**Unit Three  
Social Inequality**

**Topic 1: Social Class**

**Readings:**

Ch. 6 – Social Stratification in *Sociology* by Barkan (CO1, CO2, CO4, MO6, MO7, MO8,  
 MO10)  
 **Websites:**

Visit the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality website, and spend some time exploring it: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/scspi> (CO4, MO7, MO8, MO10)

Visit the tutorial on evaluating internet sources at: <http://www.wou.edu/provost/library/clip/tutorials/eval_internet.htm> (CO5, MO9)

**Discussion:**

Respond to at least two of the following discussion topics (Topic 1 is required), and reply to at least two other students, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module.

**Topic 1**: Conduct a search of the Internet to find information related to the topic of social class inequality. For example, you could look for information about distribution of income, distribution of wealth, poverty in the U.S. or other countries, the minimum wage, the salaries of CEOs, or any other topics related to social class inequality discussed in the text and/or lecture. When writing your posting to the class, include the address of the site, what you learned from reading the information, how the information might relate to the sociological view of inequality, and whether you believe that the information at the site is valid. Demonstrate an understanding of the information about evaluating internet sources at the posted tutorial. (CO2, CO4, CO5,MO6, MO7, MO8, MO9)

**Topic 2**: Visit the assigned website (Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality). Locate material that you find that relates to what we are studying this week. Discuss that material, and describe what you learned. (CO2, CO4, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Topic 3:** In spite of the overwhelming evidence of the impact of inequality on people’s life chances (such as health, education, standard of living, etc.), most Americans hold to the belief that people’s success in life is due primarily to their own individual qualities and motivations. Why is this individualistic view so widely accepted? What could be the benefit of thinking about this issue more sociologically? Refer to course material. (CO2, CO4, MO6, MO8, MO10)

**Topic 2: Racial Inequality**

**Reading:**

Ch. 7 – Race and Ethnicity in *Sociology* by Barkan (CO1, CO2, CO4, MO6, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Video:**

Watch *Frontline:* *A Class Divided* at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/>  
 (CO1, CO4, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Discussion:**

Respond to the following discussion topics, and reply to at least two other students, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module.

**Topic 1:** As you have gone through your life and dealt with people who could have power over you (such as teachers, principals, school counselors, employers, bank managers, doctors, attorneys, etc.), have these people tended to belong to your own racial group, or a different racial group? How could this have had an impact on your perceptions and experiences? Now, take the other view. If these powerful people tended to be from your group, discuss how your perceptions and experiences might have been impacted if they weren’t. If these powerful people tended not to be from your group, discuss how your perceptions and experiences might have been impacted if they were. Refer to the concept of “white privilege” described in the textbook. I’m hoping that you will dig deep, and think seriously about the impact of race and power on people’s lives and perceptions. (CO4, MO10)

**Topic 2**: What did you observe about the impact of discrimination from watching the video *A Class Divided*? Incorporate course material. (CO1, CO4, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Topic 3: Gender Inequality**

**Reading:**

Ch. 8 -- Gender and Gender Inequality in *Sociology* by Barkan (CO1, CO2, CO4, MO6, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Discussion:**

Respond to at least two of the following discussion topics, and reply to at least two other students, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module.

**Topic 1:** Conduct a search of the Internet to find information about gender inequality in other nations. For example, you could look for information about access to education and employment, differential application of laws, power in the home, workplace, and political institutions, or any other topics related to gender inequality discussed in the text and/or lecture. When writing your posting to the class, include the address of the site, what you learned from reading the information, how what you learned compares to the U.S., and whether you believe that the information at the site is valid. Demonstrate an understanding of the information about evaluating internet sources at the posted tutorial. (CO4, CO5, MO7, MO8, MO9)

**Topic 2:** What do you think is the most important advantage, privilege, or benefit that men enjoy in the United States? What do you think is the most significant cost or disadvantage that men experience? Can this be changed? Base your response on course material, and your own experiences that relate to the sociological perspective.  (CO1, CO4, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Topic 3:** What are your own observations in terms of sexism in language, media, housework, child care, and the workplace? How important are these issues? Prepare examples, and demonstrate a knowledge of the course material. (CO4, MO7, MO10)

**Application Essay assignment:**

Submit an essay on the following topic, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module. The essay should include an introduction, a well-developed body paragraph for each part (one paragraph for each area of inequality), and a conclusion. (CO1, CO2, CO4, MO6, MO7, MO8, MO10)

**Topic:** We have studied inequalities of social class, race, and gender. Focusing on U.S. society, and drawing from the textbook and other course material, address the following for each area of inequality:

1. What did you learn in this course about the area (social class, race, gender) of inequality?
2. How has your understanding of the area (social class, race, gender) of inequality been changed and/or enhanced by what you learned?
3. Based on the sociological perspective, briefly propose a policy or program that might be useful in reducing inequality in the area (social class, race, gender). Feel free to draw upon solutions suggested in the textbook.

**Exam:**

Take exam over Unit 3 course material, following the assessment guidelines posted in the Course Orientation module. (CO1, CO2, CO4, MO6, MO7, MO8, MO10)