

AS.360.247 Introduction to Social Policy and Inequality: Baltimore and Beyond
Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2017
T, Th: 10:30 noon – 11:45 p.m. Levering Arellano
Syllabus

Instructors:

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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, but not for Economics. 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.

Bartels, Larry, *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2016).

Edin, Kathryn and Maria J. Kefalas, *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women put Motherhood before Marriage* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

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).

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

Ehrenreich, Barbara, *Nickel and Dimed* (New York, Henry Holt and Co. 2001).

Katznelson, Ira When *Affirmative Action was White: The Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America* (WWNorton and Company, 2005).

Orleck, Annelise *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Beacon Press, 2005).

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

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:

The format of the class is lecture (on Tuesdays) and discussion (on Thursdays). All lectures will take place in Levering Arellano. For most discussions we will break off into smaller sections (noted in the syllabus as “breakout rooms”). At the end of each block (economics, sociology, political science) we will meet for a large class discussion in Levering Arellano.

All students should come to discussion section prepared to comment on and critique the assigned reading and ask questions. Participation in class contributes to your grade.

Electronics:

No laptops, tablets, or phones are allowed in this class.

Course Requirements:

Memos (64 points): During the semester, you will write **four** memos. Each memo will be approximately 6 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 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). Further writing guidelines are on the Cover Sheet posted on the course website.

Online deadlines for each memo are **12 noon** on the dates listed below. These deadlines are firm. For each 24-hour period your memo is late a penalty of one-third of a grade will be imposed (e.g. from B to B minus).

Memo#1 Due:	Monday, October 2
Memo#2 Due:	Monday, October 30
Memo#3 Due:	Monday, December 4
Memo#4 Due:	Monday, December 18

Reflections (18 points): Most weeks students will post a **one-to-two paragraph** (no more than 300 words) reflection on Blackboard. This should include insights into 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. A rubric for the reflection is on the course website. Posts are due by **12 noon on Wednesdays**. There are 9 reflections, but only 6 will count towards your final grade (reflections with the lowest grades will be dropped - alternatively, if you are pressed for time in a particular week you may decide not to submit a reflection).

Participation (18 points): Your participation grade will be based on attendance at, and contribution to, weekly discussions. Please come to discussion class prepared to discuss the readings and lecture material. Exceptions to the policies outlined above will be granted for documented medical reasons only.

Students are assigned to the following sections:

Last name **A - Jah** Levering Arellano (Edin)
Last name **Jam - Re** Wyman 603 (Morgan)
Last name **Ri - Z** Mergenthaler 366 (Weaver))

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. Please see the website of the Dean of Student Life for more information.

Course Outline and Reading List:

Date:

T 9/5

Trends in Earnings and Income Inequality - Lecture (Morgan)

Alvaredo, Facundo, Anthony B. Atkinson, Thomas Picketty, and Emmanuel Saez, "The Top 1 Percent in International and Historical Perspective," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27 (3) 2014, 3-20.

Reflection #1 due noon, Wednesday, September 6

R 9/7

Trends in Earnings and Income Inequality – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 9/12

Causes of Earnings and Income Inequality - Lecture (Morgan)

Lemieux, Thomas, "The Changing Nature of Wage Inequality," *Journal of Population Economics* 21 (January 2008), 21-48.

Goldin, Claudia and Laurence Katz, "The Future of Inequality: The Other Reason Education Matters so Much," *Milken Institute Review* 2009 (3), 28-33.

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, 1-5.

Reflection #2 due noon, Wednesday, September 13

R 9/14

Causes of Earnings and Income Inequality – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 9/19

Inequality, Good Jobs and Bad Jobs - Lecture (Morgan)

Ehrenreich, Barbara, *Nickel and Dimed* (whole book)

Reflection #3 due noon, Wednesday, September 20

R 9/21

Inequality, Good Jobs and Bad Jobs – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 9/26

Inequality and Public Policy - Lecture (Morgan)

Mankiw, N. Gregory, "Defending the One Percent," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 27 (3) 2013, 21-34.

Stiglitz, Joseph E., "The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future," *Sustainable Humanity, Sustainable Nature: Our Responsibility*, Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Extra Series 41, Vatican City, 2014, 379-399.

R 9/28 Inequality and Public Policy – Discussion (Levering Arellano)

MEMO #1 due online noon, Monday, October 2 and hard copy in class on Tuesday, October 3

T 10/3 Poverty – Lecture (Edin)
Edin and Shafer, *\$2.00 a Day* (whole book)

Reflection #4 due noon, Wednesday, October 4

R 10/5 Poverty, The Policy Response – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 10/10 Welfare – Lecture (Edin)
Edin and Lein, *Making Ends Meet* (Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6)

Reflection #5 due noon, Wednesday, October 11

R 10/12 Welfare, The Policy Response – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 10/17 Family – Lecture (Edin)
Edin and Kefalas, *Promises I Can Keep* (Chapters 1 through 5 and conclusion)

Reflection #6 due noon, Wednesday, October 18

R 10/19 Family, The Policy Response – Discussion (breakout rooms)

T 10/24 Neighborhoods – Lecture (Edin)
Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged* (whole book)

R 10/26 Neighborhoods, The Policy Response – Discussion (Levering Arellano)

MEMO #2 due online noon, Monday, October 30 and hard copy in class on Tuesday, October 31

T 10/31 **Bringing Politics Back In: The Political Causes and Consequences of Inequality – Lecture (Weaver)**
Alesina, Alberto, Edward Glaser and Bruce Sacerdote, “Why Doesn’t the U.S have a European-Style Welfare State?” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 2, 2-187 [comment at end is optional].
Bartels, Larry M., *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age* (Chapters 2 and 9).
Gilens, Martin, “ ‘Race Coding’ and White Opposition to Welfare,” *American Political Science Review* 90 (3), 1996, 593-604.
Hacker, Jacob S., and Paul Pierson, “Winner Take-All Politics: Public Policy, Political Organization and the Precipitous Rise of Top Incomes in the United States, *Politics & Society* 38 (2), 2010, 152-204.

Reflection #7 due noon, Wednesday, November 1

- R 11/2 **The Political Causes and Consequences of Inequality – Discussion (breakout rooms)**
- T 11/7 **Race, Gender and Immigration in the Development of the American Welfare State and the Consequences of the Ghetto – Lecture (Weaver)**
 Katznelson, Ira, *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5).
 Roithmayr, Daria, “Racial Cartels,” *Michigan Journal of Race and Law* 16 (1), 2010, 45-79.

Reflection #8 due noon, Wednesday, November 8

- R 11/9 **Race and the Development of the American Welfare State – Discussion (breakout rooms)**
- T 11/14 **Why Don’t the Poor Soak the Rich? From Theories of Marginalization/Power to Cases of Political Struggles for Economic and Racial Justice - Lecture (Weaver)**
 Orleck, Annelize, *Storming Caesar’s Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Introduction, Chapters 3-8).
 Soss, Joe, “Making Clients and Citizens: Welfare Policy as a Source of Status, Belief and Action,” in Anne L. Schneider and Helen Ingram, eds. *Deserving and Entitled: Social Construction and Public Policy*, 2005, 291-328.
 Schneider, Anne and Helen Ingram, “Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy,” *American Political Science Review* 87 (2), 1993, 334-347 (recommended).

Reflection #9 due noon, Wednesday, November 15

- R 11/16 **Does Economic Inequality Lead to Bias in Political Power – Discussion (breakout rooms)**
- T 11/21 **NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break**
- R 11/23 **NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Break**
- T 11/28 **The New Governance of Poverty: Incarceration, Wealth Extraction, and Governing – Lecture (Weaver)**
 Alexander, Michelle, “The New Jim Crow” in Papachristou, Alexander, ed. *Blind Goddess: A Reader on Race and Justice*, New Press, 2011.
 Goffman, Alice, “On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto,” *American Sociological Review* 74 (3), 2009, 339-357.
 Roberts, Dorothy E. “Prison, Foster Care, and the Systemic Punishment of Black Mothers,” *U.C.L.A. Law Review* 59, 2012, 1474-1500.
 Western, Bruce and Becky Pettit, “Incarceration and Social Inequality,” *Daedalus* 139 (3), 2010, 8-19.

- R 11/30 **Poverty and Punishment – Discussion (Levering Arellano)**

MEMO #3 due online noon, Monday, December 4 and hard copy in class Tuesday, December 5

- T 12/5 **Course Wrap-Up – reading TBA (Levering Arellano)**

R 12/7 Course Wrap-Up (*breakout rooms*)

MEMO #4 due online noon, Monday December 18