

Sociology 124
THE SOCIOLOGY OF POVERTY
Fall 2016
Professor Sánchez-Jankowski
Office Hours: Tuesday 9:45-11:45 in 470 Barrows Hall

This course will explore the sociology of poverty. In that regard, it will examine a number of theories on the causes of poverty, and then turn to the consequences of poverty for the people who live in it. Although the course will focus a good deal of attention on poverty in the US, there will be readings and lectures that deal with it in other societies as well. For the US we will look at the history of poverty in the US, the everyday lives of the poor, the social problems experienced as a result of poverty, and finally the role of social policy in the cycle of poverty. In addition, the course will address the role that poverty has played in the everyday lives of the divergent ethnic groups that have had it as part of their cultural experience in America. In this regard, the course will examine the interactive impact that poverty has had on the various cultures of the ethnic groups that have had a history of confronting persistent poverty and compare their experience with those groups that have had a history of experiencing poverty temporally. Finally, while there has been in recent times an urban bias to the study of poverty we will include poverty in rural areas as well.

REQUIREMENTS: There will be three essay exams given and they will be “closed book” and taken in class. Two of these exams will be given during the regular ninety-minute period allotted for the class, and the third will be the final exam where students will be given three hours. If for reasons of illness or a death to a member of the immediate family the student is not able to take the exam, then a make-up exam will be offered. For an illness, a doctor’s note telling me that it was impossible for the student to perform their tasks on the exam is required. For a death in the immediate family, a note from a family member with a phone number to call for verification is required. If students do not have either of these verifications, they will not be excused and will receive an “F.”

EXAM DATES: October 2nd for Exam # 1, November 20th for Exam # 2, and Final Exam December 14th 3-6 P.M.

GRADING: The instructor has developed all the exams for the course. In this regard, the instructor has written the questions and the answers to these questions for the reader to follow. In this way, the students will know that there was an answer for each of these questions and this answer was consistently applied to each student on each question. Every question is of equal weight and so is every exam. Thus, the final exam is one third of the student’s final grade. For each exam the student will be given a point sum and a letter grade. A+= 100-96; A= 95-92; A-= 91-90; B+= 89-87; B= 86-83; B-= 82-80; C+= 79-77; C= 76-73; C-= 72-70; D+= 69-67; D= 66-63; D-= 62-60; F= 59-0. The formula for your final grade is determined by adding up the scores on your three exams, dividing by three to determine your mean score, placing that score on the scale provided above,

and then assigning the appropriate letter grade. Finally, for those students who are taking the course on a pass/no pass basis, you must receive a C- or better on each of the exams to receive a pass grade. If any one of your exams falls below the C- level you will be given a “no pass” grade. This is because the Final Exam includes new material from the final third of the course (as well as material from the first two thirds) and in order for me to “officially” say that you passed all the material in the course you will need to pass each exam, including the final, where there is new material.

Week 1

August 30/ September 1: Nature of Poverty: Extent, Concepts and Definitions

Readings: Ananya Roy and Genevieve Negrón-Gonzalez, *Encountering Poverty*

Week 2

September 6/8: Nature of Poverty: Theories

Reading: Roy and Negrón-Gonzalez, *Encountering Poverty* Continued

Week 3

September 13/15: Unemployment and Poverty

Readings: Sandra Smith, *Lone Pursuit*

Week 4

September 20/22: Lecture on Human, Social and Cultural Capital

Reading: Sandra Smith, *Lone Pursuit* Continued

Week 5

September 27/29: Lecture on Work and Poverty

Readings: Michael Lichter and Roger Waldinger, *How the Other Half Works*

Week 6

October 4/6: Lecture on Immigration, Migration and Poverty

Readings: Lichter and Waldinger, *How the Other Half Works*, Continued

Week 7

October 11/13:

October 11: Exam # 1

October 13: Lecture on Place, Institutions and Culture

Reading: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*

Week 7

October 18/20: Lecture on Structure and Social Change

Reading: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued

Week 8

October 25/27: Lecture on Crime and Poverty

Reading: Gregory Cid Martinez, *The Neighborhood Has Its Own Rules*

Week 9

November 1/3: Lecture on Health and Poverty

Reading: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*

Week 10

November 8/10: Lecture on Poverty and Health

Reading: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies and Power*, Continued

Week 11

November 15/17:

November 15 Exam # 2

November 17: Lecture on Structure, Education and Poverty

Reading: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike*

Week 12

November 22/24: Lecture on Education, Social Problems and Social Mobility

Reading: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike*, Continued

Week 12

November 29/December 2: Lecture on Poverty, the Life Course and Social Policy

Readings: Corey Abramson, *The End Game*

December 14, 3-6: FINAL EXAM (Covers All the Lectures and Readings in the Course.)