

Saint Louis University

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M-W 2:10-3:25
McGannon 121

THE STRUCTURE OF POVERTY, GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY WGST 3510/POLS 3800/SOC 3510

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the structural causes of poverty at the global and local levels from a multidisciplinary perspective. It also gives students an opportunity to explore ways in which average citizens can take action to alleviate poverty. While other variables will not be discounted, we will concentrate on the social, political, and economic structures that produce and perpetuate cycles of poverty. The global dimension of the course will focus primarily on developing countries while the local dimension will focus on policies and programs in the U.S. We will also examine the extent to which the structural causes of poverty are the same or different between the global and local levels.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to

- identify structural sources of, and some solutions to, poverty;
- analyze the impact of social policies on social problems, especially poverty;
- propose some ways that individuals can work together to bring about social change, in particular to alleviate poverty; and
- recognize the value of civic-political engagement for bringing about greater social justice.

In this course, we will use an intersectional approach to both the subject matter and to classroom dynamics. Intersectionality is the recognition that we are all individuals with multiple social identities that intersect and shape our worldviews, and that these intersecting identities privilege and disadvantage each of us in different ways. As your instructor, I will try my best to minimize the impact in the classroom of systemic discriminations like sexism, racism, transphobia, heterosexism, and ableism in an effort to create a safe learning environment for all. I ask that you join me in this effort to foster respect for one another, enhance solidarity, and build community.

TEXTBOOKS: The following texts are required for the course:

- Mark Rank, Lawrence Eppard, and Heather Bullock, *Poorly Understood: What America Gets Wrong About Poverty* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2021).
 - Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010).
- There are also additional articles or radio shows assigned, many of which are easily located online. Those that are available on Canvas are indicated with an asterisk.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES: Your final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

⇒ Attendance

It is important to attend each class meeting so that you remain engaged with the class material and discussions. I will keep a record of attendance. **You may miss a total of two class periods during the semester for any reason**, including illness (you need not provide an excuse); **additional absences will lower your grade. If a student misses one of the scheduled in-class small group discussions, it will count as two absences rather than one.** I strongly suggest that you “save” your absences for times when you may really need them during the semester, such as when you are ill. If there is some reason why you must miss more than two classes, please contact me to discuss the situation.

⇒ Class preparation and participation

I expect you to do each assigned reading *before* it is discussed in class (I will confirm at the end of each class what material we will cover in the next class meeting). Since the class periods will be a combination of lecture and discussion, your substantial, consistent, and thoughtful contributions to class discussion (as both a speaker and a listener) are essential. **I will use participation in class discussion as a factor in deciding borderline grades for the course.**

⇒ Discussion topics for class (5%)

I will divide students into two groups, one responsible for Monday’s class and the other responsible for Wednesday’s class. On your assigned day, email me one short quote or paraphrase from the day’s assigned reading that interested/surprised/puzzled/annoyed you (include page number), and in one or two sentences, briefly explain why. I will grade these Credit/No Credit. You can skip doing this for one class period during the semester. If you successfully complete 90% of these, you will earn an "A" for this portion of your grade; 80% will earn a "B", and so on. **These are due by 10:00 a.m.** on your assigned day.

⇒ Attendance at a WGS event and reflection (5%)

Once during the semester, attend an event on campus sponsored or co-sponsored by the department of Women's and Gender Studies. Then turn in a short reflection essay (approximately 250 words) that in the first paragraph summarizes the content or a theme of the event and in the second paragraph describes how it relates to something in the course. I will grade these Credit/No Credit.

There are many events to choose from: the WGS brown bag speaker series, the new speaker series on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as events co-sponsored with other departments. I will announce these upcoming events as they are scheduled, and they can also be found in the Women’s and Gender Studies bi-weekly emailed newsletter.

⇒ Service learning project and writing assignments (This will comprise the bulk of your course grade)

As a Jesuit university, St. Louis University has an interest not only in teaching students about social justice but also in helping them explore ways to promote it in practice. For this course, every student is required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of work on a service learning project during the course. Multiple students can work together on a single project if they

choose, but each must still log 12 hours. If you run into problems getting sufficient hours at your project site, contact me immediately--otherwise, you may earn no credit for the project.

If you choose to do your service learning at a site where you are already a volunteer, then your project must either be different from your current volunteer activities or must take your current volunteer work in a new direction.

This project will serve as the core of your reflection and research papers and determine the general topic for your annotated bibliography. All students will meet with me individually early in the semester to plan your project. There will also be some small group discussions during class in order to share ideas about your experiences.

Our class will be assigned an "embedded writing consultant" to assist those of you who wish to get help with any stage of the writing process, from conceptualization through the final product. I encourage everyone to seek their help--one can always improve one's writing skills.

Following are the individual components of the project:

Preliminary Reflection paper (5%):

About five weeks after the beginning of the semester, each student will write a 1-page description of their service learning project, including:

- Paragraph 1: What is the agency or site? What are its goals? Who does it serve? Why did you choose it? What is your role?
- Paragraph 2: Is this agency/site service- or social change-oriented? What makes you think so?

Students will exchange these written descriptions with the others in their small discussion groups before class and then comment on them during in-class small group discussions. The following week, students will turn them in to me for a grade. The due dates can be found in the class schedule, below.

Critical Reflection paper (15%):

Critical reflection is essential for deep learning and is a hallmark of Jesuit education. Critical reflection not only involves thinking about our experiences and what we have learned from them, but also why they are significant and how they will impact us in the future. In short, it helps us determine what an experience means for our lives. For the purposes of this course, you will write an approximately 3-page (750-word) paper that describes what your project means for how you can engage in social change activities in the future. This will be due near the end of the semester on the date specified below. As a guide, answer the following questions in your reflection paper:

- *Very briefly* describe your project agency/site and your activities (you can incorporate material from your Preliminary Reflection paper).
- What did you learn about how you can engage in social action? This might include things about, say, the effectiveness of certain strategies; or it might be something more personal, such as how the assumptions you made at the start of the project have changed or the types of activities that best suit you personally; or it might be skills you learned; or it might be something broader about how social change happens/does not happen.
- Which of your experiences were the most valuable in learning this?

Continued....

- Why does it matter that you learned this?
- How is this likely to affect your actions in the future?

The best papers will not only answer these questions but also **make explicit connections with course material** (e.g., the assigned readings and class discussions).

Project log (required):

You will need to keep a log of the time you spend on your service learning and turn it in with your Critical Reflection paper. Unless you are initiating an original project, it must be signed by a supervisor. Please use the "Service Learning Course Hours Form" for this purpose, available on the website of SLU's Center for Service and Community Engagement at <https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/center-for-service/pdfs/service-learning-course-hours.pdf>. **If you do not put in the minimum of 12 hours work on the project, it will significantly lower your Critical Reflection paper grade.**

Annotated bibliography of your research (20%):

Each student must turn in an annotated bibliography of **at least 10 reference works not assigned for the course** that you anticipate will be useful for your final paper. There is an online research guide prepared by Pius reference librarian Dr. Jill Bright (jill.bright@slu.edu) to help you get started. It can be found through the Pius Library website or at <http://libguides.slu.edu/poverty>. Dr. Bright is available to assist students, but don't contact her until you have begun doing the research on your own first.

Each student's bibliography should contain AT LEAST ONE reference from each of the following categories:

- scholarly books
- scholarly articles
- statistical abstracts or other statistical source
- scholarly encyclopedias (e.g., *The Encyclopedia of World Poverty*) (that is, cite at least one entry from at least one scholarly encyclopedia)
- websites run by established organizations (e.g., the U.S. government, international institutions such as the U.N., or NGOs), newspapers, or magazines
- Congressional or other legislative hearings (e.g., *CQ Weekly*)

Each bibliographic entry **MUST** contain both **a summary of what is in the source and an assessment of how useful it is likely to be for your final paper**. Do not simply copy down the article's Abstract; your entry needs to describe what YOU find potentially relevant in the selection, and it should be in your own words. As a rule of thumb, a minimum of four sentences is needed for an adequate entry. I will put some samples of well-written entries in a document on the course Canvas page entitled, "Sample Annotated Bibliography entries." You can also find a good online guide for writing an annotated bibliography at the Purdue University OWL website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>.

Your bibliographic selections should cover a range of the issues involved in your topic-- for example, do not have four sources that provide only statistical data.

For the version you turn in to be graded, **label each entry in bold type and note the category of reference it is** (e.g., scholarly book, statistical source, etc.). Also, **write your**

research question at the very beginning of the bibliography. The due date can be found in the class schedule, below.

Final research paper (40%):

This paper should be a scholarly analysis of the general topic area you have chosen (e.g., food insecurity; housing; child care; sweat shops) and an evaluation of the contribution your service learning agency/site (or those like it) can make to poverty alleviation. Your goal is to use your research and your experience working on the project to evaluate how citizens can bring about greater social justice for the issue you have chosen. In some cases, the organizations/sites where students do their projects will fall short of their initial expectations, but these will still be opportunities for learning. Be sure to address the following questions somewhere in your paper:

1. What does this issue have to do with poverty? (Include some history of the issue here.)
For example,
 - What have been the dominant political discourses about the issue?
 - What is the history of public policy/international policy about the issue?
 - What does the scholarly/scientific literature say about this issue?
2. How does the agency/site where you did your service learning project fit into this broader history of political action and discourse on poverty?
 - To what extent or in what ways can the organization/site help alleviate poverty, and/or what are its limitations?
3. What additional things need to happen in order to bring about greater social justice in your issue area? Be as specific as you can.

This paper should be approximately 5-7 typed pages (1250-1750 words) long, NOT including the reference list. I suggest that you **use subheadings** for different sections. Where possible, incorporate material from your annotated bibliography, your reflection paper, the assigned readings, class discussions, and things you have learned from your fellow students. **Indent and single space quotations** that run longer than three lines (and do not load up your paper with quotations. Instead, summarize an idea in your own words and attribute the original idea to the author with a citation).

Be sure to include citations for all of the articles/books/websites you use in your paper, including those assigned in the course. **Use either the APA, MLA, or Chicago citation style or an alternative the instructor has approved.** All of these **bibliographic entries must be complete.**

There should be a minimum of 10 citations; as a general rule of thumb, the more the better. Note that **you may only include a source in your bibliography/reference list if you explicitly refer to it in the text and include an in-text citation for it.** Also note that **every in-text citation should have a corresponding entry in your bibliography/reference list.**

Be sure to **proofread** all of your work before turning it in!

Group presentation (10%):

I will assign each student to a group of 3-5 students with whom you will meet periodically in class over the course of the semester. Each group will collaborate to create and deliver a 10-12 minute presentation to the rest of the class. These will be presented during the scheduled final exam period. The topic of each group's presentation can vary depending on the

students' interests, but it should include some sort of synthesis of the group's work over the course of the semester. Here are a few examples, but I encourage you to think of others—just get my approval before you proceed:

- What were the common themes among each of your projects/topics in terms of how to alleviate poverty?
- In what ways were your projects/topics different, why were they different, and in what ways does it matter?
- What are some promising practices, approaches, or solutions to alleviating poverty? They can be modeled on one or more of your projects/sites or they can be about how these approaches could be done better.
- What have you learned from each other that you didn't know before?

Your presentations can take any of a number of different forms. Here are just a few ideas:

- You can have everyone speak in turn.
- You can have one person speak and others do support work, such as write a script, create visuals, etc.
- You can create a video to show the class.
- You can create some sort of other product, such as a game for the class to play.

⇒ Electronic devices

Based on recent research, in order to maximize student learning, students may not use any electronic devices in class, including computers, phones, or tablets. Bring a paper and pencil to class to take notes.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mandatory Face Masks

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, key safeguards like face masks have allowed SLU to safely maintain in-person learning. If public health conditions and local, state, and federal restrictions demand it, the University may require that all members of our campus community wear face masks indoors.

Therefore, any time a University-level face mask requirement is in effect, face masks will be required in this class. This expectation will apply to all students and instructors, unless a medical condition warrants an exemption from the face mask requirement (see below).

When a University-wide face mask requirement is in effect, the following will apply:

- Students who attempt to enter a classroom without wearing masks will be asked by the instructor to put on their masks prior to entry. Students who remove their masks during a class session will be asked by the instructor to resume wearing their masks.
- Students and instructors may remove their masks briefly to take a sip of water but should replace masks immediately. The consumption of food will not be permitted.
- Students who do not comply with the expectation that they wear a mask in accordance with the University-wide face mask requirement may be subject to disciplinary actions

per the rules, regulations, and policies of Saint Louis University, including but not limited to those outlined in the *Student Handbook*. Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including any of the following:

- dismissal from the course(s)
- removal from campus housing (if applicable)
- dismissal from the University
- To immediately protect the health and well-being of all students, instructors, and staff, instructors reserve the right to cancel or terminate any class session at which any student fails to comply with a University-wide face mask requirement.

When a University-wide face mask requirement is not in effect, students and instructors may choose to wear a face mask or not, as they prefer for their own individual comfort level.

ADA Accommodations for Face Mask Requirements

Saint Louis University is committed to maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment. Individuals who are unable to wear a face mask due to medical reasons should contact the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (students) or Human Resources (instructors) to initiate the accommodation process identified in the University's [ADA Policy](#). Inquiries or concerns may also be directed to the [Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity](#). Notification to instructors of SLU-approved ADA accommodations should be made in writing prior to the first class session in any term (or as soon thereafter as possible).

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The full University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost's Office website at: https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf.

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites.

Title IX

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, **that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX Coordinator and share the basic facts of your experience.** This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX Coordinator will then be available to

assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

Anna Kratky is the Title IX Coordinator at Saint Louis University (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK or make an anonymous report through SLU's Integrity Hotline by calling 1-877-525-5669 or online at <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/slu>. To view SLU's policies, and for resources, please visit the following web addresses: <https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php> and <https://www.slu.edu/general-counsel>.

IMPORTANT UPDATE: SLU's Title IX Policy (formerly called the Sexual Misconduct Policy) has been significantly revised to adhere to a new federal law governing Title IX that was released on May 6, 2020. Please take a moment to review the new policy and information at the following web address: <https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php>. Please contact the Anna Kratky, the Title IX Coordinator, with any questions or concerns.

Disability Services Academic Accommodations

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR) to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact CADR, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at accessibility_disability@slu.edu or by phone at [314.977.3484](tel:314.977.3484). Once approved, information about a student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from CADR and within the instructor's official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact to CADR. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

The following schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs.

August 25: Introduction to the course

Focus: What is the difference between an individual and a structural explanation?

- What does social justice entail?
- Is charity the best way to achieve social justice?
- Is there a difference between doing service and doing activism?
- Home health care jobs: What is their potential role in poverty reduction?

Readings:

- Eduardo Porter, "Home Health Care: Shouldn't It Be Work Worth Doing?" *New York Times*, August 29, 2017, available online.

August 30: Why is there so much poverty in the U.S.?

Focus: Why does the U.S. have such a high poverty rate?

- What does it mean to be poor in the U.S.?
- What does poverty cost the U.S. as a society? What does it cost individuals?
- The U.S. has one of the weakest social safety nets in the industrialized world--why?

Readings:

- Rank et al., *Poorly Understood*, Section II. Why Is There Poverty? pp. 41-69; Section III. What Is the Cost of Poverty? pp. 73-96; and Section IV. Does Welfare Work? pp. 99-113.

September 1: How do we define and measure poverty?

Focus: Why do measures of poverty matter?

- How do we measure poverty in the U.S.? What are some alternatives?
- How does Sen define poverty?
- How does the "Grassroots Think Tank" promote changes consistent with Sen's notion of freedom as autonomy?

Readings:

- *John Iceland, *Poverty in America: A Handbook* (2006), Chapter 3 (pp. 20-37).
- *Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (1999), pp. xi-xiv, 3-8, 20-24, and 33-34.
- *Hal Adams, "A Grassroots Think Tank—Linking Writing and Community Building," in *Teaching for Social Justice* (NY: The New Press, 1998), pp. 81-97.

September 8: Global poverty

Focus: Poverty around the world

- Why should Americans care about poverty in other countries?
- What is "sustainable development?"
- How do we measure poverty around the world?
- In what ways does development affect women's and men's lives differently?

Readings:

- *Daniel Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), pp. 1-10.
- *Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (2015), pp. 1-7, 45-69, and 244-249.

September 13, 15: The demographics of poverty in the U.S.

Focus: How widespread is poverty in the U.S.?

- What does gender, race, ethnicity, and disability have to do with it?
- How do gender and other inequalities impact poverty among women?

Readings:

- Rank et al., *Poorly Understood*, Section I. Who Are the Poor? pp. 9-38.
- Pam Fessler, "Why Disability and Poverty Still Go Hand in Hand 25 Years after Landmark Law," National Public Radio story, July 23, 2015 (6.5 minutes long). Available online.
- Rani Caryn Rabin, "A Hunger Crisis in the LGBT Community," *New York Times*, July 19, 2016, available online on the *NY Times Well* blog.
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• **The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink*, by Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 11-12, 17-24, 36-39, 45-81, 84-91, 128-133, and 142-147 (on Canvas: "Shriver, Part 1").

Sunday, September 19, midnight

DRAFT OF PRELIMINARY REFLECTION PAPERS DUE: Email a draft of your 1-page Preliminary Reflection Paper to all of your small group members *and the instructor* by midnight on September 19 so that they can be read and then discussed in class on September 22 (no late papers will be discussed).

September 20, 22: The demographics of poverty in the U.S., *continued*

Focus: Why are African Americans' poverty rates so high?

- Wealth vs. income: why is the distinction important?
- What role has structural racism played in causing poverty among Black and brown Americans?
- Is access to food a feminist issue?

Readings:

- *Melvyn Oliver and Thomas Shapiro, *Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality* (1995), pp. 303-17 (excerpted in Sarah Ferguson, *Mapping the Social Landscape*, 4th edition [Boston: McGraw Hill]) and pp. 45-50 (photocopied from original book).
- Andrew W. Kahrl, "Black People's Land Was Stolen," *New York Times*, June 23, 2019, available online.
- NY Times editorial, "An Unfair Property Tax System," *New York Times*, April 4, 2021.

Small group discussion #1 in class on September 22. Topic: Comment on each others' drafts of Preliminary Reflection papers. The group discussions will last about 15 minutes total.

Readings, *continued*:

- Fred Harris and Alan Curtis, "The Unmet Promise of Equality," *New York Times*, March 1, 2018, available online.
- Mikki Kendall, *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot* (Penguin Books, 2020), "Hunger," pp. 31-46.

September 27, 29: The demographics of global poverty

PRELIMINARY REFLECTION PAPERS DUE ON SEPTEMBER 27. You will turn in this 1-page paper at the beginning of class. No late papers will be accepted.

Focus: Poverty in the developing world

- What is meant by the term "structural violence"?
- How do different axes of oppression (e.g, gender, race/ethnicity) interact with poverty?
- Why are women key to reducing poverty in the developing world?
- What is the connection between violence and women's economic livelihood?
- What is the role of health care in reducing poverty?
- What is the role of education in reducing poverty?

Readings:

- *Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (2005), pp. 29-50.
 - Begin reading Kristof and WuDunn (below).
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- Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky* (2009), read the Introduction and your choice of five of the following eight chapters: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12.

October 4, 6: The system of economic globalization

Small group discussion #2 in class on October 6. Topic: How has your service learning project affected you personally, or your assumptions or ideas about how things work?

- Focus:
- The history of global capitalism
 - What are the prerequisites of development?
 - What role do governments play in the expansion of global capitalism?
 - What are the gendered impacts of globalization?
 - What has been the impact of neo-liberal trade policies in poverty alleviation?
 - Is the free flow of labor across borders a good idea? Is it politically feasible?

Readings:

- *Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (2015), pp. 92-138.
- *Ha-Joon Chang, “Kicking Away the Ladder: How the Economic and Intellectual Histories of Capitalism Have Been Re-Written to Justify Neo-Liberal Capitalism” (2002). In *Post-Autistic Economic Review* 15(3): 1-4.

- *Cynthia Enloe, “The Globe Trotting Sneaker [1996],” in *Feminist Frontiers*, 7th ed., edited by Verta Taylor, Nancy Whittier, and Leila J. Rupp (2007), pp. 458-462.
- *Dani Rodrik, “Globalization for Whom? Time to Change the Rules—and Focus on Poor Workers” (2002). In *Harvard Magazine*, July-August, pp. 1-3.
- *Alice Evans, "Inclusive Prosperity for Global Supply Chains," *Boston Review Forum* 11 (44.3, 2019), pp. 59-63.

October 11: Political ideology in the U.S. regarding poverty and welfare

Guest instructor: Dr. Linda Nicholson, Prof. Emerita of Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Prof. Emerita of History, Washington University

Focus: How do we in the U.S. understand poverty and the welfare state

- Different types of Western welfare states and their underlying ideologies
- U.S. views of poverty, inequality, and rights
- Contract vs. charity, and their implicit gender codes

Readings:

- *Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, “Contract vs. Charity: Why Is There No Social Citizenship in the United States?” In *The Citizenship Debates*, ed. Gershon Shafir (1998), pp. 113-130.
- *Theda Skocpol, “The Limits of the New Deal System and the Roots of Contemporary Welfare Dilemmas.” In *The Politics of Social Policy in the U.S.*, ed. Margaret Weir, Ann Shola Orloff, and Theda Skocpol (1988), READ ONLY pp. 298-307.

October 13: NO CLASS

October 18: Discourses on poverty

Focus: How do we view “the poor”?

- “Us” vs. “them”
- Who are the “undeserving poor” and who benefits from this concept?
- In what ways is poverty discourse gender-specific?
- What is the role of politics in policies to alleviate poverty?

Readings:

- Rank et al., *Poorly Understood*, Section V. How Extensive Is Inequality? pp. 127-154 and Chapter 19, Why Do The Myths Persist? pp. 157-165.
- *Sharon Hays, *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform* (2003), pp. 121-128 and 136-177.

October 20: “Welfare reform” or a “war on welfare”? The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA)

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY.

Focus: • Political values and U.S. social welfare policy

- Should we try to improve TANF?
- What kinds of policies help employees be both better workers and caregivers?
- What kinds of policies would boost family pay and incomes?
- How would men benefit from these programs as well as women?

Readings:

- *Sharon Hays, *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform* (2003), pp. 9-24.
- * *The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink*, by Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 237-273 (on Canvas: “Shriver, Part 2”).

October 25: A new perspective on “the culture of poverty”

Small group discussion #3 in class on October 25. Topic: In what ways does your service learning site/agency/project connect to course material about alleviating poverty?

Focus: The broad impact of racism across American society

- Does culture matter? If yes, in what way(s)?

Readings:

- *Heather McGhee, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* (New York: One World, 2021), Chapter 1. An Old Story: The Zero-Sum Hierarchy, pp. 3-15; Chapter 2. Racism Drained the Pool, pp. 17-39; and Chapter 10. The Solidarity Dividend, pp. 255-289.

October 27, November 1: The crisis in affordable housing

Focus: • Who is affected by the lack of affordable housing in the U.S. today?

- What difference does one's neighborhood make?
- What are the causes of the current housing crisis? Are they the same for the un-housed as they are for the stretched middle class?
- How is the housing crisis connected to racial/ethnic discrimination?
- What are some current efforts to create affordable housing? What strategies work best?

Readings:

- *Mikki Kendall, *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women That a Movement Forgot* (Penguin Books, 2021), "Housing," pp. 205-216.
 - Nicholas Kristof, "A Better Address Can Change a Child's Future," *New York Times*, August 3, 2019, available online.
 - *Linda Gibbs, Jay Bainbridge, Muzzy Rosenblatt, and Tamiru Mammo, *How Ten Global Cities Take on Homelessness: Innovations That Work* (Oakland, CA: The University of Calif. Press, 2021), Chapter 4. Developing an Affordable Housing Strategy, pp. 70-85 and Chapter 6. Prevention That Works, pp. 104-118.
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- Conor Dougherty, "Build, Build, Build....," *New York Times*, Feb. 16, 2020, available online at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/13/business/economy/housing-crisis-conor-dougherty-golden-gates.html>
 - Sarah Mervosh, "Minneapolis, Tackling Housing Crisis and Inequity, Votes to End Single-Family Zoning," *New York Times*, December 13, 2018, available online at <https://nyti.ms/2GgoJP0>.
 - *Heather McGee, *The Sum of Us*, Chapter 7. Living Apart, pp. 167-191.

November 3: Structural inequality: The racial and class segregation of schools

Focus: • Whatever happened to education as the great equalizer?

- What is the current state of school desegregation?
- Why don't colleges admit more low-income students?

Reading:

- Nikole Hannah-Jones, "It Was Never About Busing," *New York Times*, July 14, 2019, available online.
- *Excerpt from Paul Tough, "The Impossible Math of College Admissions," *New York Times*, September 15, 2019.

November 8: Structural inequality: The organization of work in the U.S. today

Focus: • What led to the disappearance of good jobs in the U.S.?

- Why are so many of the remaining jobs low wage?
- Does corporate American have a responsibility to invest in its workers?

Readings:

- *Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (2015), pp. 239-243.
- Nicholas Kristof, "McDonald's Workers in Denmark Pity Us," *The New York Times*, May 10, 2020, available online.
- Listen to Terry Gross, Fresh Air interview with Rick Wartzman, "The Decline of Good Jobs in America," first aired July 5, 2017 (30 minutes long), available online.
- Neil Irwin, "The Great American Janitor Test," *New York Times*, September 3, 2017, available online.
- N. Gregory Mankiw, "CEOs Are Qualified to Make Profits, Not Lead Society," *The New York Times*, July 24, 2020, available online.

November 10: Rethinking the structure of work; Guaranteed basic income

Small group discussion #4 in class today. Topic: Based on your service learning experiences, what policies or practices do/don't seem promising for alleviating poverty?

- Focus:
- What's wrong with work today?
 - Is work as currently structured obsolete?
 - How can independent contractors acquire benefits that full-time workers get?
 - How would a guaranteed basic income work?
 - What is politically feasible?

Readings:

- To the Best of Our Knowledge with Anne Strainchamps, "What's Wrong With Work?" aired September 1, 2018, available online (50 minute podcast).
- Look at the website of The Freelancers' Union, especially the tab, "In the Press."
- *Brishen Rogers, "Basic Income in a Just Society," *Boston Review*, Forum 2: Work, Inequality, Basic Income (2017), pp. 11-29.

November 15: Non-college routes to middle class jobs

Guest speaker: To be announced

Focus: Should everyone have to go to college to get a good job?

Readings:

- John Hanc, "With Innovation, Colleges Fill the Skills Gap", *NY Times*, June 7, 2017, available online at <https://nyti.ms/2sSkAVI>.
- Steve Lohr, "'Second Route' to Middle Class," *NY Times*, June 29, 2017, available online.

November 17: The impact of climate change on global poverty

- Focus:
- How does climate change exacerbate global inequality?
 - What are some solutions?

Readings:

- To be announced.
- *Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (Columbia Univ. Press, 2015), pp. 393-445.

November 22: Global Migration

CRITICAL REFLECTION PAPER DUE TODAY.

- Focus:
- Why do people migrate across borders?
 - Is migration a feasible anti-poverty strategy?
 - What role do governments/social policies play in migration?
 - What is the political impact of migration?

Readings:

- *Ronald Skeldon, "Migration and Poverty," *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* 17(4): 67-82 (2002).
- Richard Partington, "Conflicts and Poverty Drive Big Jump in Global Migration, Finds Report," *The Guardian*, December 5, 2018, available online.

November 24: Thanksgiving break, NO CLASS

November 29: Poverty alleviation strategies: Macro-level policy changes

- Focus:
- Is the U.S. welfare state model adequate for a post-industrial society?
 - The male breadwinner model: What's wrong with it?
 - What policies support greater gender equity?

Readings:

- *Nancy Fraser, "Reinventing the Welfare State," in *Boston Review* (Feb./Mar., 1994).
- Rank at el., *Poorly Understood*, Chapter 20. Reshaping Social Policy, pp. 166-176.
- *Caitlyn Collins, *Making Motherhood Work: How Women Manage Careers and Caregiving* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press), Chapter 2. Sweden, pp. 27-68.

December 1: International development through foreign aid: strategies and consequences

Small group discussion #5 in class today. Topic: Prepare for group presentations. Decide on your topic, divide up tasks.

- Focus:
- Democratic vs. autocratic governments: Why does it matter for development?
 - What are the obstacles to good governance?
 - How has foreign aid exacerbated bad government?
 - What is Easterly's solution?
 - What is Sach's solution?

Readings:

- *William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (2006), pp. 132-159 (NOTE: Start reading at p. 132 even though the photocopy starts at p. 112).
- *Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development* (2015), Chapter 14. Sustainable Development Goals, pp. 480-511.
- Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky* (2009), chapter 13

December 6: Poverty alleviation: Active citizens, advocacy, and the role of civil society

Focus: • Competing conceptual frames: Is the primary issue one of poverty or inequality?

- How can increased equality benefit societies?
- What role do active citizens play in development? How does that work?
- In what ways can transnational activist networks help alleviate poverty?
- What are the strengths of a rights-based approach to development?

Readings:

- Rank at al., *Poorly Understood*, Chapter 21. Creating the Change, pp. 177-184.
- *Duncan Green, *From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World* (2008), pp. 2-6, 18-33, and 58-63.
- *Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (1998), pp. 1-3, 16-22 (NOTE: Stop reading at the "Symbolic Politics" subheading on p. 22).

December 8: A matter of justice, a matter of citizenship, a matter of security

Optional date for small group discussions, if needed to prepare for group presentations.

Focus: • What are the ways in which world poverty has been framed in our course readings?

- Which frames do you find most convincing? Which do you think are the most effective with different audiences?

Readings:

- *Thomas Pogge, "Priorities of Global Justice," in *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate*, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (2003), READ ONLY pp. 552-556.
- *Lael Brainard, Derek Chollet, and Vinca LaFleur, "The Tangled Web: The Poverty-Insecurity Nexus," in *Too Poor for Peace*, eds. Lael Brainard and Derek Chollet (2007), READ ONLY pp. 1-5.

December 14, 2:00

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE

December 16, 2-3:50.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS