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### **Course Description**

Inequality is a core global social problem that affects the foreseeable future at all levels—local, national, and international. Since the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, inequality within nations has substantially increased, which threatens our ability to improve overall quality of life and the human condition.

This U.S.-focused course starts with intersectionality—the notion that systems of oppression intersect, are interdependent, and produce different outcomes for different people based on their social location—as its theoretical and epistemological base. It familiarizes students with classical and contemporary theories of social stratification and assesses how contemporary stratification scholars engage the complex and changing nature of inequality across systems of oppression and social institutions.

### **Required Materials**

Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*  
Glenn, *Unequal Freedom*  
Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*  
Massey, *Categorically Unequal*  
Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Doméstica*  
Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*  
Moore, *Invisible Families*

### **Course Requirements**

Op-Eds. You will compose three (3) essays that take the style of an op-ed piece on inequality in response to course readings. These pieces should be three-to-five pages in length and should draw on course content and current events to make a specific argument about inequality. These should be written for an educated readership but should not be overly laden with academic jargon.

Blog Posts. Each week, you will contribute a post to our class blog. Posts should critically engage the course readings for the week in approximately 750 words. Feel free to draw on relevant links, articles, videos, or other resources. Blog posts are due by 8 AM each Tuesday in advance of class.

Discussion Facilitation. You (and perhaps a collaborator) will be responsible for facilitating the class discussion on a chosen week. This should not be a rehash of the readings. Instead, you are to pose key questions, highlight and synthesize major themes and ideas, and set the discussion agenda.

Final Paper. The final course paper can critically review the literature in a particular area of social stratification, join together existing literatures in new ways, or present a secondary analysis of data. The final paper is a research paper, and should therefore draw on scholarly sources. It should be approximately 20 pages and be written in the form of a scholarly article. We will workshop the final papers, and a rough draft is due November 11<sup>th</sup>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **August 26<sup>th</sup>: Background & Theoretical Introductions I**

- Neckerman, Kathryn M. and Florencia Torche. 2007. "Inequality: Causes and Consequences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 33:335-357.
- Parsons, Talcott. 1940. "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification." *American Journal of Sociology* 45(6):841-862.
- Tumin, Melvin M. 1953. "Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis." *American Sociological Review* 18(4):387-394.
- Clark, Rob. 2011. "World Income Inequality in the Global Era: New Estimates, 1990-2008." *Social Problems* 58(4):565-592.

### **September 2<sup>nd</sup>: Background & Theoretical Introductions II**

- Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94:S95-S120.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6):1360-1380.
- DiMaggio, Paul and Filiz Garip. 2012. "Network Effects and Social Inequality." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 93-118.
- Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67(5):747-776.

### **September 9<sup>th</sup>: Intersectionality & Black Feminist Thought**

- Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: 139-67.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. 1997. "Feminist Theory and Sociology: Underutilized Contributions for Mainstream Theory." *Annual Review of Sociology* 23:97-120.

→ OP ED I DUE

### **September 16<sup>th</sup>**

- Glenn, *Unequal Freedom*
- Leicht, Kevin. 2008. "Broken Down by Race and Gender? Sociological Explanations of New Sources of Earnings Inequality." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 237-255.
- Risman, Barbara J. 2004. "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism." *Gender & Society* 18(4):429-450.

### **September 23<sup>rd</sup>**

- Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*
- Massey & Fischer, "The Ecology of Racial Discrimination"

### **September 30<sup>th</sup>**

- Massey, *Categorically Unequal*

- Wilkinson, Richard G. and Kate E. Pickett. 2009. "Income Inequality and Social Dysfunction." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35:493-511.
- Khan, Shamus Rahman. 2012. "The Sociology of Elites." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 361-377.

→ OP-ED II DUE

### October 7<sup>th</sup>

- Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Doméstica*
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor." *Signs* 18(1):1-43.
- Portes, Alejandro. 2007. "Migration, Development, and Segmented Assimilation: A Conceptual Review of the Evidence." *Annals of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 610 (March): 73-97.

### October 21<sup>st</sup>

- Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*
- Wakefield, Sara and Christopher Uggen. 2010. "Incarceration and Stratification." *Annual Review of Sociology* 36:387-406.
- Wildeman, Christopher. 2012. "Imprisonment and Infant Mortality." *Social Problems* 59(2):228-257.

→ PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

### October 28<sup>th</sup>

- Moore, *Invisible Families*
- Tilcsik, András. 2011. Pride and Prejudice: Employment Discrimination Against Openly Gay Men in the United States, *American Journal of Sociology* 117(2):586-626
- Skim Kortney Ryan Ziegler's blog, <http://blackademic.com/>
- Data from the Social Justice Sexuality Project (will be made available on UMDrive)

→ OP-ED III DUE

### November 4<sup>th</sup>

No class; work on initial drafts of final papers

### November 11<sup>th</sup>: Rough Drafts Due

### November 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>: Paper Workshops

### December 2<sup>nd</sup>: Course Wrap-up

**Final Papers Are Due Tuesday, December 9, 2014.**