

## **SOCIOLOGY 148: SOCIAL POLICY**

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

Location: 56 Barrows Hall

### **PROFESSOR CYBELLE FOX**

Office: 492 Barrows Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-4pm

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 social policy to mitigate poverty and inequality and to provide universal access to health care, 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, inequality, and health care, 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 1) critiquing the author's methodology or analysis, 2) comparing and contrasting findings across different readings (within or across weeks), or 3) using the readings to evaluate or make sense of contemporary news reports. The reading responses for a given week are due on **Monday at 2pm**. Late responses will not count. Submit all reading responses to the class BCourse page by the deadline. **There are no reading responses for weeks 1, 8 or 10.**

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 11, 2020.**

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be worth 40 percent of your final grade. The exam will take place on **Friday, May 15, 2020, 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** that can be purchased at Copy Central at 2411 Telegraph Ave. 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)

Many of the readings for this course are also available to read on-line. Copies of readings available online are also uploaded to BCourses. Two copies of the book will also be placed on reserve at Moffitt Library.

#### **COURSE OUTLINE:**

##### **PART I:**

##### **Poverty, Inequality, and the American Social Policy Response**

**Week 1: January 22, 2020**

**Course Introduction**

*No readings*

**Week 2: January 27 & 29, 2020**  
**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 & Schuster, pp.1-4, 11-40

**Week 3: February 3 & 5, 2020**  
**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 21, 2019, Washington, DC  
Jacob Hacker, 2009, “Northern Exposure: Learning from Canada’s Response to Winner-Take-All Inequality,” *Pathways* (Spring):25-30

**Week 4: February 10 & 12, 2020**  
**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 19, 2020**  
**Inequalities**

*No class on February 17*

- 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

**Week 6: February 24 & 26, 2020**  
**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: March 2 & 4, 2020**  
**The Hidden Welfare State**

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

Marketplace, *The Uncertain Hour*, Podcast, *Season 1: Welfare Reform, 20 Years Later*

- Episode 3, "[What's Love \(Styles\) Got to Do with It?](#)" (34 minutes)
- Episode 4, "[Everything but the Kitchen Sink](#)," (24 minutes)

**Week 8: March 9 & 11, 2020**  
**Review & Exam**

*No readings*

**\*\*Midterm Exam, in-class, March 11\*\***

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

**Week 9: March 16 & 18, 2020**  
**Public and Elite 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

Martin Gilens, 2015, "Descriptive Representation, Money, and Political Inequality in the United States," *Swiss Political Science Review* 21(2):222-228

**Week 10: March 23 & 25, 2020**  
**Spring Break**

*No readings*

**Week 11: March 30 & April 1, 2020**  
**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

Hana Brown, 2013, "The New Racial Politics of Welfare: Ethno-Racial Diversity, Immigration, and Welfare Discourse Variation," *Social Services Review* 87(3):586-612

**Week 12: April 6 & 8, 2020**  
**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, Chapter 1: Doctor's Politics and the Red Menace

**Week 13: April 13 & 15, 2020**  
**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 20 & 22, 2020**  
**American Political 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 27 & 29, 2020**  
**Policy Legacies**

Joe Soss, 1999, "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action," *American Political Science Review*, 93(2):363-380

***Final Exam:***  
**May 15, 2020, 3-6pm**