Instructor  Dr. Rob White, Turlington 3356 (rwhite@ufl.edu)  
Fall 2012 Office hours: Monday (3:00-4:00) Wednesday (3:00-4:00) or by appointment.

Meeting Times  Wednesday 5th-7th Periods (11:45-2:45) (Time subject to change pending students’ schedules.)  
Turlington (TBA)

Course Description

This is a graduate level seminar that examines social stratification in the United States. We will review theoretical frameworks for studying social inequality and evidence for a range of social processes which result in unequal distributions of individual resources. In this course, individual resources will be thought of as anything which matters for individual well-being. This includes wealth, education and health as well as the rights accorded by citizenship and freedom from discrimination. Throughout the semester, we will consider inequalities in both outcomes and opportunities and pay careful attention to the consequences of inequalities for intergenerational social mobility. Our emphasis will concern alternate approaches for understanding the emergence and persistence of social inequalities. We will cover many methods used by sociologists for studying inequality and consider inequalities by race, ethnicity and gender throughout the semester.

There is no prerequisite for this course. Students from any social science discipline will find many areas of interest in the course. The multi-disciplinary nature of our selected readings will provide many opportunities during the course to advance your current research interests as well as discover cross-cutting themes with other subfields of sociology and criminology including family, gender, race, education, labor markets and criminal justice. The readings have also been carefully selected to reflect the wide range of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods which are used in studying social inequality.

Course Format

Our primary objective is to review the classical origins and current unsettled areas of sociological research concerning social inequalities. Weekly discussions and class activities will provide opportunities to engage the material independently and in groups. The course is also designed to provide students a venue for critically thinking about the dimensions of social inequality in their own research and advancing a part of their current work. There are five main components of the course that will contribute to your course grade.

1. Class participation. All of our class meetings are organized around group discussion making the success of our course largely dependent upon our collective engagement with the material. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the substance and methods in our readings. Class participation will contribute 15% of the overall course grade. An unexcused class absence will earn a zero score for that day’s class participation.

2. Leading class discussion. Each student will be designated to lead discussion for the first half of a single class during the semester. Prior to each class, the designated class leader will circulate a set of discussion questions concerning the assigned readings. During class time, the leader will be responsible for providing a brief introduction summarizing the relevance of the readings and then leading discussion for the first half of class.
3. Reaction papers. Four essays will be completed over the semester to provide another venue for carefully reflecting on the course readings. Each essay should address two or more of the papers designated for the reaction paper assignment and may be either a critique, an insight provoked by the readings that is distinct from the readings' findings or some combination of critique and insight. Reaction papers will be limited to 3-5 double-spared pages and will be evaluated according to the strength of the analysis.

4. Paper presentation. Each student will make a 15 minute presentation of a reading that is not required for the class. These should be chosen from the supplementary readings listed in the syllabus. An outside reading not listed on the syllabus may also be presented in consultation with the instructor.

5. Individual paper project. The final requirement of the course is completing a substantial paper. The project is an excellent opportunity to develop a thesis proposal, advance an important part of your thesis work or explore a new research idea. There are three possible formats: (1) a critical literature review for a potential thesis project; (2) a thesis proposal; or (3) a complete research paper. Other projects can be considered in consultation with the instructor. The project should be chosen according to your interest and current stage of your thesis research. The substance of the final project should relate in some way to the course material, although this may be determined in consultation with the instructor in cases where there is some initial uncertainty identifying themes related to inequality in your research. Completed papers must be between 5,000-7,000 words of text (excluding abstracts, tables, footnotes and references). This is approximately 15-22 double spaced pages. There are four important parts of the project. First, a project proposal will be submitted at an early stage in the semester. Second, a draft project will be due after spring break. This draft should have many of the projects pieces completed, albeit in draft form. Third, a 15 minute conference style presentation of the project will occur in one of the final two class meetings. The fourth and final part is submitting the complete paper during exam week. Detailed guidelines will be provided that specify the precise format and expectations for each of the different possible projects.

The final course grade will be based on the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Participation in class discussion.</th>
<th>30</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading discussion.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Four reaction papers.</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Paper presentation.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project: Proposal (1-2 pages).</td>
<td>Due Feb 13</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Project: Draft (8 pages minimum)</td>
<td>Due March 20</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Presentation.</td>
<td>April 17 or 24</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Final submission.</td>
<td>Due May 3</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>Total:</td>
<td>200</td>
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Letter grades will be determined by the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum %</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>184</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>156</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
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<td>130</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>120</td>
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Weekly Readings

Required readings include journal articles and book chapters and are available on the course e-Learning website. There are no required texts for this course. Listed supplementary readings are not required for class.
Week 1 (Jan 9) – Structures of Stratification


Supplementary


Week 2 (Jan 16) – Occupation and Status Attainment


Supplementary


Week 3 (Jan 23) – Educational Attainment (I) – The Structure of Schooling


Supplementary


Week 4 (Jan 30) – Educational Attainment (II) – Family Background


Supplementary

**Week 5 (Feb 6) – Intergenerational Mobility (I) – Trends**


*Supplementary*


**Week 6 (Feb 13) – Intergenerational Mobility (II) – Families and Institutions**


*Supplementary*


**Week 7 (Feb 20) – Income Inequality and Family Background**


**Supplementary**


**Week 8 (Feb 27) – Social Exclusion**


**Supplementary**


**March 6 – No Class (Spring Break)**
Week 9 (Mar 13) – Health Inequalities (I) – Fundamental Causes


Supplementary


Week 10 (Mar 20) – Health Inequalities (II) – Poverty and Access


Supplementary

Week 11 (Mar 27) – Discrimination and Criminal Justice


Supplementary


Week 12 (Apr 3) – Poverty and Risk in Low Wage Markets


Supplementary

Week 13 (Apr 10) – Neighborhoods and the Reproduction of Inequalities


Supplementary


Week 12 (Apr 17) – Class Presentations

Week 13 (Apr 24) – Class Presentations