

Politics of Inequality
Rutgers University - Newark
Spring 2022
Tuesday 6:00 – 9:00pm
Hahnes Building 322

Professor: Domingo Morel, PhD
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Covid-19 Statement from Rutgers University

In order to protect the health and wellbeing of all members of the Rutgers-Newark community, masks must be worn by all persons inside campus buildings when in the presence of others, and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth. Masks must be worn during class meetings. Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app found at: [myRutgers Portal](#).

Course Description

In the past four decades, the United States has experienced an unprecedented rise in income and wealth inequality. How has the American political system affected levels of inequality in the U.S.? How has inequality shaped American politics? This course is designed to help students understand the political causes and consequences of inequality in America. The course will cover various topics including political participation, campaign finance, economic policy, housing, policing and incarceration, and education.

Course Format and Requirements

This course meets once a week. Attendance and active participation are important aspects of your class experience and evaluation. The course meetings will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, and student presentations. In addition to reading the assigned materials, students must come prepared to discuss current events as well. Each class will begin with a discussion of current events in American politics.

Course Assessment

- 2 short papers (15% each): First paper due by Friday, March 1. Second paper due by Friday, April 22.
- Final Paper Proposal/Interview Questions (10%)
- Final paper (30%)
- Final presentations (15%)
(Paper topic, guidelines, and submission instructions will be posted on course website and discussed in class.)
- Discussion/Participation (15%)

Short Paper:

Students are expected to submit 2 short papers throughout the semester. The papers will provide a critical analysis of the day's reading assignments. Students will choose which day to submit the assignment. The first paper is due by Friday, March 11. The second paper is due by Friday, April 19. The paper should be 2 pages in length and should include the following: brief summary of the readings, major arguments; and analysis and critique of the readings. Papers are due via e-mail (domingo.morel@rutgers.edu and aa2014@newark.rutgers.edu).

Discussion/Participation:

Our class will benefit greatly from active participation from all class members. The unique analysis and personal experiences that each of you contributes to the discussions will help educate the rest of us. Class participation consists of the following components: (1) attending class; (2) Be prepared by doing the required readings (3) engaging regularly in class discussions.

COURSE POLICIES

Communications Inside and Outside of Class: Each student is responsible for all communications made during our class meetings as well as via e-mail. Periodically, the instructor will find it necessary to convey information to the class outside of our in-class sessions. In general, I will post any class announcements via e-mail to your Rutgers e-mail address.

Accommodations:

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Students with Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact ODS, register, have an initial appointment, and provide documentation. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and documentation submitted) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided to the student. The student must give the LOA to each course instructor, followed by a discussion with the instructor. This should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations:** Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Counseling Services:** Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall, (973) 353-5805 or <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>.
- **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries:** Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.
- **Students Who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does NOT have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.

Learning Resources:

- Rutgers Learning Center (tutoring services)
Room 140, Bradley Hall
(973) 353-5608
<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/learning-center>
- Writing Center (tutoring and writing workshops)
Room 126, Conklin Hall
(973) 353-5847
nwc@rutgers.edu
<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>

Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity:

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Electronic Devices

Cell phones should be off while students are in class.

Contacting the Professor

Students are encouraged to make an appointment by email to discuss course material, assignments and other academic concerns.

COURSE MATERIALS

All readings will be posted on our class Canvas site.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

The class readings may change slightly as salient policy issues may evolve over the course of our class. I will let you know about changes to the syllabus at least a week in advance.

Date	Topic
Tuesday, January 18	Introduction and Class Overview
Tuesday, January 25	NO CLASS
Tuesday, February 1	Inequality <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jencks, Christopher. 2002. "Does Inequality Matter?" <i>Daedalus</i> 131(1):49-65. (Canvas)▪ McCarty, Nolan. 2013. "The Political Roots of Inequality." (Canvas)▪ Jamila Michener & Margaret Teresa Brower. 2020. "What's Policy Got to Do with It?: Race, Gender & Economic Inequality in the United States." (Canvas)▪ Thompson, Derek. 2012. "A Giant Statistical Round-Up of the Income Inequality Crisis in 16 Charts." (Canvas)
Tuesday, February 8	Democracy and Inequality <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Larry Bartels. 2008. <i>Unequal Democracy</i>. Chapter 1. (Canvas)▪ Gilens, Martin. 2005. "Inequality and Democratic Responsiveness." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 69 (5):778-96. (Canvas)▪ Elizabeth Drew, "How Money Runs Our Politics," <i>The New York Review of Books</i>, June 4, 2015: http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2015/06/04/how-money-runs-our-politics/
Tuesday, February 15	Poverty in America <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Iceland, John. 2013. "Methods of Measuring Poverty," in <i>Poverty in America</i>. (Canvas)▪ Jay Shambaugh, Lauren Bauer, and Audrey Breitwieser. 2017. "Who is Poor in the United States." (Canvas)▪ Fremstad, Shawn. 2020. "The Defining Down of Economic Deprivation: Why We Need to Reset the Poverty Line." (Canvas)
Tuesday, February 22	Politics of Poverty <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Katz, Michael. "The Undeserving Poor: Morals, Culture and Biology", Chapter 1 in <i>The Undeserving Poor: America's Enduring Confrontation with Poverty</i> (Canvas)▪ Minoff, Elisa. 2020. "The Racist Roots of Work Requirements." (Canvas)
Tuesday, March 1	Welfare Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Christopher Howard, "The Hidden Side of the American Welfare State," <i>Political Science Quarterly</i> Vol. 108, No. 3 (Autumn 1993): 403-436. (Canvas)▪ Holt, Steve. (February 2006) "The Earned Income Tax Credit at Age 30: What We Know." Pages 1-17 Brookings Research Brief. (Canvas)▪ "Minimum Wage," in <i>The CQ Researcher, Issues for Debate in American Public Policy</i> (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc, 2014, 15th edition) pp. 281-299. (Canvas)
Tuesday, March 8	Anti-Poverty Policy Retrenchment <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Schram, Sanford. 2017. "Neoliberalizing the Welfare State." (Canvas)▪ Edin, K. & Shaefer, L. 2016. "20 years since welfare "reform"". <i>The Atlantic</i>. (Canvas)

- Ehrenfreund, M. 2016. “How welfare reform changed American poverty, in 9 charts”. (Canvas)

Tuesday, March 15

Spring Break

Tuesday, March 22

Policing and Incarceration

- Terry-Ann Craigie, Ames Grawert, Cameron Kimble, and Joseph E. Stiglitz. 2020. “Conviction, Imprisonment, and Lost Earnings: How Involvement with the Criminal Justice System Deepens Inequality.” (Canvas)
- Emily Bazelon [moderator]. 2020. “Police Reform Is Necessary, But How Do We Do It?” The New York Times Magazine. June 13. [Discussion with Alicia Garza, Phillip Atiba Goff, Vanita Gupta, Sam Sinyangwe, and J. Scott Thompson]. (Canvas)

Tuesday, March 29

Housing Segregation and Inequality

- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. 2018. “How Real Estate Segregated America.” (Canvas)
- Yglesias, Matthew. 2015. “Everything you need to know about the affordable housing debate.” Vox. (Canvas)
- Desmond, Matthew. 2016. “The eviction economy.” NYTimes (Canvas)
- Rothstein, Richard. 2014. “The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Root of its Troubles.” <http://www.epi.org/publication/making-ferguson/>

Tuesday, April 5

K-12 Education

- Morel, Preface and Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 6. (Canvas)

Tuesday, April 12

Higher Education

- Mettler, Suzanne. Degrees of Inequality, Chapters 1, 2 and 7 (Canvas)

Tuesday, April 19

COVID-19 and Inequality in America

- Readings To Be Determined

Tuesday, April 26

Conclusion – Final Paper Presentations