SOCILOGY 148: SOCIAL POLICY
Class: Tu-Th, 11:00am-12:30pm, 159 Mulford Hall

PROFESSOR CYBELLE FOX
Office: 492 Barrows Hall
Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:00-3:00pm
Signup sheet: http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/wwndo
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OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION
During the last four decades economic inequality in America has been rapidly increasing. Yet where most rich democracies use redistributive social policy to mitigate inequality, the United States has done less than any other rich democracy in this regard. In this class, we will examine American policy responses to poverty and inequality and evaluate different theories about why the response has been so weak. We will pay particular attention to the role of public opinion, interest groups, race and class relations, social movements, and the state in explaining the scope, form, and function of American social welfare provision.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Your final course grade will be based on the following:
Class Participation: 20%
Midterm: 35%
Final Exam: 45%

Class Participation: Twenty percent of your grade will be based on your class participation. On-time attendance at all lectures is mandatory. Participation includes attendance, thoughtfully contributing to class discussions, asking pertinent questions, as well as your average (mean) grade on 3 out of 4 pop quizzes.

Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will be worth 35 percent of your final grade. The exam will take place in class on Thursday, February 28, 2013.

Final Exam: The final exam will be worth 45 percent of your final grade. The exam will take place on Thursday, May 16, from 8:00-11:00am.

COURSE READINGS:
The readings for the first week are available on-line (follow the hyperlink) and on Bspace. A course reader will be available at Copy Central, 2576 Bancroft Way. A copy of the course reader will also be available at Moffit Library on course reserves.
COURSE OUTLINE

PART I:
Is there a Problem?

Week 1, January 22-26, 2013
Poverty

John Cassidy, “Relatively Deprived,” The New Yorker, April 3, 2006

Week 2, January 28 – February 1, 2013
Inequality


PART II:
The American Social Policy Response

Week 3, February 4-8, 2013
American Social Welfare Policy in Historical and Comparative Perspective


Week 4, February 11-15, 2013
Unequal Treatment

Week 5, February 18-22, 2013
Disciplining the Poor

Lawrence Mead, “Telling the Poor What to Do,” Public Interest (Summer 1998)132:97-112

Week 6, February 25- March 1, 2013
The Hidden Welfare State


MIDTERM,
Thursday, February 28, 2013

PART III:
Explaining the American Policy Response to Poverty and Inequality

Week 7, March 4-8, 2013
Class Warfare

Margaret Talbot, “Is it Dangerous to Talk about the Middle Class?” The New Yorker, July 26, 2012

Week 8, March 11-15, 2013
Public Opinion and Ideology

Week 9, March 18-22, 2013
Race and Racism


Week 10, March 25-29, 2013

Spring Break, No Class

Week 11, April 1-5, 2013
Interest Groups

Jill Quadagno, 2005, One Nation Uninsured: Why the U.S. Has No National Health Insurance, Oxford University Press, pp.17-47

Week 12, April 8-12, 2013
The War of Ideas


Week 13, April 15-19, 2013
Social Movements

Ellen Reese, 2011, They Say Cut Back, We Say Fight Back! Welfare Activism in an Era of Retrenchment, Russell Sage Foundation, pp.1-21, 47-71
Week 14, April 22-26, 2013
States, Parties, & Institutions


Week 15, April 29-May 3, 2013
Policy Legacies
