

Sociology 124
THE SOCIOLOGY OF POVERTY
Fall 2023

Professor Sánchez-Jankowski

Office Hours: Wednesday 10:00-12:00 in 470 Social Science Building

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 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 history 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 America. 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 persistent poverty 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. I have ordered 8 books for the course: Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*; Janice Perlman, *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro*; Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement: Social Change and Resilience in Poor Neighborhoods*; Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homelessness in San Francisco*; Randol Contreras, *The Stickup Kids: Race, Drugs, Violence and the American Dream*; Jason Corburn and Lee Riley, eds., *Slum Health: From the Cell to the Street*; Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Potholes in the Road: Transition Problems Among Low-Income Students in High School*; and Corey Abramson, *The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years*. You will need to have access to them all because the exams will utilize each in their entirety.

REQUIREMENTS: There are two requirements for this course. First, a number of books have been ordered for the course. You will need to have access to them—buying, renting, or borrowing—and you will be required to read each with a keen eye to the overall argument that they advance as well as the evidentiary basis for their conclusions. Second, there will be two in-class exams and one final exam. Each will count equally toward your final grade. These exams will have 3 Essay-answer questions. Completion of all the exams is required. If for reasons of illness or a death to a member of the immediate family the student is not able to take the exam, then a make-up exam will be offered. For an illness, a doctor's note telling me that it was impossible for you to perform the 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 10th for Exam # 1, November 7th for Exam # 2, and Final Exam in December 15, 8:00-11:00 (Location to be Determined).

GRADING: The instructor has developed all the exams for the course. In this regard, the instructor has written the questions and the answers to these questions for the reader to follow. In this way, the students will know that there was an answer for each of these questions and this answer was consistently applied to every student on each question. 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 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 new material.

Week 1: INTRODUCTION

August 26: The Course Introduction

Week 2: CONCEPTS INVOLVED IN STUDY OF POVERTY

August 29: Measurement of Poverty

August 31: Theories of Poverty

Reading: Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Pp.3-156.

Week 3: DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND POVERTY: MACRO ISSUES

September 5: Geographic Issues

September 7: Resource Issues

Reading: Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Pp. 3-156 (Continued)

Week 4: UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY

September 12: Push in the Relocation Process

September 14: Pull Factors in the Relocation Process

Reading: Reading: Janice Perlman, *Favela*, Pp. 1-164

Week 5 THE POLITICS AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

September 19: Geography of Poverty

September 21: Politics and Reproduction in Urban Poverty

Readings: Perlman, *Favela*, Pp. 165-339.

Week 6 DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: STRUCTURE

September 26: Structural Element in the Formation of Poverty

September 28: Structural Elements in the Management of Poverty

Readings: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Pp. 1-176

Week 7 DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: CULTURE

October 3: Culture and Poor Neighborhoods

October 5: Resilience in Poor Neighborhoods

Reading: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Pp. 176-354.

Week 8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ITS POVERTY RESIDUALS

October 10: TEST # 1

October 12: Homelessness in the Midst of Economic Growth

Reading: Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders*, Pp. xiii-180

Week 9 MODERNISM'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

October 17: Causes of Limited Housing Access

October 19: Social Life on the Edge

Reading for following week: Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders*, Pp. 181-292.

Week 10 HUMAN CAPITAL AND POVERTY

October 24: Structure and Educational Attainment

October 26: Culture and Educational Attainment

Readings: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Potholes in the Road* (Whole book).

Week 11 POVERTY, CRIME AND VIOLENCE

October 31: Opportunities in Creating Knowledge and Expertise

November 2: Difficulties in Creating Knowledge and Expertise

Reading: Randol Contreras, *The Stickup Kids* (Whole Book).

Week 12 HEALTH AND ECONOMIC LIFE

November 7: TEST # 2

November 9: Disease and Being Poor

Reading: Corburn and Riley, *Slum Health*, Chs. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Week 13 POVERTY AND HEALTH

November 14: Health and Being Poor

November 16: Being Poor and Health

Reading: Corburn and Riley, *Slum Health*, Chs. 11, 12, 13.

Week 14 INEQUALITY AND THE LIFE COURSE

November 21: Environment, Body, and Aging

November 23: Thanksgiving Holiday

Reading: Corey Abramson, *The End Game* (Whole Book)

Week 15 POVERTY AND POLICY

November 28: Addressing the Policy Question of “The Poor”

Reading: Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Pp. 156-195

Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Cracks in the Pavement*, Pp. 352-54

Jason Corburn and Lee Riley, eds., *Slum Health*, Chapters 13, 14

November 30: Review

FINAL EXAM: DECEMBER 15, 8:00 AM TO 11:00 AM
PLACE WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS