SOCIAL INEQUALITY -- CRD 172
Department of Human Ecology - Community and Regional Development
Spring 2019
MW 12:10-2:00pm
Wellman 230

“The division of society into distinct social classes, is one of the most striking manifestations of the modern world... it has often been the source of other kinds of inequality and.... the economic dominance of a particular class has very often been the basis for its particular rule.”

-T. Bottomore, 1966

Instructor: M. Anne Visser, Ph.D.
Office: 2319 Hart Hall
Office Telephone: 530-752-9935
Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30AM-11:00AM
*Sign up at https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/urtwq to schedule a meeting during office hours. Office hours are held by sign up only.

Email: mavisser@ucdavis.edu

TA: Tyler Jackson  Email: Office Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces and examines issues of social inequality in international, domestic, and comparative contexts. My goal is to encourage you to think critically about the forces and processes which lead to social inequality and exclusion, as well as to highlight some of the critical forces that shape structures of opportunity in modern society. Students will gain an understanding of the major theoretical frameworks for studying social inequality, as well as the trends and debates surrounding specific issues of inequality in the United States and internationally. The course emphasizes approaches for understanding the emergence and persistence of social inequality and inequity, the role of the state in mitigating inequality and inequity, as well as how international and domestic literatures differ, complement and contribute to each other. Particular emphasis will be placed on patterns of inequality and inequity that are at the center of current debates among policymakers in the United States.

COURSE FORMAT

The class aims to provide an introduction to the theories, trends, and debates on the topic of inequality in national (United States), international, and comparative contexts. The primary objective is to review the origins and modern treatments of social inequality within the social and policy sciences. A second objective is to provide a venue for students to critically engage on issues related to the dimensions of social inequality and how perspectives across studies differ, complement, and contribute to explanations of inequality.

The first part of the course will review theories of inequality and stratification. The second part of the course will emphasize how structural inequality is produced and reinforced in society. Readings and discussions will focus on concepts, data, methods, and factors that analyze occupational and class structures; intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic status; the effects of family, school, and labor
markets on socioeconomic achievement, careers and inequality; earnings, income and wealth distribution; as well as subjective aspects of stratification.

I would like you to keep in mind the entire quarter that articles read in this class are written by individuals with their own perspective and agendas. My objective is that by the end of this course you will be able to think more critically and get better insight into why socio-economic outcomes and opportunities are the way they are and to understand some of the explanations for the persistence of inequality.

The university classroom is a place in which the exchange of ideas is encouraged. Over the course of the semester we will be discussing sensitive issues related to topics of social inequality, and many individuals have strong beliefs and opinions about these topics. Students are expected to engage with these topics within the context of the theoretical frameworks and perspectives learned throughout the course.

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

All students should be familiar with the Student Code of Academic Conduct that is located here: [http://xia.ucdavis.edu/cac.html](http://xia.ucdavis.edu/cac.html). Please review this carefully and ask the instructor, if you have any questions. The instructor is obliged to refer you to Student Judicial Affairs in all cases of violation or suspected violation. In addition to plagiarism and cheating on examinations, it is also a violation of the Student Code of Academic Conduct to use your own written materials prepared for other classes unless you take the following points into consideration:

It is permissible to use materials and texts from other class projects, **within CRD or in other departments**, under these conditions:

1) You inform the instructor beforehand.
2) You clearly identify the portions where you quote yourself (or collaborative work) within the written assignment.
3) You provide a copy of the previous work you have submitted in the other class to the instructor.
4) To ensure that you receive a good grade the material must fit seamlessly into the assignment for **THIS** class.
5) If you have any doubts about the extent to which you can use previously written materials, talk to the instructor prior to making any submission.

**READINGS**

Readings are important components to the course and are required. They are the necessary background for discussion. Participation in lectures is important and students are expected to be prepared to discuss readings in class. I will call on you randomly by name. Additional or alternate readings may be assigned throughout the course as directed by the instructor. Students are expected to complete all readings to effectively participate in the discussion. Some of the readings assigned in this course include applications of structural equation models, categorical data analysis, and econometric methods. Some class time will be devoted to understanding methodological issues. However, students are expected and encouraged to do independent work to assist in grasping these issues and consult with the TA and instructor if they have difficulty in understanding the work.

There is one required textbook available for sale at the Campus Book Store and on Reserve at Shields Library. In PDFs of all other course readings are on the class Smartsite web pages under “Resources.”

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Course grades are based upon the following:

- **Quizzes** 30%
- **Term Paper** 40%
- **Midterm Examination** 25%
- **Participation** 5%

**Quizzes:** There will be four quizzes, each worth 10% of the class grade. The lowest score will be dropped for the course (so total is 30%). **There will be no make-ups.** Quizzes will cover the last few days of readings, including those for the day of the quiz and the last couple of lectures. They are short and are designed to encourage you to do the readings.

Missed quizzes cannot be made-up. **There will be no exceptions.** However, the lowest scoring quiz will be dropped. The quiz can be given at any time during the quarter and at any point during class.

**Take Home Midterm Examination:** The midterm exam will be a take home essay exam. You are encouraged to use the Student Academic Success Center to improve your writing. Exams turned in beyond the scheduled deadline will automatically receive a full grade deduction for everyday the exam is late. After 5 days, students will be unable to submit the assignment.

**Term Paper:** The task will be to inquire more deeply into an aspect of social inequality, consider and evaluate a current policy, referendums, law, legislative act, or court decision which has been made recently to address this issue, and to suggest your own proposal for change. The policy act chosen by the student must be currently proposed or recently implemented. Students will be required to provide a brief history of the law or policy, its current status, the affected population and why such rulemaking was seen as necessary. You will justify your position using the concepts and theories learned in the class and will be expected to demonstrate how your research relates to your understanding of the course concepts, readings and theories. Data collection for the paper should be based on: scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines, congressional testimonies, archival material, planning department documents, government reports, and analyses, census data, and other governmental data sources. Blog postings and online forums should not be used.

Your paper should contain the following elements:

- **Problem Statement** (state, describe, and demonstrate the importance of your problem).
  - Identify the problem that concerns you and how it relates to social inequality.
  - Characterize the nature, dimensions, and impacts of this problem.
- **Causal analysis** (identify the major causes of this problem).
- **Policy Approach** (provide a brief history of the law or policy, its current status, the affected population and why such rulemaking was seen as necessary).
- **Proposal for Change** (propose an alternative way to address this problem).
  - Describe and justify your solution and illustrate how it addresses the causes of the problem. If possible, mobilize evidence that such a solution might work, e.g. instances in which such an approach has been used.
Evaluate the limitations of your solution: What aspects of the problem does it leave unaddressed, unchanged? What else do you think might be necessary to do to alleviate this problem?

The paper must be clear, concise and succinct. You should include data in tables, graphs, and or figures if you have large amounts of quantitative data you would like to include. Tables, figures, and graphs must have a descriptive title over it and be referred to by figure number in the text of the research paper. Grades for the term papers will be based on organization, thoroughness of argument, and connection/integration of various themes, concepts, and readings from the course to explain your research problem. Papers should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with issues, causes, and consequences of social inequality.

The paper shall be 8-10 pages in length not counting references, footnotes, and tables. Do not exceed this length. The term paper is meant to give you a deeper understanding of social inequality and the capacity of the state to address issues of social inequality. All students will be required to submit a prospectus of their topic by April 22, 2019. I will discuss the feasibility of your choices with you via email or during office hours. The earlier you begin to work on the paper, the more insightful and interesting the paper will be. I will only allow a maximum of 6 papers to be written on the same policy initiative. IT IS VITAL THAT YOU USE THE READINGS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. IF A STUDENT FAILS TO USE THE READINGS, THE HIGHEST GRADE THAT WILL BE OFFERED TO THE STUDENT WILL BE A “C” FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.

All papers must use citations in the text (ex. Smith, 2012) and then have the full citation in a bibliography at the end.

Term papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, and printed only on one side. Students must submit a paper copy to my mailbox and an electronic copy uploaded to SmartSite by 5:00 PM on the last day of class (June 5th). I will also require that you submit an electronic copy of the paper through the SmartSite website. All papers submitted through SmartSite must be in Microsoft word and in PDF form. Please use Times New Roman size 12 font. Title your attachments in the following way: lastnameCRDXXXSpring2019. I must receive a hard copy and an electronic copy. Late papers will automatically receive a full grade deduction for each day that it is late. No final term papers will be accepted after June 10th.

Students will be required to turn in a prospectus during the fourth week of the course (April 22nd). The prospectus must be turned in electronically through Canvas prior to the start of class and as a hard copy at the beginning of class. The prospectus should identify your topic in no more than 250 words, include an initial outline, and a list of at least 5 sources. Both a hard copy and electronic copy uploaded to Canvas website will be required. Failing to turn in the prospectus will result in a -3 point penalty on the final term paper. Any prospectus turned in after April 22nd will also be subject to a late penalty on the final term paper with an additional -0.5 penalty on the final term paper for each day late. No prospectuses will be accepted after April 30th.

Prospectuses are meant to offer students the opportunity to gain feedback from the professor and TA on the feasibility of your topic choice and provide initial guidance on the term paper very early on. The earlier you begin to work on the paper, the more insightful and interesting the paper will be. Model papers are posted on the course Canvas website.
AN IMPORTANT WORD ABOUT GRADING: Grades are earned, not given. Simply completing the course requirements does not entitle a student to a grade of A or B. “A” grades are earned for exceptional work. Requests for reconsideration of grades will be accepted only in writing with a clear statement of what the student believes has been mis-graded within one week of receiving the graded material. Please submit your original full assignment along with your request for grade reconsideration. Important: In reviewing the requested assignment for grade reconsideration, grades may be revised up or down depending upon the reassessment of the graded material.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

All communication related to the course will be delivered through the official university email system. Each student is responsible for the information sent and received from the instructor via the university email account and is expected to check their email account on a regular and consistent basis. Students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework. I will not respond to emails sent from personal accounts.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

4/1: Introduction and Review of Syllabus

4/3: No Class

4/8: Causes and Consequences of Inequality

Landslapes Chapter 1: New Global and American Landscapes of Inequality.


4/10: Causes and Consequences of Inequality and Principles of Stratification


4/15: Class, Race, and Gender


4/17: Class, Race, and Gender


4/22: Class, Race, and Gender - PROPOSED TERM PAPER TOPICS DUE

Crittenden, A. (2002). The price of motherhood: Why the most important job in the world is still the least valued. Holt Paperbacks. Introduction: pp. 1-12


4/24: No Class: Work on your Term Paper
4/29: The Role of the State: MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED


5/1: NO Class Work on your Midterm

5/6: Labor Markets and Work - MIDTERM DUE


5/8: Education


5/13: Wealth


5/15: No Class Work on Term Papers
5/20: Poverty & Family Inequality


5/22: Criminal Justice System

Landscapes Chapter 3: State of Panic, pp. 39-64.


5/27: No Class - Memorial Day Holiday

5/29: Residential Segregation


6/3: Global Dimensions

Landscapes Chapters 10 & 11: The Neoliberalization of Minds, Space, and Bodies: Rising Global inequality and the Shifting American Public Sphere & the Neoliberalization of Compassion: Darfur and the Mediation of American Faith, Fear, and Terror.


6/5: TERM PAPERS DUE BY 5PM