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 December 12th for the Final Exam.

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 28: Outline of the Course
   Readings: Daryl Collins, et. al., *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World’s Poor Live on $2 a Day*

Week 2
September 1: Lecture on Economic Nature of the Problem
   Readings: Collins, et. al., *Portfolios of the Poor*, Continued
September 4: Lecture on Economic Nature of the Problem, Continued
   Readings: Collins, et. al., *Portfolios of the Poor*, Continued

Week 3
September 9: Lecture on Human Capital and Poverty
   Readings: Collins, et. al., *Portfolios of the Poor*, Continued
September 11: Lecture on Sociology of Poverty
   Readings: Sanchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement: Social Change and Resilience in Poor Neighborhoods*

Week 4
September 16: Lecture on Social Capital and Poverty
   Readings: Sanchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued
September 18: Geography and Poverty
   Reading: Sanchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued

Week 5
September 23: Lecture on Poverty and Social Structure
   Readings: Sanchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued
September 25: EXAM # 1 (Covers Material From POP, CIP, and the lectures)

Week 6
September 30: Lecture on Environment, Health and Poverty
   Readings: Javier Auyero and Debra Alejandro Swinston, *Flammable: Environmental Suffering in an Argentinian Shanty Town*
October 2: Lecture on Health and Poverty, Continued
   Readings: Auyero and Swinston, *Flammable*, Continued
Week 7

October 7: Lecture on Disasters, Poverty, and Health
  Readings: Auyero and Swinstead, Flammable, Continued
October 9: Lecture on Social Isolation, Poverty and Health
  Readings: Auyero and Swinstead, Flammable, Continued

Week 8

October 14: Lecture on Income and Disease
  Readings: Paul Farmer, Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues
October 16: Lecture on Housing and Disease
  Readings: Paul Farmer, Infections and Inequalities, Continued

Week 9

October 21: Lecture on Culture and Disease
  Readings: Paul Farmer, Infections and Inequalities, Continued
October 23: Lecture on Governments and Disease
  Readings: Paul Farmer, Infections and Inequalities, Continued

Week 10

October 28: EXAM #2 (It will cover material From Flammable, Infections and Inequalities, Lectures and the books/lectures from Start of the Course)
  Readings: None
October 30: Lecture on Poverty and Crime
  Readings: Michael Patrick MacDonald, All Souls: A Family Story From Southie

Week 11

November 4: Lecture on Community and Crime
  Readings: Michael Patrick MacDonald, All Souls, Continued

November 6: Lecture on Poverty and Incarceration
  Readings: Michael Patrick MacDonald, All Souls, Continued

Week 12

November 11: Lecture on Crime and Economic Development
  Readings: Michael Patrick MacDonald, All Souls, Continued

November 13: Lecture on Economic Considerations of Human Wellbeing
  Readings: TBA
Week 12
November 18: Lecture on America’s Policies Toward Poverty
   Readings: TBA
November 20: Lecture on Personal Freedom and Poverty
   Readings: Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Continued

Week 13
November 25: Lecture on Global Policies and Poverty
   Readings: Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Continued
November 27: Thanksgiving Holiday
   Readings: Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Continued

Week 14
December 2: Lecture on What Is To Be Done
   Readings: Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Continued
November 4: Review
   Readings: None

December 17: FINAL EXAM from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm (Covers All the Lectures and Readings in the Course.)