

Sociology 124
THE SOCIOLOGY OF POVERTY
Fall 2021

Professor Sánchez-Jankowski
Office Hours: Thursday 3:00-5:00 in 470 Social Science Building

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. I have order 8 books for the course: Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*; Cynthia Duncan, *Worlds Apart*; Janice Perlman, *Favela*; Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*; Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders*; Jason Corburn and Lee Riley, eds., *Slum Health*; Manata Hashemi, *Coming of Age in Iran*; and Corey Abramson, *The End Game*. You will need to have access to them all because the exams will utilize each in their entirety.

REQUIREMENTS: There are two requirements for this course. First, a number of books have been ordered for the course. You will need to have access to them—buying, renting, or borrowing—and you will be required to read each with a keen eye to the overall argument that they advance as well as the evidentiary basis for their conclusions. Second, there will be two in-class exams and one final exam. Each will count equally toward your final grade. These exams will have 3 Essay-answer questions. Completion of all the exams is required. 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 you to perform the 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: September 28th for Exam # 1, November 9th for Exam # 2, and Final Exam in December 14, 3-6 (Location to be Determined).

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 every 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 INTRODUCTION

August 26: The Course

Readings: Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, Pp.3-174.

Week 2 CONCEPTS INVOLVED IN STUDY OF POVERTY

August 31: Measurement of Poverty

Reading: Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Pp. 3-174 (Continued)

September 2: Theories of Poverty

Week 3 RURAL POVERTY

September 7: Structure and Culture in Rural American Poverty

Readings: Duncan, *Worlds Apart: Poverty and Politics in Rural America*

September 9: Politics of Poverty

Week 4 RURAL TO URBAN POVERTY

September 14: Push in the Relocation Process

Reading: Janice Perlman, *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge*

September 16: Pull Factors in the Relocation Process

Week 5 URBAN POVERTY

September 21: Geography of Poverty

Reading: Perlman, *Favela* (Continued)

September 23: Politics of Reproduction in Urban Poverty

Week 6 STRUCTURE OF URBAN POVERTY

September 28: TEST # 1

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement: Social Change and Resilience in Poor Neighborhoods*, Pp. 1-352

September 30: Structural Elements in Formation and Reproduction of Poverty

Week 7 CULTURE AND URBAN POVERTY

October 5: Culture and Poor Neighborhoods

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

October 7: Resilience in Poor Neighborhoods

Week 8 STRUCTURAL CAUSES OF BECOMING POOR

October 12: Evictions, Vacancies, Incapacities

Reading: Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders in San Francisco*

October 14: Responses to Structural Strains

Week 9 HOMELESSNESS

October 19: Causes of Limited Housing Access

Reading for following week: Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders (Continued)*

October 21: Social Life on the Edge

Week 10 YOUTH AND POVERTY

October 26: Inheritance and Labor Market

Reading: Manata Hashemi, *Coming of Age in Iran: Poverty and the Struggle For Dignity*

October 28: Politics and Culture

Week 11 EDUCATION AND POVERTY

November 2: Opportunities in Creating Knowledge and Expertise

Reading: Manata Hashemi, *Coming of Age in Iran* (Continued)

November 4: Difficulties in Creating Knowledge and Expertise

Week 12 POVERTY, CRIME AND VIOLENCE

November 9: TEST # 2

Reading: Corburn and Riley, *Slum Health: From the Cell to the Street*, Chapters 6-12

November 11: Crime and Violence Origins

Week 13 POVERTY AND HEALTH

November 16: Disease

Reading: Corburn and Riley, *Slum Health*, (Continued)

November 18: Health

Reading: Corey Abramson, *The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years*

Week 14 INEQUALITY AND THE LIFE COURSE

November 23: Environment, Body, and Aging

Reading: Corey Abramson, *The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years* (Continued)

November 25: Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15 POVERTY AND POLICY

November 30: Addressing the Policy Question of “The Poor”

Reading: Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Pp. 175-195

Cynthia Duncan, *Worlds Apart*, Chapter 4

Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Pp. 352-54

Jason Corburn and Lee Riley, eds., *Slum Health*, Chapters 4, 13, 14

December 2: Review

FINAL EXAM: DATE, TIME, AND PLACE WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS