SOCIETY 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


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


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


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


Week 5: February 12-14, 2018
Inequalities


Week 6: February 21, 2018
Disciplining the Poor

Lawrence Mead, “Telling the Poor What to Do,” *Public Interest* (Summer 1998)132:97-112

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


**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**


Ilyana Kuziemko and Stafanie Stantcheva, “*Our Feelings about Inequality: It’s Complicated.***” *New York Times* Opinionater, April 21, 2013

**Week 10: March 19-21, 2018**
**Race and Racism**


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

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

Week 14: April 16-18, 2018
States, Parties, & Institutions


Week 15: April 23-25, 2018
Policy Legacies


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