SOCILOGY 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.


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

Week 3: February 3 & 5, 2020
American Social Welfare Policy in Historical and Comparative Perspective

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Chart Book: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families,” August 21, 2019, Washington, DC

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


Week 6: February 24 & 26, 2020
Disciplining the Poor

Lawrence Mead, “Telling the Poor What to Do,” Public Interest (Summer 1998)132:97-112
Week 7: March 2 & 4, 2020
The Hidden Welfare State

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


Week 10: March 23 & 25, 2020
Spring Break

*No readings*

Week 11: March 30 & April 1, 2020
Race and Racism

Week 12: April 6 & 8, 2020
Interest Groups

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

Week 14: April 20 & 22, 2020
American Political Institutions


Week 15: April 27 & 29, 2020
Policy Legacies


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