

**Department of Sociology
Dartmouth College
Winter 2017**

Inequality and Social Justice (Sociology 45)

Professor: Marc Dixon

Office: 102 Silsby

Phone: 603-646-9041

E-mail: Marc.D.Dixon@Dartmouth.edu

Course Information:

MWF, 12:50-1:55, 006 Kemeny Hall

X-Period: Tuesday, 1:20-2:10

Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 2-3:30,
or by appointment

Course Description:

How are valued resources such as wealth, prestige, and power, distributed across different groups in society? What are the consequences of rising inequality? What would a just society look like? This course examines these and other questions with a survey of two central research areas in the social sciences: social inequality and social activism. In the first part of the course we take up sociological research on the extent of economic and social inequalities in the United States, how they are generated, and the consequences they bear. Part two considers a variety of activism arising in response to stark inequalities, the strategies activist groups adopt and the extent to which they affect change.

Readings:

All required articles, book excerpts and other media are posted on the Canvas course site.

*Note that there are several recent books on course topics you might find helpful. Many of these are available through the Dartmouth Library and are listed on the Canvas course main page.

Course Requirements and Evaluation: Grades are based on the following:

Course Requirements

Participation—5%

Reading Questions—5%

Weekly Assignments—15%

Group Presentation—15%

Midterm—30%

Final Paper—30%

Grading Scale

A 93-100

A- 90-92.99

B+ 87-89.99

B 83-86.99

B- 80-82.99

C+ 77-79.99

C 73-76.99

Etc.

1—Participation: While I will lecture on certain materials, your attendance and active participation are crucial. Active class participation can take a variety of forms, including enthusiastic and intellectually rigorous discussion, work on in-class assignments, and regular class attendance. Students who do not attend class regularly will have points deducted from their participation grade.

2—Reading Questions: Students will submit reading questions in advance of class three times during the term and attend class that day prepared to discuss them. Questions are due by 8AM the day of class. Dates are split by last names:

A-D will submit questions for classes on 1/11, 1/18 and 1/24

E-M for 2/1, 2/7 and 2/15

N-Z for 2/22, 3/1 and 3/8

3—Weekly Assignments: Starting on Monday, January 9, we will begin each week or course segment with a short exercise relating to the topic and readings; seven total. In class students will work through a set of problems for fifteen to twenty minutes and will submit their write-up via Canvas, or to the instructor if writing by hand. We will spend the next segment of the class period working through these questions as a group. Assignments are graded on a simple scale of full (3 points), partial (1-2 points) and no credit (0 points). Please Note: I count your top six scores. Write-ups will not be accepted if the student does not attend and participate in class that day. Late write-ups are not accepted.

4—Group Presentation: In groups of two or three, students will provide a short (10-15 minute) summary of a reading and topic area and then lead a class discussion on the issue. The written product will be one to two-page single-spaced brief that conveys the basics of the presentation in paragraph form. Any power point slides or presentation links (if using) must be e-mailed to me by 8AM the day of the presentation. The write-up is due at the beginning of class. Students will sign up for presentation groups by the beginning of week 2.

5—Midterm Exam: We will have an in-class midterm exam on Wednesday, February 8. The exam will cover material from lectures, class discussions, presentations, videos, and readings. Notes are allowed.

6—Final Paper: Students will write a ten to twelve-page term paper due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, March 8. The purpose of the paper is to give you the chance to spend some time thinking about something of relevance to inequality and social justice that interests you. You have considerable leeway in choosing a topic but you must clear it with me first. To this end, students will submit a one-page description of their paper topic by Monday, February 13. Late papers are penalized ten points (one letter grade) per day.

Course Policies:

Classroom Etiquette: Contribute. Attend all class meetings. Be on time. Be engaged and thoughtful. Be an informed participant. Read the materials in advance and come prepared to weigh in on them. Above all, do your part to help make this a great learning experience. This

means: DO ask questions. DO challenge ideas, and foster debate and dialogue in class. DO contribute helpful resources for learning. DO take me and your fellow students seriously. And, Please, Please DO NOT message with friends, shop, sleep, walk in and out of class, converse with others, and otherwise disrupt lecture and discussion. It is nearly impossible for me to concentrate on lecturing and guiding discussions, and for others to hear, pay attention, and participate in discussions when students are behaving in disrespectful and/or disruptive ways.

Honor Principle: Assignments will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in the Dartmouth Organization, Regulations and Courses. I also encourage students to read Dartmouth's statement on Sources and Citations:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

Religious Holidays: If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Course Schedule & Assigned Readings:

The following is an outline. I will occasionally update required readings and will almost always post supplemental news coverage, data-driven journalism, and other inequality-related materials for your edification. **It is your responsibility to check the canvas course calendar at the beginning of each week.**

Date	Topic & Assigned Readings
<i>Introductory Statements</i>	
1-4	Course Introduction and Overview
1-6	What is Social Justice? Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter From a Birmingham Jail" Michael Sandel, "The Case for Equality" Lane Kenworthy on Tolerance
1-9	Foundational Readings and Debates on Inequality Max Weber, Class, Status, and Party Pierre Bourdieu, The Forms of Capital
1-11	Foundational Debates, Part II Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification" Melvin Tuman, "Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis"
<i>The Shape of Inequality in the United States</i>	
1-13	Inequality Trends, Causes & Consequences Timothy Noah, "The United States of Inequality"

	Johnathan Fisher and Timothy Smeeding on Income Inequality Thomas Piketty and Emanuel Saez, <i>Inequality in the Long Run</i>
1-16	MLK Day—No Class Meeting
1-17	X-Hour Inequality Trends, Causes & Consequences, Part II Ken Hou-Lin and Don Tomaskovic-Devey, “Financialization and U.S. Income Inequality” Lane Kenworthy, “Is Inequality harmful?”
1-18	Growth at the Top Emmanuel Saez, “Striking it Richer” Lisa Keister, “The One Percent” Brook Harrington on the Wealth Management Industry
1-20	Problems in the Middle Kevin Leicht and Scott Fitzgerald. 2014. “The Struggling Middle Class.” Bruce Western et al., “Economic Insecurity and Social Stratification”
1-23	Poverty in the US Research Briefs from Sheldon Danziger and Christopher Wimer Kathryn Edin, excerpt from <i>Two Dollars a Day</i>
1-25	Inequality by Race and Ethnicity, Part I Excerpts from Joe Feagin’s <i>Racist America</i> Kevin Stainback and Don Tomaskovic-Devey, excerpts from <i>Documenting Desegregation</i> Patricia Hill Collins on Intersectionality
1-27	Inequality by Race and Ethnicity, Part II Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations” Matthew Hall et al., “Variations in Housing Foreclosures by Race and Place, 2005-2012.”
1-30	Gender Inequality Paula England, “The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled” Excerpt from Dan Clawson and Naomi Gerstel’s <i>Unequal Time</i>
2-1	Guest Speaker: Kathryn Edin Readings TBA
2-3	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity at Work HRC Corporate Equality Index Marc Dixon et al. on State Nondiscrimination Laws
2-6	Education & Mobility Excerpts from Annette Lareau and Sean Reardon Stephen Raudenbush and Robert Eschmann, “Does Schooling Increase or Reduce Inequality?” Jason Houle, “Disparities in Debt”
2-7	X-Hour American Views on Inequality Leslie McCall and Lane Kenworthy, “Americans’ Social Policy Preferences in the Era of Rising Inequality”
2-8	Mid-term exam
2-10	No Class Meeting

<i>Social Justice Activism</i>	
2-13	A Primer on Social Justice Activism Charles Tilly, excerpts from <i>Social Movements, 1768-2008</i>
2-15	Movements for Economic Justice Vincent Roscigno and William Danaher, "Media and Mobilization." Marc Dixon, "Union Organizing and Outreach in the Contemporary United States."
2-17	Civil Rights Activism Joseph Luters on Civil Rights and Southern Business Michael Biggs and Kenneth Andrews, "Protest Campaigns and Movement Success"
2-20	Women's Movement Activism Robert Goldberg on the National Organization of Women Madeline Kunin, excerpts from <i>The New Feminist Agenda</i>
2-21	X-Hour Environment, Part I Jedediah Purdy, "Environmentalism Was Once a Social Justice Movement."
2-22	Environment, Part II Shannon Bell and Yvonne Braun, "Coal, Identity, and the Gendering of Environmental Justice Activism in Central Appalachia"
2-24	No Class Meeting
2-27	Food and Social Justice, Part I Barry Estabrook, "The Price of Tomatoes"
2-28	X-Hour Food and Social Justice, Part II Saru Jayaraman, Excerpts from <i>Behind the Kitchen Door</i>
3-1	Campus, Part I Nella Van Dyke, "Hotbeds of Activism" Sarah Soule on Anti-Apartheid Activism and Divestment
3-3	No Class Meeting
3-6	Campus Activism, Part II Angus Johnston, "Student Protests Then and Now"
3-8	Course Wrap-up and Final Reports Due Taking Stock of Inequality and Social Justice Michael Burawoy, "Facing an Unequal World"