

**BROCK UNIVERSITY - DEPARTMENT OF CHILD AND YOUTH STUDIES  
CHYS 3P94: CHILDHOOD, YOUTH & EQUITY ISSUES**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Associate Professor Richard C. Mitchell, Ph.D.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The course is a combination of lectures, videos, and seminar group discussions where we explore how traditional developmental models for improving children's and young people's "equity" issues contrast with sociological approaches. In addition, rights-based perspectives of children's and young people's citizenship and democratic participation in equity issues are offered. The main theme of the course is to consider how interconnected issues of fairness and equity play out in unequal ways for many children and young people in comparison with other aged sectors in Canadian society. The course surveys substantive policy and professional issues within such areas as the racialization of child poverty, Aboriginal and First Nations discourses, children and young people who experience cognitive and mobility challenges, and professional practice settings where children and young people may be confronted by social and/or political exclusion. In addition, inequities within education, youth employment and experiences of family, peer group and out-of-home-care will be debated. We will consider the nature of this inequality through dimensions of age and stage, human rights, poverty, ethnicity, gender, ability and sexual identity as well as through a number of theoretical, historical and socio-political contexts.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To understand and analyze the variety of ways in which children and young people experience social exclusion using a sociological framework.
2. To think critically about 'childhood', 'youth' and adolescence with regard age and stage, poverty, gender, ethnicity, ability and sexuality, and how each of these may intersect to "produce" inequality and/or discrimination.
3. To then critically evaluate our understanding of designations such as 'childhood', 'youth' and 'adolescence' as social constructions that are not solely biologically determined, and begin to question our taken-for-granted assumptions about such universalized, essentialized categories.
4. To understand various theoretical approaches for supporting greater equity, and their implications for social change and improved experiences for diverse groups of children and young people.

**COURSE EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

<b>1) Class Participation</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>2) Seminar Discussion Groups</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>3) 1<sup>st</sup> Readings Quiz</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>4) 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings Quiz</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>5) Draft Outline of Term Paper</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>6) Term Paper</b>	<b>30 %</b>