

Poverty, Wealth and Privilege Section 80

SOCI 165

Spring 2023 3 Unit(s) 01/25/2023 to 05/15/2023 Modified 01/24/2023

Contact Information

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Synchronous Online Course

Mondays 10:30-11:45

On Zoom here: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/88928872635> (<https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/88928872635>)

Office Hours

Mondays 2-3 p.m. on Zoom:

<https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/92544100827>

Course Description and Requisites

An examination of the causes and consequences of inequality along the dimensions of social class, race/ethnicity, gender, citizenship status, and/or sexualities. Approach may be local, national or global.

Prerequisite: SOCI 1 or equivalent.

Letter Graded

Program Information

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to think sociologically about the relationship between social structure, interaction, identities, and inequalities.
2. Students will be able to identify and explain major sociological theories and apply them to everyday life.
3. Students will be proficient in qualitative and quantitative research design, data collection and data analysis.
4. Students will be proficient in oral and written communication skills appropriate to the discipline.
5. Students will be able to practice sociology as educated and civically engaged persons.

Course Goals

"The opposite of poverty is not wealth. The opposite of poverty is justice."

-Bryan Stevenson, Death Row Lawyer and Advocate for Equity

According to the course catalog, Sociology 165 is "[A]n examination of the causes and consequences of inequality along the

dimensions of social class, race/ethnicity, gender, citizenship status, and/or sexualities. The approach will be local, national, and international.” In light of the catalog description, this class will explore what the implications are of the top 0.1% controlling as much wealth as the bottom 90% in the USA, why inequality is increasing between the wealthy and the poor, what is the relationship between the USA’s high poverty rate and it being the wealthiest nation in the world, and what are various solutions and obstacles to solutions to our excessive inequity. As the renowned sociologist C. Wright Mills stated, “personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues - and in terms of the problems of history making.”

In this class, we will explore the poverty, wealth and privilege through sociological lenses. This course will analyze how human beings interact with these phenomena from both macro and micro perspectives. To this end, material will be based on both qualitative descriptions and quantitative trends of contemporary poverty, wealth and privilege. This course will challenge the myth of meritocracy and will answer the following questions: How do personal issues and social problems overlap? Which of the three dimensions, poverty, wealth and privilege garner the most attention? And, How? And, Why? What role does activism play in social change? When does inequity become a concern for masses of people? How and when do people commit to change for equity? In the process of examining the social construction and destructive forces of poverty, wealth and privilege, the course will address a number of other relevant topics, including: social inequity, classism, racism, feminism, sexism, political responses to poverty and the wealth gap, and consequences of/for policy.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Institutional Outcomes	Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Method
Critical Thinking	Students will be able to define the core terms and the major theoretical approaches of Poverty, Wealth and Privilege and apply these concepts to various social manifestations.	Class Discussion, Open-ended questions on assignments and reflections
Communication	Students will be able to articulate insights generated from core terms and major theoretical approaches and discuss how these concepts inform the study of present day Poverty, Wealth and Privilege .	Class discussion, assignments and reflections
Evaluate Empirical Sociological Research	Students will read and evaluate empirical sociological research.	Class discussion, assignments and reflections
Valuing Diversity and Global Awareness	Students will understand how identities such as race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, and nationality contribute to a range of social experiences and social perspectives regarding Poverty, Wealth and Privilege.	Class discussion, Group work (including group assignments)
Self-Awareness	Students will be able to discuss their interpretations of Poverty, Wealth and Privilege as they relate to their lived experiences by evaluating the impact their structural position has on their lives, as well as the lives of others.	Class discussion, assignments and reflections

Course Materials

All course readings are available through the class resources on Canvas and/or online. You may have to purchase a couple of films online for this course.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Reading. I expect all of the material to be read with a critical eye. Give yourself adequate time after each reading to reflect on the author’s central argument(s) and take notes.

Dialoguing. I expect you to show up to the synchronous online Zoom meetings prepared to discuss course material.

Participation. Active participation in class discussion and classroom activities is expected.

Assignments. There will be at least one assignment due each module throughout the semester.

Quizzes. There may be quizzes assigned throughout the semester.

Facilitation. Please expect to facilitate an informed conversation amongst your peers.

Below is the course outline. This schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Changes will be made via Canvas. Readings and other course material should be completed for the week before the synchronous Zoom meetings.

Date(s)	Topics and some films we will be viewing. Additional Associated Readings and media listed on Canvas	Reminders
MODULE 1	Introduction to the Course	
MODULE 2	Introduction to Poverty, Wealth and Privilege	
MODULE 3	Intersectionality: The Roots of Inequity, Power, Poverty, Wealth and Privilege	Check: Last Day to Add Courses and Register Late
MODULE 4	Theory, Class and Class Inequity How do major sociological theories and theorists understand and/or address stratification?	
MODULE 5	Power and poverty	
MODULE 6	Power, Capital and Alienation We will watch the movie, <i>The Corporation</i> for this module.	

Date(s)	Topics and some films we will be viewing. Additional Associated Readings and media listed on Canvas	Reminders
MODULE 7	<p>A Deeper Look at Wealth</p> <p>We will watch either <i>The One Percent</i> or <i>Born Rich</i>.</p> <p>Watch <i>The One Percent</i> if your last name begins with A-M. Watch <i>Born Rich</i> if your last name begins with N-Z.</p> <p>Links to the films are available here:</p> <p><i>The One Percent</i></p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK35cxb3rkA</p> <p><i>Born Rich</i></p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maWdDI_OjIQ</p>	
MODULE 8	White Supremacy and the Racial Caste System	
MODULE 9	SPRING BREAK	
Module 10	<p>FBI and State Sanctioned Racially Based Murder</p> <p>We will watch the movie, <i>The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther</i> for this module.</p>	
MODULE 11	Critical Race Theory, the Racial Wealth Gap and John Lewis	
MODULE 12	Citizenship, Undocumented Statuses and Immigration	

Date(s)	Topics and some films we will be viewing. Additional Associated Readings and media listed on Canvas	Reminders
MODULE 13	Residential Segregation and Environmental Injustice	
MODULE 14	Schooling and -Isms	
MODULE 15	Gender Inequity and Feminism	
MODULE 16	Invoking the Imagination within Neoliberalism	
MODULE 17	Overcoming Oppression, Building a Better Future	

✓ Grading Information

*In-class Zoom dialoguing and discussion, participation and activities	40 pts
Module Assignments, flipgrids, discussion boards and/or quizzes	250 pts.
Group Facilitation	25 pts.
Final Project	35 pts.
TOTAL	350 pts.

*Students must be present during synchronous Zoom classes to receive credit for Zoom participation and activities.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

331-350+ = A
315 - 330 = A-
303 - 314 = B +
293 - 302 = B
280 - 292 = B -
268 - 279 = C +
258 - 267 = C
245 - 257 = C -
233 - 244 = D +
223 - 232 = D
209 - 222 = D -
000 - 208 = F

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.