

AS.360.247 Introduction to Social Policy and Inequality: Baltimore and Beyond
Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2015
T, Th: 12 noon – 1:15 p.m. Hodson 210
Syllabus

Instructors:

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Teaching Assistants:

Anne-Marie Livingstone, Department of Sociology

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Email: nigbokwe@jhu.edu **Office hours:** Th 10:00-11:30 a.m. Gilman Atrium

Course Description:

This is an interdisciplinary course that will introduce students to basic concepts in economics, political science, and sociology relevant to the study of social problems and the programs designed to remedy them. We will address issues of national policy importance, as well as concerns specifically relevant to Baltimore City and the metropolitan region. Students will be introduced to some of the key methodologies social scientists employ, and will learn to critically evaluate the theoretical and empirical literature in the field. Introduction to Social Policy is open to all freshmen, sophomores and juniors and there are no prerequisites. The course is required for the new Social Policy minor and counts towards the required courses needed for majoring in Sociology and Political Science. The course is also writing-intensive and counts towards general distribution requirements.

Readings:

The following texts are required. If you do not wish to purchase them, copies are on two-hour reserve at the Milton S. Eisenhower Library.

Campbell, Andrea Louise, *Trapped in America's Social Safety Net: One Family's Struggle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014)

Edin, Kathryn and Laura Lein, *Making Ends Meet: How Low Income Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low Wage Employment* (New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1997) (paperback)

Edin, Kathryn and Luke Shafer, *\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015)

Harrington, Michael, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York, Macmillan, 1963) (paperback)

Noble, Charles, *Welfare As We Knew It: A Political History of the American Welfare State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)

Wilson, William Julius, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) (paperback)

All other required readings are available through the course website or on electronic reserve at the Milton S. Eisenhower library.

Website:

This course has a Blackboard website which you should consult frequently for announcements. Blackboard will also be used as a forum for online discussions. You can access the course website at blackboard.jhu.edu.

Class Format:

Each week there will be one lecture and one discussion section. **Except for the first class on Thursday, August 27th, all lectures will be held on Tuesdays, and all discussion sections will be held on Thursdays.** All students should come to discussion section prepared to comment on and critique the assigned reading and ask questions. Participation in class and online discussions contribute to your grade. No laptops, tablets, or phones are allowed in this class.

Course Requirements:

Memos (70 points) During the semester, you will write **four** memos. Each memo will be approximately 6-8 pages in length, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, and 12pt font. Memo topics will be distributed approximately two weeks before the deadline with specific guidelines posted on the course website. Your memo should be submitted both online (Blackboard) and in hard copy to the TAs with a copy of the memo guidelines stapled to the front of your memo. If you would like to improve your writing skills, you are encouraged to use the excellent resources available at the Johns Hopkins Writing Center which is located in Gilman Hall in the north wing of the Hutzler Reading Room (Room 230).

Deadlines for each memo are **12 noon** on the dates listed below.

Memo#1 Due: Tuesday, September 29
Memo#2 Due: Tuesday, October 27
Memo#3 Due: Friday, November 20
Memo#4 Due: Thursday, December 17

Participation (30 points): Each week, students will post a **one-paragraph** reflection on Blackboard. This should include comments on the reading assignments, class lecture, or other issues related to the course (e.g. news items, published research, etc.). These paragraphs should directly cite the readings for class. Posts are due by **12 noon each Wednesday**. There are 12 reflections, and you may drop the two with the lowest grades. In addition to online reflections, your participation grade will be based on attendance at and contribution to weekly discussions. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and lecture material. Students may earn a maximum of **20 points** for the weekly reflections and **10 points** for their attendance and contribution to discussion.

Students are assigned to the following sections:

Last name **A - He** Hodson 315 (Schlozman)
Last name **Hi - Pa** Hodson 210 (Edin)
Last name **Pi - Z** Hodson 301 (Morgan)

Academic Dishonesty:

Cheating hurts our community by undermining academic integrity, creating mistrust and fostering unfair competition. The university will punish cheaters with failure on an assignment, failure in a course, permanent transcript notation and/or expulsion. Violations can include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments without permission, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery, falsification and lying. For more information, see the guide on "Academic Ethics for Undergraduates" and the Ethics Board.

Course Outline and Reading List:

Date:

- R 8/27 Introduction to the Course**
- T 9/1 Trends in Earnings and Income Inequality - Lecture (Morgan)**
Lemieux, Thomas, "The Changing Nature of Wage Inequality," *Journal of Population Economics* 21 (January 2008): 21-48.
Piketty, Thomas and Emmanuel Saez, "The Evolution of Top Incomes: A Historical and International Perspective," *American Economic Review* 96 (2) (2006): 200-205.
- R 9/3 Trends in Earnings and Income Inequality - Discussion**
- T 9/8 Investment in Human Capital - Lecture (Morgan)**
Goldin, Claudia and Laurence Katz, "The Future of Inequality: The Other Reason Education Matters so Much," *Milken Institute Review* 2009 (3).
Hershbein, Brad, Melissa S. Kearney and Lawrence H. Summers, "Increasing Education: What it Will and Will not do for Earnings Inequality," *The Hamilton Project*, 30 March, 2015.
- R 9/10 Investment in Human Capital - Discussion**
- T 9/15 Good Jobs, Bad Jobs - Lecture (Morgan)**
Ehrenreich, Barbara, *Nickel and Dimed* (New York, Henry Holt and Co. 2001):11-49.
Kalleberg, Arne L., *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* (Russell Sage, New York, 2011), Chapters 1 and 6.
- R 9/17 Good Jobs, Bad Jobs - Discussion**
- T 9/22 Inequality and Public Policy - Lecture (Morgan)**
Mankiw, N. Gregory, "I Can Afford Higher Taxes. But They'll Make Me Work Less," *New York Times*, October 9, 2010
Stiglitz, Joseph E., *The Price of Inequality* (New York, W.W. Norton, 2012), Chapters 1 and 3
- R 9/24 Inequality and Public Policy – Discussion**
- T 9/29 Poverty – Lecture (Edin)**
Harrington, *The Other America*
- R 10/1 Poverty, The Policy Response – Discussion**
- T 10/6 Welfare – Lecture (Edin)**
Edin & Lein, *Making Ends Meet* 1,3,5,6
Edin and Shafer, *\$2.00 a Day*.
- T 10/8 Welfare, The Policy Response – Discussion**
- T 10/13 Crime – Lecture (Edin)**
DeLuca, Stefanie, *If You Can Weather The Storm* (course website)
Goffman, Alice, "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto," *American Sociological Review* June 2009 (74), 339-357.
- R 10/15 No class – classes meet according to Monday schedule**
- T 10/20 Neighborhoods – Lecture (Edin)**
Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*

- R 10/22 Neighborhoods and Crime, Policy Response – Discussion**
- T 10/27 From the Progressive Era to the Great Society – Lecture (Schlozman)**
Noble, Charles, *Welfare As We Knew It: A Political History of the American Welfare State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 19-104.
- R 10/29 From the Progressive Era to the Great Society - Discussion**
- T 11/3 Consequences of a Fragmented Welfare State – Lecture (Schlozman)**
Campbell, Andrea Louise, *Trapped in America's Social Safety Net: One Family's Struggle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), ix-70, 101-131.
Howard, Christopher, "The Haves and the Have Lots," *Democracy*, Spring 2007, 48-58.
Esping-Andersen, Gøsta and John Myles, "Economic Inequality and the Welfare State," in *The Oxford Handbook of Economic Inequality*, ed. Wiemer Salverda, Brian Nolan, and Timothy M. Smeeding (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 639-664.
- R 11/5 Consequences of a Fragmented Welfare State - Discussion**
- T 11/10 Politics and Rising Inequality – Lecture (Schlozman)**
Noble, Charles, *Welfare As We Knew It*, 105-128.
Bartels, Larry, *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 29-53, 98-126.
Bartels, Larry, "Obama's Uphill Struggle against Economic Inequality," *Washington Post* online, 24 Jul. 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2014/07/24/obamas-uphill-struggle-against-economic-inequality/>.
Bonica, Adam, Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, "Why Hasn't Democracy Slowed Rising Inequality?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27 (2013): 103-124.
- R 11/12 Politics and Rising Inequality – Discussion**
- T 11/17 Alternatives from Here – Lecture (Schlozman)**
Noble, Charles, *Welfare As We Knew It*, 135-157.
Murray, Charles, *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 196-218.
Hecló, Hugh, "Poverty Politics," in *Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change*, ed. Sheldon H. Danziger, Gary D. Sandefur, and Daniel H. Weinberg (New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 396-402, 430-437.
Gordon, Linda, "Who Deserves Help? Who Must Provide?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 577 (2001), 12-25.
Coates, Ta-Nehisi, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, May 2014, 54-71.
- R 11/19 Alternatives from Here – Discussion**
- T 11/24 NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break**
- R 11/26 NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break**
- T 12/1 Course Wrap-Up**
- R 12/3 Final Debate**