

Sociology 273.003: Social and Economic Justice
Fall 2011
Peabody 203
Tuesday-Thursday 11am-12:15pm

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Why we are here

This course explores issues related to social and economic justice in contemporary society. We will emphasize exploring conditions of injustice along with the mass movements that have sometimes arisen to fight these injustices. In particular, we will focus on issues related to poverty and inequality; the environment; work; race, ethnicity and immigration; sex and sexual orientation; health and healthcare; education; criminal justice and democracy. What sorts of injustices exist in these areas, and what are people doing to end them? When do people recognize something as injustice? What leads people from thinking about injustice to doing something about it? You will have an experience in working to reduce social and economic injustices through community based services.

Stuff you have to do

Students are expected to do the assigned reading, to attend class, to participate actively in class discussions, and to critically engage with their service learning. Class time will usually build on the readings, sometimes review them, but never replace them. Often, there will be in-class group assignments that require the readings to have been completed. You will sometimes be tested on readings at the start of class (as discussed below). You should always bring the assigned reading(s) to class. This way when I ask a question, instead of staring blankly, you can flick through the pages, looking for an answer. It makes the silence much less uncomfortable for all of us. If you are using a computer, please be respectful of those around you.

Exams (45% of final grade)

The three exams will be of the normal sort, consisting of a mixture of short answers, terms for you to define, and short essays showing your ability to apply the material to new circumstances. These exams are to ensure that you have mastered the basic concepts of the class and can apply the information to new situations. Bring a blue book on exam day. You and your classmates will develop most of the questions on the exams. Each exam will be worth 15% of your final grade.

Quiz Making (10% of final grade)

Four times during the semester, you will construct quiz questions and answers. Due dates are based on your last name, and are listed in the syllabus. You will have five opportunities to hand these in, so your top four grades count. You can hand these in early, but not late. Quiz questions will be submitted online twelve hours before class starts. This assignment is described more fully in a handout.

Quiz Taking (10% of final grade)

Many days class will start with a short quiz. There are twelve days where this quizzes will be offered to you, and your top ten count. You will receive full credit if you demonstrate that you read the assigned materials. You will receive partial credit if you give it your best shot. You will re-

ceive no credit if you don't take the quiz. As you might have figured out by now, the quizzes will be made by you and other students in the course.

Service Learning (15% of final grade)

Students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of service during the semester at a community partner site. Ideally, this will enhance your readings and lectures by allowing you to actively applying course concepts. In the second week of the course, we will match students with community partners. By the third week, students are expected to have begun service and submitted their service-learning agreement. Ideally, you will work 3-5 hours a week for 10 weeks. You will keep a service-learning journal, but the content will not be graded. You will hand in this journal along with a short paper critically examining your community service the day of the final.

Blog Post and Presentation (5% of final grade)

The class will be updating a blog—sejnews.web.unc.edu—with posts on social and economic inequality. Once during the semester you will be required to update the blog with current events related to facts and statistics related to inequality; movements against inequalities; and policies impacting inequalities. For the blog, you will be responsible for creating a succinct summary of inequality related news since the class last met. The blog is posted for the whole world to see, but you don't have to use your own name if you don't want to. This must be posted before class starts. You will also be required to present this information to the class in a three to four minute presentation. Your presentation will start class that day, so you must be prepared by 11:00am. This project is joint with one other student, but you will receive your own grade. We will pick days on the second day of class.

Wikipedia Edits (15% of final grade)

The writing assignment is to improve the quality of Wikipedia articles related to social and economic justice and movements to against injustice. In general, Wikipedia is awesome. Coverage of sociology in general and social justices issues in specific, however, is not as impressive. The mission of our class is to improve this. You will be expected to contribute substantially to Wikipedia by creating and improving articles. The effort you spend on this should be equal to that of an 8–10 page paper. The goal of this assignment is similar to that of a term paper: providing you an opportunity to demonstrate the ability to apply course learning to a new subject, but has the advantage that the final product will not be immediately thrown away by me or you, but rather will live on in a publicly available format as long as it is useful and accurate.

Final Grade

A grade of 93½ and above will qualify for an A; 90 and above A-; 86½ and above B+; 83½ and above B; 80 and above B-; 76½ and above C+; 73½ and above C; 70 and above C-; 60 and above D; and below 60 is an F. The grading system for this course heavily rewards those who keep current with the readings, attend class, and pay attention. To get an A, you have to do all that, plus demonstrate an ability to apply stratification theories to new situations; find, evaluate and summarize academic research on inequality; and present your findings in a coherent and convincing way.

No Deals

The grading system described above will be used for everyone. No exceptions. If you are going to miss class because of an athletic event, you should let me know in advance via email so that you can make up any in-class work. You can't take any of the exams late or early unless you have a really good reason. If you think you have a good reason, contact me ahead of time. If you notice that a grade posted to Sakai is missing or wrong, please let me know as soon as possible.

Stuff I have to do

I'm responsible for giving you the opportunity to learn all you can about social and economic justice. I'll try to make coming to class worth your time and money. If you email me, I'll try to respond quickly. If you want to chat, stop me after class, come by my office hours, or set up an appointment. I'll do my best to communicate clearly what my expectations are for receiving good grades for each assignment and for the course overall. I'm also responsible for making sure that your grade is fair, although Carmen, the TA, will be doing most of the grading. Carmen and I will work to let you know your grades quickly so that you know how you are doing in the course throughout the semester. Carmen will be available to meet with you to discuss why you were given a specific grade, or anything else related to the course

Films

In addition to the readings, lectures, we will be watching several films in this course. They are listed on the syllabus. In addition to being historical records of social and economic injustices and movements to combat injustices past and present, many of these films provide unique chances to explore the emotional intensity of social movement participation. They are also required viewing. You will be tested on their content at exam time. I'll try and put as many as possible on reserve, but no promises. We will often watch abridged versions of the films in order to have enough time to complete the film and discuss in during the same class period.

Academic Integrity

Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected. Transgressions will be reported. Don't cheat, plagiarize or otherwise engage in academic misconduct. Familiarize yourself with the University policy on Academic Dishonesty. If in doubt, ask me or the TA. All academic work in this course, including homework, quizzes, and exams, is to be your own work, unless otherwise specifically provided. It is your responsibility if you have any doubt to confirm whether or not collaboration is permitted.

Readings

Several books are required. You will be expected to do the readings for each day prior to class. The books are available at the Student Store and other places. They are all cheaper online. The current price for new copies of all these books on Amazon is \$125.01.

- Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan. 2011. *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. Columbia University Press.
- David Snow and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. Norton
- Randy Shaw. 2008. *Beyond the Fields: Cesar Chavez, the UFW, and the Struggle for Justice in the 21st Century*. University of California Press.
- Jerome H. Skolnick and Elliott Currie. 2011. *Crisis in American Institutions*. Allyn and Bacon. (Note: Listed as CAI in readings list.)

Additional readings will be on the course's Sakai website.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

This is our current plan. If we get ahead, behind, or change directions, updated schedules will be made available.

Justice and Legitimizing Injustice

- 8/23 Tuesday No reading
- 8/25 Thursday Cook and Hegtvedt, "Distributive Justice, Equity, and Equality" pages 217-226 (on Sakai) and the Wikipedia entry on Social Justice (Group 1)
- 8/30 Tuesday Johnson et al., "Legitimacy as a Social Process" skip "The Illustration of Organizational Forms" section (on Sakai) (Group 2)

Thinking about movements and grievances

- 9/1 Thursday Snow and Soule, Chapter 1 and 2 (Group 3)

Environmental Hazards

- 9/6 Tuesday CAI 23, 24, 25 (Group 4)
- 9/8 Thursday Shaw, Chapters 1, 2, 5 (Group 5)
Film: *The Fight in the Fields*

Poverty and Inequality

- 9/13 Tuesday CAI 9, 12, 5 (Group 1)
- 9/15 Thursday CAI 10, 11, 28 (Group 2)
- 9/20 Tuesday Shaw, Chapter 4 (Group 3)
Film: *Occupation*

Race Ethnicity and Immigration

- 9/22 Thursday CAI 13, 15 16 (Group 4)
- 9/27 Tuesday Klanderman's et al. "Embeddedness and Identity: How Immigrants Turn Grievances into Action" (on Sakai) (Group 5)

- 9/29 Thursday Shaw, Chapter 6 (Any group)
Film: *Prom Night in Mississippi*
- 10/4 Tuesday Shaw, Chapters 7-8 (Group 1)

Criminal Justice

- 10/6 Thursday CAI 39, 37, 38 (Group 2)
- 10/11 Tuesday Exam 1

Health and Healthcare

- 10/13 Thursday CAI 30, 31, 32 (Group 3)
- 10/18 Tuesday Marmot, (on Sakai) (Group 4)
Film: *Unnatural Causes*
- 10/20 Thursday Fall Break

Education

- 10/25 Tuesday CAI 33, 34 (Group 5)
- 10/27 Thursday CAI 35, 36; Student Movements (on Sakai) (Group 1)
Film: *Waiting for Superman*

Sex, Sexuality and Morality

11/1	Tuesday	CAI 17, 18, 19 (Group 2)
11/3	Thursday	"Same-sex marriage" (on Sakai) (Group 3)
11/8	Tuesday	Snow and Soule 4 and 5 (Group 4) Film: <i>Unborn in the USA</i>
11/10	Thursday	Snow and Soule, Chapter 6 (Group 5)
11/15	Tuesday	Exam 2

Thinking globally

11/17	Thursday	CAI, Part XII (Group 1)
11/22	Tuesday	Chenoweth and Stephan, Pages 1-10; 30-61 (Group 2)
11/24	Thursday	Thanksgiving
11/29	Tuesday	Chenoweth and Stephan Chapter 4,5 or 6; and Chapter 7 (Group 3) Film: <i>Bringing Down a Dictator</i>
12/1	Thursday	Chenoweth and Stephan, Pages 199-228 (Group 4)
12/6	Tuesday	Shirkey, "The Political Power of Social Media" and Gladwell, "Small Change" (on Sakai) (Group 5)
12/13	Tuesday	Exam 3