor: J. Comeau
Email: jcomeau5@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the various meanings, practices, implications, and critiques of Public Sociology, while developing an understanding and appreciation of Sociology's application to the public-sphere and beyond the academic community.

Antirequisite(s): [Sociology 4485F/G](#) if taken in 2021-2022 or 2024-2025.

Prerequisite(s): Enrolment in fourth year of one of the Honours Specializations or Honours Double Majors in Sociology or Criminology.

Extra Information: 3 seminar hours.

Course Weight: 0.50
Breadth: Category A
Subject Code: SOCIOLOG

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this 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 prerequisites.

Professor Jinette Comeau
Email: jcomeau5@uwo.ca
Office Hours: by appointment

Soc4446G (570): COMMITTING SOCIOLOGY

Course Introduction

In this experiential learning course, students will be introduced to the various meanings, practices, implications, and critiques of Public Sociology, while developing an understanding and appreciation of Sociology's application to the public-sphere and beyond the academic community. Drawing upon the theories and methods learned in other courses, students will design and execute projects on a sociological topic of their choice and develop research questions that will answer real-world problems with the goal of generating social change. Please note that experiential learning immerses students in an experience requiring their active participation and attendance in all classes.

Learning Outcomes

- To explore the various meanings, practices, implications, and critiques of public sociology
- To develop an understanding and appreciation of applied sociology and its role in public policy and social change
- To integrate and critically evaluate theories and methods learned in other courses and apply them to develop research questions that will answer real-world problems
- To engage with community-based partners and various stakeholders to identify problems as well as an appropriate approach and strategy to solving them
- To learn how to effectively collaborate with a team or work individually to produce tangible outcomes for community-based partners and stakeholders
- To effectively communicate and disseminate research methods and findings to various audiences and in various ways (presentation, website, policy brief, workshop, etc.)

Brightspace

All course content will be available on Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>

Login using your UWO username and password. Check Brightspace regularly for information on the course schedule, materials such as lecture slides and readings, announcements, grades, and the full evaluation details. You will also be required to submit all assignments and evaluations to Brightspace.

Course Readings

The assigned readings can be accessed on Brightspace at no cost. Please see the detailed outline below for the course reading schedule.

Methods of Evaluation

1. Participation and Attendance (10%)

Active participation in the course requires that students contribute to class discussions, and demonstrate initiative, strong organizational skills, and professionalism. While students will engage in group-based discussions, they may choose at their own discretion to work individually or as part of a group to complete the assigned course work.

Policy on Attendance

If a student misses more than one class, they will be scheduled to meet with the professor to discuss their future in this course.

Policy on Groupwork

Students who choose to work as part of a group will take full responsibility for managing and coordinating all aspects of the groupwork.

2. Identifying a problem and developing an objective (10%)

This assignment will provide students with the opportunity to identify a topic or social problem that they would like to pursue and to develop an objective for the final application that will be produced as part of this course. Students who plan to conduct research with human participants will also be expected to submit a draft Research Ethics application to be reviewed by the professor prior to submission to the King's University College Research Ethics Committee.

3. Project proposal, plan, and timeline (20%)

After identifying a topic or social problem that they would like to pursue, students will write a detailed proposal with a plan and timeline for completing the work and meeting the objectives related to the final application that they will produce.

4. Progress report and reflection (10%)

Mid-way through the term, students will submit a progress report on the work they have completed to date and a reflection on their experiences in the course.

5. Symposium (15%)

In our last class, we will hold a symposium to share the work that was produced as part of this course. We will work collaboratively to determine the content and format of the symposium. Community based partners and King's faculty and students will be invited to attend. Students who miss the symposium will require formal supporting documentation from the Academic Advising Office.

6. Final Application (35%)

Students will have significant discretion in developing their final application based on the topic and objectives they identified early in the term. While the format and content of the application will vary across students, all students will be required to submit a written executive summary of the work completed.

Late submissions and missed course work

Students are expected to submit all course work on the due dates below. Course work will be accepted without penalty if it is submitted within 24 hours of the due date. Without an undocumented absence or formal supporting documentation from the Academic Advising Office, late submissions will be penalized by 10% per day late (including weekends).

Artificial Intelligence & Plagiarism

All work submitted as part of this course must be completed independently by the student without any aids. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), including but not limited to ChatGPT, for this course is NOT permitted under any circumstance. Please see the course policies below for additional details.

Course Schedule, Topics and Readings

Subject to minor changes that will be announced on Brightspace

Date	Topics	Readings
Week 1 (Jan 5)	Course Introduction and Engaging your Sociological Imagination	Mills (1959/2000) The Promise News articles: "Harper's vendetta against sociology"; "Job applicants with these skills will have the advantage"
Week 2 (Jan 12)	Committing Sociology: Critiques and Challenges of Public Sociology Grounding your Research in the Existing Literature and Public Sphere	Buroway (2005); Helmes-Hayes & McLaughlin (2009); Lozano (2018)
Week 3 (Jan 19)	Workshop: Identifying the Problem and Developing Objectives. Applying for Research Ethics Approval	Mills (1959/2000) Appendix: On Intellectual Craftmanship Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Week 4 (Jan 26)	Workshop: Target Audience, Community Engagement, and Making Connections. Problem Assignment DUE Research Ethics DUE (if applicable)	Bannister et al. (2011)—eBook available online through Western Libraries
Week 5 (Feb 2)	Workshop: Developing a Proposal, Plan, and Timeline Problem and Objective Refinement.	Procter: The Academic Proposal USC Libraries: Organizing Your Proposal
Week 6 (Feb 9)	Workshop: Knowledge Translation and Deliverables	Bannister et al. (2011) eBook available online through Western Libraries
Feb 16	Reading Week	

Week 7 (March 2)	Workshop: Innovative Knowledge Translation Strategies and Best Practices Proposal/Plan DUE	
Week 8 (March 9)	Workshop: Drafting Final Application Plan (troubleshooting, editing, revisions, etc.)	
Week 9 (March 16)	Workshop: Drafting Symposium Plan	
Week 10 (March 23)	Workshop: Updates, Final Editing and Revisions. Other Topics TBD as the course progresses. Progress/Reflection DUE	
Week 11 (March 30)	Workshop: Finalizing Symposium and Practice	
Week 12 (April 6)	Last class: Symposium Final Application Due	

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

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; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

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.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.