

**SOCIOLOGY 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  
Daniel R. Meyer and Geoffrey L. Wallace, 2009, "Poverty Levels and Trends in Comparative Perspective," *Focus* 26(2):7-13  
H. Luke Shaefer and Kathryn Edin, "Extreme Poverty in the United States, 1996 to 2011," *National Poverty Center, Policy Brief#28*, February 2012

#### Week 2, January 28 – February 1, 2013 Inequality

- Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, 2010, *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer—And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class*, Simon and Schuster, pp.1-4, 11-40

### PART II: The American Social Policy Response

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

- Jane Waldfogel, 2009, "The Role of Family Policies in Antipoverty Policy," *Focus* 26(2):50-55  
Jacob Hacker, 2009, "Northern Exposure: Learning from Canada's Response to Winner-Take-All Inequality," *Pathways* (Spring):25-30  
Robert Moffit, 2008, "A Primer on U.S. Welfare Reform," *Focus* 26(1):15-25  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Chart Book: TANF at 16," August 22, 2012, Washington, DC

#### Week 4, February 11-15, 2013 Unequal Treatment

- Cybelle Fox, 2012, *Three Worlds of Relief: Race, Immigration and the American Welfare State from the Progressive Era to the New Deal*, Princeton University Press, pp.124-187  
Deborah Sontag, "Deported in a Coma, Saved Back in U.S.," *New York Times*, November 8, 2008, A1

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

Lawrence Mead, "Telling the Poor What to Do," *Public Interest* (Summer 1998)132:97-112  
Loïc Wacquant, 2009, *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*,  
Duke University Press, pp.76-112

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

Suzanne Mettler, 2011, *The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy*, University of Chicago Press, pp.1-30

**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  
Nicholas Carnes, "How Government by the Privileged Distorts Economic Policy," *Scholars  
Strategy Network Key Findings*, January 2012  
"Lower Income Republicans Say Government Does Too Little for Poor People," *Pew Research  
Center for the People & the Press*, February 2, 2012  
Douglas Mackinnon, "What Do I Know About Poverty," *New York Times*, March 8, 2012

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

Larry M. Bartels, 2005, "Homer Gets a Tax Cut: Inequality and Public Policy in the American  
Mind," *Perspectives on Politics* 3(1):15-31  
Alberto Alesina and Edward Glaeser, 2004, *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe: A World of  
Difference*, Oxford University Press, pp.183-216

**Week 9, March 18-22, 2013**

**Race and Racism**

- Martin Gilens, 2003, "How the Poor Became Black: The Racialization of American Poverty in the Mass Media," in *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*, S. Schram, J. Soss, and R. Fording (eds), University of Michigan Press, pp.101-130
- Joe Soss, "Race and Penalties at the Frontlines of Welfare Reform," *Scholars Strategy Network*, May 2012

**Week 10, March 25-29, 2013**

*Spring Break, No Class*

**Week 11, April 1-5, 2013**

**Interest Groups**

- Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, 2010, *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer—And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class*, Simon and Schuster, pp.95-136
- 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**

- Shawn Zeller, 2003, "Conservative Crusaders," *National Journal* 35 (April 26):1286-1291
- Andrew Rich, 2005, "War of Ideas," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Spring):18-25

**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
- Vanessa Williamson, Theda Skocpol and John Coggin, 2011, "The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism," *Perspectives on Politics* 9(1):25-43

**Week 14, April 22-26, 2013**  
**States, Parties, & Institutions**

Sven Steinmo and Jon Watts, 1995, "It's the Institutions, Stupid! Why Comprehensive National Health Insurance Always Fails in America," *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 20(2):329-372

David Ellwood, "Welfare Reform as I Knew It: When Bad Things Happen to Good Policies," *The American Prospect*, November 19, 2001

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

Andrea Campbell, 2003, *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State*, Princeton University Press, pp. 1-37, 125-137

