

SOCIOLOGY 148: SOCIAL POLICY

Class: M & W, 5:00-6:30pm

Location: 20 Barrows Hall

PROFESSOR CYBELLE FOX

Office: 492 Barrows Hall

Office Hours: 2:30-4:30pm

Signup sheet: <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/sxkih>

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OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

During the last four decades economic inequality in America has increased rapidly. 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 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:

Reading Responses: 30%

Midterm: 30%

Final Exam: 40%

Reading Responses: Thirty percent of your final course grade will be based on your average (mean) grade on 5 weekly reading responses. The reading responses should be 1 page long. In the first paragraph, you should, in your own words, summarize the main argument of the reading(s) for the entire week. Use the rest of the response to critically evaluate the readings. You can do this by critiquing the author's methodology or analysis or by comparing and contrasting across different readings (within or across weeks). The reading responses for a given week are due on **Sunday at 5pm**. Late responses will not count. Submit all reading responses to the class BCourse page. There are no reading responses for weeks 1, 8 or 11.

You may, if you want, submit more than 5 weekly reading responses. In that case, the average grade will be calculated using only the 5 highest scores.

Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will be worth 30 percent of your final grade. The exam will take place in class on Wednesday, March 7, 2018.

Final Exam: The final exam will be worth 40 percent of your final grade. The exam will take place on Friday, May 11, 2018 from 3-6pm.

EXPECTATIONS:

Attendance: You are expected to come on time to every lecture. While I post my power point slides after each lecture, the power point slides are not designed to be comprehensive. To do well in this course, you will need to take notes to supplement the information provided on the slides.

Participation: You should come to class having done the reading for the week. I also welcome your participation in class. Over the years, I have noticed that students who participate in class tend to do better in my courses. To further encourage student engagement, I will offer extra credit for students who participate in lecture. Participation includes asking pertinent questions and thoughtfully contributing to classroom discussion.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own (including copying other students' work or using Internet resources without proper citation). Those who plagiarize will receive an F. The university might impose other sanctions. For more on academic integrity, please look here: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity>

COURSE READINGS:

I have prepared a **course reader**, which students can purchase at Copy Central at 2576 Bancroft Way. Two copies of the reader will also be placed on reserve at Moffitt Library.

Students may also purchase the following **REQUIRED** book from the University Bookstore

Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2015, *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

One copy of the book will also be placed on reserve at Moffitt Library. This book is also available to read on-line through OskiCat.

For those worried about the costs of the readings, consider making use of course reserves or sharing a reader with someone else in class. I have also included a hyperlink for those readings available online.

COURSE OUTLINE

PART I:

Poverty, Inequality, and the American Social Policy Response

Week 1: January 17, 2018

Course Introduction

No readings

Week 2: January 22-24, 2018
Tracking Poverty & Inequality

- John Cassidy, "[Relatively Deprived](#)," *The New Yorker*, April 3, 2006
- Janet C. Gornick and Markus Jäntti, 2016, "[Poverty](#)," Pp. 15-24 in *State of the Union: The Poverty and Inequality Report 2016, Pathways, Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality* (Spring Issue).
- 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

Week 3: January 29 & 31, 2018
American Social Welfare Policy in Historical and Comparative Perspective

- Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2015, *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), Introduction & chapter 1, pp.xi-33
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "[Chart Book: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#)," August 16, 2017, Washington, DC
- Jacob Hacker, 2009, "[Northern Exposure: Learning from Canada's Response to Winner-Take-All Inequality](#)," *Pathways* (Spring):25-30

Week 4: February 5-7, 2018
Deep Poverty in America

- Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2015, *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), chapters 2-4, pp.35-128

Week 5: February 12-14, 2018
Inequalities

- Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2015, *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), chapter 5, pp.128-156
- Alana Semuels, "[Oregon: Welfare Utopia](#)," *The Atlantic*, May 31, 2016
- Cybelle Fox, 2016, "[Unauthorized Welfare: The Origins of Immigrant Status Restrictions in American Social Policy](#)," *Journal of American History* 102(4):1051-1074

Week 6: February 21, 2018
Disciplining the Poor

- Lawrence Mead, "[Telling the Poor What to Do](#)," *Public Interest* (Summer 1998)132:97-112
- Sanford Schram & Joe Soss, "[Demonizing the Poor](#)," *Jacobin Magazine*, September 3, 2015

Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2015, *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), Conclusion, pp.157-174

Week 7: February 26 & 28, 2018
The Hidden Welfare State

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

Matthew Desmond, 2017, "[How Homeownership Became the Engine of American Inequality](#)," *New York Times Magazine*, May 9, 2017

Week 8: March 5-7, 2018
Review & Exam

No readings

Midterm Exam, in-class, Wednesday, March 7

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

Week 9: March 12-14, 2018
Public Opinion

Benjamin I. Page, Larry M. Bartels and Jason Seawright, 2013, "[Democracy and the Policy Preferences of Wealthy Americans](#)," *Perspectives on Politics*, 11(1):51-73

Ilyana Kuziemko and Stafanie Stantcheva, "[Our Feelings about Inequality: It's Complicated](#)," *New York Times Opinionator*, April 21, 2013

Week 10: March 19-21, 2018
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: Key Findings*, May 2012

Week 11: March 26-28, 2018

Spring Break, No Class

Week 12: April 2-4, 2018

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 13: April 9-11, 2018

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 16-18, 2018

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

Week 15: April 23-25, 2018

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

Final Exam:

Friday, May 11, 2018, 3:00-6:00pm