

SOCIOLOGY 5180
Social Inequality: Contemporary Theories, Debates, and Models

Tuesdays: 10:10 – 12:05, Uris 360

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Office Hours: Friday 10:30 – 11:30

Course description:

This course reviews classical and contemporary approaches to understanding the differential distribution of valued goods and the social processes by which such inequality comes to be seen as legitimate, natural, or desirable. Because a primary objective of the course is to identify areas in which new theories, hypotheses, and research agendas might be fruitfully developed, we will give special attention to contemporary theorizing and empirical research.

WARNING: This is not a policy oriented course and is not recommended for students who have no inherent interest in the development of the literature on social inequality from a sociological perspective. Our seminar discussions simply will not allow for substantial amounts of time to discuss policy issues or inter-disciplinary insights.

Reading:

All course readings will be drawn from:

Grusky, David B. 2008. *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective* (3rd edition). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

which is available for purchase at the campus store and the usual online sources.

Assignments:

1. A final paper (approx. 12-15 double-spaced pages). The topic of the paper will be assigned and distributed on the last day of class, December 1st. It will be due two weeks later, via email attachment, on December 15th.
2. Preparation for discussion. Each reading will be introduced by a class participant, based on a random draw. Class members therefore need to prepare, for each reading, material sufficient to answer two basic questions for each reading: (1) What is the primary contribution of the piece? (2) How does the piece relate to other reading assigned in the course (either in the same week or across weeks)?

Grades:

The course grades will be based on two components: (a) final paper (50%), (b) active participation in seminar discussion (50%).

A-Exam for the Graduate Field of Sociology:

Completion of this course satisfies 2/3 of the requirements for an A-exam in inequality for the sociology graduate program. Students who wish to complete the A-exam will also need to develop a supplementary reading list on a specific topic. In most cases, students will read this work over the winter break, or in the spring semester, after which they will then be assigned a single individual-specific A-exam question, to which they will have one week to write a 6-page response.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Introduction

Tuesday, September 1

David B. Grusky and Manwai C. Ku, “Gloom, Doom, and Inequality,” 2-28

WEEK 2: Forms and Sources of Stratification

Tuesday, September 8

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, “Some Principles of Stratification,” 30-33

Gerhard Lenski, “New Light on Old Issues: The Relevance of ‘Really Existing Socialist Societies’ for Stratification Theory,” 33-40

Melvin M. Tumin, “Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis,” 41-49

Claude S. Fischer, Michael Hout, Martín Sánchez Jankowski, Samuel R. Lucas, Ann Swidler, and Kim Voss, “Inequality by Design,” 49-53

Alan B. Krueger, “Inequality, Too Much of a Good Thing,” 53-60

WEEK 3: Marxian Understandings of Social Class

Tuesday, September 15

Karl Marx, “Alienation and Social Classes,” “Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism,” “Ideology and Class,” 74-90

Ralf Dahrendorf, “Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society,” 91-97

Erik Olin Wright, “A General Framework for the Analysis of Class Structure,” 98-111

Immanuel Wallerstein, “Class Conflict in the Capitalist World Economy,” 111-113

Jan Pakulski and Malcolm Waters, “The Death of Class,” 1022-1030

Aage B. Sørensen, “Foundations of a Rent-Based Class Analysis,” 219-234

WEEK 4: Weberian and Durkheimian Alternatives

Tuesday, September 22

Max Weber, “Class, Status, Party,” “Status Groups and Classes,” “Open and Closed Relationships,” 114-132

Anthony Giddens, “The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies,” 132-142

Frank Parkin, “Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique,” 143-158

Emile Durkheim, “The Division of Labor in Society,” 159-164

David B. Grusky and Jesper B. Sørensen, “Are There Big Social Classes?,” 165-175

Kim A. Weeden, “Occupational Closure and Earnings Inequality,” 176-186

WEEK 5: Gradational Scales for Status Attainment Research

Tuesday, September 29

- Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan (with the collaboration of Andrea Tyree), "Measuring the Status of Occupations," 187-190
Donald J. Treiman, "Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective," 191-194
John H. Goldthorpe and Keith Hope, "Occupational Grading and Occupational Prestige," 195-202
David L. Featherman & Robert M. Hauser, "Prestige or Socioeconomic Scales in the Study of Occupational Achievement?," 202-204
Robert W. Hodge, "The Measurement of Occupational Status," 205-213
Robert M. Hauser and John Robert Warren, "Socioeconomic Indexes for Occupations: A Review, Update, and Critique," 213-218

WEEK 6: Social Mobility

Tuesday, October 6

- Ralph H. Turner, "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System," 420-425
David L. Featherman and Robert M. Hauser, "A Refined Model of Occupational Mobility," 426-436
Robert Erikson and John H. Goldthorpe, "Trends in Class Mobility: The Post-War European Experience," 437-465
Richard Breen, "Social Mobility in Europe," 465-480
Gary Solon, "Intergenerational Income Mobility," 481-485

No class October 13th – FALL BREAK

WEEK 7: Who Gets Ahead?

Tuesday, October 20

- Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan (with the collaboration of Andrea Tyree), "The Process of Stratification," 486-497
Christopher Jencks, Marshall Smith, Henry Acland, Mary Jo Bane, David Cohen, Herbert Gintis, Barbara Heyns, and Stephan Michelson, "Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America," 498-504
David J. Harding, Christopher Jencks, Leonard M. Lopoo, and Susan E. Mayer, "Family Background and Income in Adulthood, 1961-1999," 505-515
William H. Sewell, Archibald O. Haller, and Alejandro Portes, "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process," 516-528
Richard Breen and John H. Goldthorpe, "Explaining Educational Differentials: Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory," 610-622
Bourdieu, "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste," 870-893
Annette Lareau, "Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life," 926-936

WEEK 8: Labor Markets and Networks

Tuesday, October 27

- Michael J. Piore, "The Dual Labor Market: Theory and Implications," 550-553
Aage B. Sørensen and Arne L. Kalleberg, "An Outline of a Theory of the Matching of Persons to Jobs," 553-561
Arne L. Kalleberg, "Nonstandard Employment Relations and Labour Market Inequality: Cross-national Patterns," 562-575
Martina Morris and Bruce Western, "Inequality and Earnings," 61-66
Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez, "The Evolution of Top Incomes," 67-72
Bruce Western, "Incarceration, Unemployment, and Inequality," 388-392
Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," 576-580
Nan Lin, "Social Networks and Status Attainment," 580-582
Ronald S. Burt, "Structural Holes," 583-587
Roberto M. Fernandez and Isabel Fernandez-Mateo, "Networks, Race, and Hiring," 587-595

WEEK 9: Poverty and the Underclass

Tuesday, November 3

- Timothy Smeeding, "Poverty, Work, and Policy: The United States in Comparative Perspective," 327-339
William Julius Wilson, "Jobless Poverty: A New Form of Social Dislocation in the Inner-City Ghetto," 340-349
Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass," 349-359
Anne R. Pebley and Narayan Sastry, "Neighborhoods, Poverty, and Children's Well-Being," 360-371
Robert J. Sampson and Jeffrey D. Morenoff, "Durable Inequality: Spatial Dynamics, Social Processes, and the Persistence of Poverty in Chicago Neighborhoods," 371-387
James Rosenbaum and Stefanie DeLuca, "Does Changing Neighborhoods Change Lives? The Chicago Gautreaux Housing Program," 393-399

WEEK 10: Racial and Ethnic Inequality (Part 1)

Tuesday, November 10

- Reynolds Farley, "Racial Identities in 2000: The Response to the Multiple-Race Option," 624-631
Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market," 632-646
Alejandro Portes and Robert D. Manning, "The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples," 646-657
Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants," 658-669

Mary C. Waters, "Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities," 669-672

WEEK 11: Racial and Ethnic Inequality (Part 2)

Tuesday, November 17

William Julius Wilson, "The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions," 691-703

Joe R. Feagin, "The Continuing Significance of Race: Antiblack Discrimination in Public Places," 703-709

Devah Pager, "Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration," 683-690

Melvin L. Oliver and Thomas M. Shapiro, "Black Wealth / White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality," 709-715

William Julius Wilson and Richard J. Taub, "There Goes the Neighborhood: Race, Ethnic, and Class Tensions in Four Chicago Neighborhoods," 716-727

WEEK 12: Gender Inequality (Part 1)

Tuesday, November 24

Arlie Russell Hochschild, "The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work," 730-734

Lisa Belkin, "The Opt-Out Revolution," 735-738

Heather Boushey, "Is the Opt-Out Hypothesis Convincing?," 739-746

Shelley J. Correll, Stephen Benard, and In Paik, "Getting a Job: Is there a Motherhood Penalty?," 759-770

Barbara F. Reskin, "Rethinking Employment Discrimination and Its Remedies," 770-779

Trond Petersen, "Discrimination: Conscious or Nonconscious?," 780-785

WEEK 13: Gender Inequality (Part 2)

Tuesday, December 1

William T. Bielby, "The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation," 786-797

Barbara F. Reskin, "Labor Markets as Queues: A Structural Approach to Changing Occupational Sex Composition," 802-812

David B. Grusky and Asaf Levanon, "Four Gloomy Futures of Sex Segregation," 812-825

Trond Petersen and Laurie A. Morgan, "The Within-Job Gender Wage Gap," 826-833

Paula England, "Devaluation and the Pay of Comparable Male and Female Occupations," 834-838

Tony Tam, "Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less?," 838-842

Francine D. Blau and Lawrence M. Kahn, "The Gender Pay Gap: Have Women Gone as Far as They Can?," 843-860