

Sociology 124
THE SOCIOLOGY OF POVERTY
Fall 2015
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 sociological, psychological, and economic 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 definitional problems and distribution 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 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 this persistent condition, 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 a student is not able to take an 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 been totally responsible for the exams in the course. In this regard, the instructor has written the questions and the answers to these questions for the Course Reader to follow. Thus, students need to will know that there was an answer for each of these questions and the reader has been provided this answer. 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 is not merely an exam that reviews material from the course, but 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 this new material.

Week 1

August 27: Outline of the Course

Readings: Katherine Boo, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*

Week 2

September 1: Lecture on the Contours of the Condition

Readings: Katherine Boo, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, Continued

September 3: Lecture on the Sociology of the Economic Condition

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Introduction and Ch. 1

Week 3

September 8: Lecture on Sociology of the Economic Condition, Continued

Readings: Manata Hashimi and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Children in Crisis*

September 10: Lecture on Sociology of Poverty

Readings: Hashimi and Sánchez-Jankowski, *Children in Crisis*, Continued

Week 4

September 15: Lecture on Economics of the Social Condition

Readings: Collins, et al. *Portfolios of the Poor*

September 17: Lecture on Economics of the Social Condition, Continued

Reading: Collins, et al. *Portfolios of the Poor*, Continued

Week 5

September 22: **EXAM # 1 (Covers Material From BBF, POP, CIC, CIP and the lectures)**

September 24: Lecture on Social Structure and Poverty

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*,

Week 6

September 29: Lecture on Social Capital and Poverty

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued

October 1: Lecture on Poverty Social Change

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Continued

Week 7

October 6: Lecture on Politics and Health

Readings: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*

October 8: Lecture on Poverty and Disease

Readings: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*, Continued

Week 8

October 13: Lecture on Poverty and Health

Readings: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*, Continued

October 15: Lecture on Poverty and Environmental Degradation

Readings: Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*, Continued

Week 9

October 20: Lecture on Poverty and the Life Course

Readings: Corey Abramson, *The End Game*

October 22: Poverty and Aging

Readings: Corey Abramson, *The End Game*, Continued

Week 10

October 27: Lecture on Poverty, Old Age and Health

Readings: Abramson, *The End Game*, Continued

October 29: **EXAM # 2 (It will cover material From *Flammable, Infections and Inequalities*, Lectures and the books/lectures from Start of the Course)**

Readings: None

Week 11

November 3: Lecture on Community and Crime

Readings: Mary Patillo and Bruce Western, *Imprisoning America*

November 5: Lecture on Poverty and Incarceration

Readings: Mary Patillo and Bruce Western, *Imprisoning America*, Continued

Week 12

November 10: Lecture on Crime and Economic Development

Readings: Mary Patillo and Bruce Western, *Imprisoning America*, Continued

November 12: Lecture on Economic Considerations of Human Wellbeing

Readings: Mary Patillo and Bruce Western, *Imprisoning America*, Continued

Week 12

November 17: Lecture on America's Policies Toward Poverty

Readings: James Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the 20th Century*

November 19: Lecture on Personal Freedom and Poverty

Readings: James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the 20th Century*, Continued

Week 13

November 24: Lecture on Global Policies and Poverty

Readings:

November 26: Thanksgiving Holiday

Readings: No Readings

Week 14

December 1: Lecture on What Is To Be Done

Readings: James Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the 20th Century*, Continued

December 3: Review

Readings: None

December 16: FINAL EXAM from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm (Covers All the Lectures and Readings in the Course.)