

Sociology 6080

Seminar in the Sociology of Poverty

Dr. Stephen J. Scanlan

Call #1951
Section 100
Thursdays 4:35-7:20
Bentley Annex 102
Spring Semester 2013

Office: Bentley Hall Annex 125
Phone: 593-1384
E-mail: scanlans@ohio.edu
Twitter: @StephenJScanlan
Office Hours: T 3:00-5:00, W 1:00-3:00
and by appointment

“Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times—times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation—that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.”

--Nelson Mandela

Course Goals and Objectives

In this course we will explore contemporary issues, research, and theory important to the sociology of poverty and its global and local connections. There are dynamic and multi-faceted micro- and macro-level processes that reveal a world of vast differences and inequality among the global citizenry both within and between countries. This course is designed to provide understanding of and utilizing the sociological perspective to help better grasp the challenges and complexities of poverty broadly defined in the contemporary world. The goals of the course are to do the following:

1. Provide students an understanding of key perspectives for examining poverty in the United States and throughout the world.
2. To utilize a broad lens and an informed perspective to contemplate, discuss, and critically evaluate the theoretical foundations and contemporary debates regarding poverty and its connection to important social issues.
3. To develop a broad familiarity with and engage in the critical analysis of theoretical formulations and empirical research on poverty with an emphasis on the evaluation of that research as part of a community of scholars that I seek to establish in the classroom.
4. To become familiar with the body of literature and data available for doing research on poverty and develop the ability to generate original research that contributes to contemporary understanding of issues important to sociology.

The nature of a sociology course. In this seminar we will deal with a number of topics that are often controversial. You are free and encouraged to offer the class any comments and/or disagreement you may have. Dialogue and debate are essential to the active learning environment that is central to the seminar format of this class and of which you are the most important component. You will *not* be penalized for disagreeing with other students or the instructor, but please be certain your perspective is based on evidence from course or other readings. In addition, varied points of view must be expressed in a manner that is sensitive to differences in ability, class, ethnicity, lifestyle preference, race, religion, or sex, and should not be expressed so as to be perceived as a personal attack. In short, having respect for others' differences is the most important prerequisite for enrollment in this course.

Required Texts and Readings

1. Auyero, Javier. 2009. *Flammable*. New York: Oxford University Press.
2. Collier, Paul. 2008. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. New York: Oxford University Press.

3. Eller, Ronald D. 2008. *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
4. Gowan, Teresa. 2010. *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homeless in San Francisco*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
5. Magdoff, Magdoff and Brian Tokar. 2010. *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
6. Munck, Ronaldo. 2005. *Globalization and Social Exclusion: A Transformationalist Perspective*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
7. Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation, Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press.
8. Rivlin, Gary. 2010. *Broke, USA*. Publisher: New York: Harper.
9. Shelley, Louise I. 2010. *Human Trafficking*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
10. There are also articles that I have posted on Blackboard that are designated as such in the course outline below.

In addition to the above, students can enhance the content, discussion, and understanding of the course by staying abreast of poverty and related concerns through reading newspapers such as *The New York Times*, or *The Wall Street Journal*, periodicals such as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Economist*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, or *The Nation*, listening to *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, or *BBC News Hour* on National Public Radio (WOUB-FM Athens 91.3) or watching *NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer nightly on WOUB-TV. In addition, students may also find that the Internet is a wonderful source of information on poverty, international media sources, and related issues that the mainstream media in the United States do not address.

Course Requirements

1. *Class Participation*. I will base 18.2% of your final grade on class participation. Given the seminar designation of this course, classes will consist primarily of discussion and the exchange of ideas. Although I will help guide discussion and offer input for consideration I will never formally lecture in this course. Class meetings will consist of responses and reactions to each week's readings and presentation of student research ideas and progress. Because this is a graduate level seminar you are given as much responsibility for the course as possible. Thus, I fully expect students to participate, meaning that you should complete the assigned readings before class, take notes on them, and be prepared to contribute ideas. Of course, because we have a breadth of material to cover I will certainly make sure that we stay focus and directed, hitting key concepts.

Regarding participation, every student will have the opportunity to be the discussion leader/co-leader for our weekly class meetings. Students in this role are expected to be the class "experts" on the readings for that day of the course. The students *are not required to make a formal presentation* but will informally generate and guide discussion. Discussion leaders should therefore have numerous questions in mind for the class to consider and be prepared to be the point-person for the readings and related issues. Finally, students are free (but not required) to bring in additional materials to assist with the discussion as they see fit, though it is important to check in with the instructor.

To facilitate dialogue and assist the instructor and discussion leaders, *everyone* is required to electronically submit potential discussion questions *to the entire class* using the discussion board tool on the course homepage of Blackboard *before 12:00 p.m.* every Thursday through Week 13 of the semester. I will set up the mechanisms for these on Blackboard and as well as compile and distribute the questions to the class. In addition to "jump-starting" discussion for class in that students will have each already considered potential topics, posting questions will serve several additional purposes:

- a. To develop critical thinking skills by helping students to formulate critiques that elaborate upon the course readings.
- b. To garner student input on issues that are most interesting and deemed most imperative to class content, thus giving students important responsibility for direction of the course.
- c. To help the instructor assess who is having difficulty grasping course material and/or reflecting upon readings and expressing appropriate questions and ideas in writing.

There will certainly be times when you forget to submit questions, do so late, or on those extremely rare occasions when you did not get to all of the readings and I understand this. For this reason I do not assign a letter grade to your submissions but instead simply consider them "complete/incomplete" and look at them

cumulatively over the semester to provide something “quantitative” upon which to base your class participation that complements the more “qualitative” active participation in class discussion that I find to be even more valuable and central to graduate study and class time.

2. *Critical Reflections.* To further assist in the development of the ability to think and write critically about poverty, students are to complete a minimum of six essays reacting to and reflecting upon the required readings and texts for each week. The essays must be typed, double-spaced, and be no more than 2 pages in length and submitted *electronically* to me prior to each of the ten regular class meetings from weeks 2 to 13. The essays in total comprise 27.3% of the final grade (individually each is worth 25 points or approximately 4.5% of the total grade). Students may choose to do all ten essays over the course of the semester and I will use each student’s six best essays to compute the final grade. Late reflections will not be accepted and students cannot “save them up” to be turned in later. Students may find it beneficial to use the essays to formulate and expand upon ideas for class discussion or explore options for the term paper or other research projects. I will provide a handout with additional details for critical reflections on Blackboard.

3. *Data Assignment.* It goes without saying that good research needs good data to analyze. To help students develop familiarity with the range of empirical data available for research on poverty, students are to complete a synopsis of an existing *published* data source or research organization and share it with everyone else in the course. This will enable everyone to be familiar with multiple data sources and use peer synopses as a resource for teaching and current or future research. The assignment is worth 100 points or 18.2% of the final grade. I provide more specific instructions for this assignment in a separate handout on Blackboard, including choices of data sources from which to select. The assignment is to be formatted using the template that I provide and is due *electronically at 11:59 p.m. on February 14* at which time students are also required to distribute their findings to everyone else in the course via the e-mail function of Blackboard. Late papers will be accepted, but only at the cost of a 5-point deduction for each day late.

4. *Research Project.* Students are to complete/develop/propose an original research project examining poverty using data from existing sources or that they generate/propose on their own. The final product is to be no longer than 20 typed, double-spaced pages including all references and tables and is worth 36.4% of the final grade. The project can be an intensive literature review, a detailed research proposal, or a more finalized project complete with findings such as a conference paper or thesis/dissertation chapter. The research project should therefore not be a mere “course paper” but instead a first or continued step in an attempt to contribute original scholarship on poverty. Therefore students should model their paper to serve as a thesis or dissertation proposal or chapter or be the foundation for a conference presentation or research publication. In other words, when this course is completed your work on the topic of choice is only beginning!

A brief 1 page statement of topic and consideration of theory and hypotheses is due in class on **January 31**. A detailed outline of the paper and expanded bibliography is due on **March 21** in preparation for individual meetings during Week 12 to discuss progress on the paper and address any difficulties one may be having. Students will present their papers in seminar on **April 18, April 25**, and if necessary **May 2** (the designated final exam day) using a professional meetings/conference style format that we will discuss at a later date. The final paper is due **at 11:59 p.m. on May 2**. Late papers will be accepted but only at the cost of a 5-point deduction for each day late. A separate handout will provide more details for the research project and the various stages will be posted on Blackboard.

Final Grades

1. *Grade breakdown.* The breakdown for final grades is as follows:

Class Participation	100 points (18.2%)
Critical Reflections	150 points (27.3%)
Data Assignment	100 points (18.2%)
Research Project	<u>200 points (36.4%)</u>
	550 points (100%)

2. *Grading scale.* Final grades will be determined using the standard grading scale:

A	93-100 (509 points or more)	C	73-76 (399-420 points)
A-	90-92 (493-509 points)	C-	70-72 (383-398 points)
B+	87-89 (476-492 points)	D+	67-69 (366-382 points)
B	83-86 (454-475 points)	D	63-66 (344-365 points)
B-	80-82 (438-453 points)	D-	60-62 (328-343 points)
C+	77-79 (421-437 points)	F	Below 60 (327 points or less)

Academic misconduct. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated, and all cases of academic misconduct will be immediately addressed using standard university policy and procedures to ensure a student's right of due process. According to Section 3 of the Ohio University Student Code of Conduct, academic misconduct is "Dishonesty or deception in fulfilling academic requirements. It includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, un-permitted collaboration, forged attendance, fabrications, using advantages not approved by the instructor, knowingly permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from one's work, or submitting the same assignment in different courses without consent of the instructor." In short, assignments, exams, and other means of evaluation for the course are a reflection of an individual's ability to comprehend and complete the course material and students are responsible for understanding what the various forms of academic misconduct entail. The instructor may impose a grade penalty for academic misconduct and/or file a judicial referral. Academic misconduct is subject to a maximum sanction of disciplinary suspension or expulsion from the university.

Having made this statement I still encourage you to work together outside of class as you complete course requirements because peer cooperation, review, and support are important components of higher education and academic research. For more information on academic misconduct, examples, policies, and procedures I encourage you to consult the University Judiciaries website at: <http://www.ohio.edu/judiciaries/academic-misconduct.cfm#academic>. For tutorials, additional information, and links on plagiarism students can consult the following website: <http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/index.html>.

Student Services

I am more than willing to discuss student concerns and progress throughout the semester during office hours or individual appointments, and will make every effort to assist those who are experiencing difficulty in this course. In addition there are several other options available on campus for students who need extraordinary assistance, and I encourage you to take advantage of the following services if necessary:

Academic Advancement Center	Career Services	Counseling and Psychological Services
Alden Library 101	Baker Center 533	Cady Hall (temporarily)
593-2644	593-2909	593-1616

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require services and accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (348 Baker University Center, 593-2620) to make arrangements for having disability addressed in this course. I am happy to accommodate student needs and students with documented disabilities should make their needs known to the instructor and seek available assistance in a timely manner.

Cell Phones and Laptops

Out of respect for the instructor and other students please turn off cell phones during seminar. If it is absolutely necessary that such devices remain on (e.g., in times of an extreme emergency) then please sit near the exit of the room, turn off ringer or set to vibrate, and remove oneself from the classroom when answering. Students are welcome to use laptops in lectures for taking notes and other course-related activities that do not distract other students during lecture. Thank you for your cooperation on these fronts!

Course Outline

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics/Readings/Tasks</u>
1	1/17	<p><i>Course Introduction and Overview of Poverty</i></p> <p>Iceland, John. 2012. "Methods of Measuring Poverty." Pp. 20-37 in <i>Poverty in America: A Handbook</i>. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Ruggeri Laderchi, Caterina, Ruh Saith, and Frances Stewart. 2003. "Does It Matter That We Do Not Agree on the Definition of Poverty? A Comparison of Four Approaches." <i>Oxford Development Studies</i> 31:243-274. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Sen, Amartya. 1999. "Poverty as Capability Deprivation." Pp. 87-110 in <i>Development as Freedom</i> New York: Anchor Books. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Silver, Hilary. 1994. "Social Exclusion and Social Solidarity: Three Paradigms." <i>International Labour Review</i> 133:531-578. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Newman, Katherine S., and Rebekah Peeples Massengill. 2006. "The Texture of Hardship: Qualitative Sociology of Poverty, 1995-2005." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 32:423-446. (On Blackboard)</p>
2	1/24	<p><i>Poverty in the United States</i></p> <p>Rank: Entire book</p> <p>❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
3	1/31	<p><i>Urban Ethnography and Poverty in the United States</i></p> <p>Gowan: Entire book</p> <p>Wilson, William Julius. 1999. "When Work Disappears: Implications for Race and Urban Poverty in the Global Economy." <i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i> 22: 479-499. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>❖ Critical Reflection is due</p> <p>❖ Research Project Proposal is due</p>
4	2/7	<p><i>Regional Poverty and Spatial Inequality in the United States</i></p> <p>Eller: Entire book</p> <p>Tickamy, Ann R. 2000. "Space Matters! Spatial Inequality in Future Sociology." <i>Contemporary Sociology</i>. 29:805-813. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
5	2/14	<p><i>The Working Poor in the United States</i></p> <p>Rivlin: Entire book</p> <p>Wicks-Lim, Jeannette. 2012. "The Working Poor." <i>New Labor Forum</i> 21:17-25. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Skim: Berner, Maureen, Trina Ozer, and Sharon Paynter. 2008. "A Portrait of Hunger, the Social Safety Net, and the Working Poor." <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>.36:403-420. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>❖ Critical Reflection is due</p> <p>❖ Data Assignment is due</p>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics/Readings/Tasks</u>
6	2/21	<p><i>Poverty, Policy, and the Welfare State</i></p> <p>Danziger, Sandra K. 2010. "The Decline of Cash Welfare and Implications for Social Policy and Poverty." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 36:523-545. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Somers, Margaret R. and Fred Block. 2005. "From Poverty to Perversity: Ideas, Markets and Institutions over 200 Years of Welfare Debate." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 70: 260-287. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Manza, Jeff. 2000. "Race and the Underdevelopment of the American Welfare State." <i>Theory & Society</i> 29:819-832. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Henderson, Debra A. and Ann R. Tickamyer. 2008. "Lost in Appalachia: The Unexpected Impact of Welfare Reform on Older Women in Rural Communities." <i>Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare</i>, 35:153-171. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Brady, David. 2003. "The Politics of Poverty: Left Political Institutions, the Welfare State, and Poverty." <i>Social Forces</i>: 557-588. (On Blackboard)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
7	2/28	<p><i>Globalization, Poverty, and Inequality</i></p> <p>Munck: Entire book</p> <p>Kacowicz, Arie. 2007. "Globalization, Poverty, and the North-South Divide." <i>International Studies Review</i>. 9:565-580. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Isbister, John. 2006. "Explanations of Underdevelopment." Chapter 3 in <i>Promises Not Kept: Poverty and The Betrayal of Third World Development</i>, 7th ed. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press. (On Blackboard)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
8	3/7	<i>Spring Break—no class</i>
9	3/14	<p><i>Issues in Global Poverty: Human Trafficking and the Global Labor Force</i></p> <p>Shelley: Entire Book</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
10	3/21	<p><i>Issues in Global Poverty: Environmental Injustice</i></p> <p>Auyero: Entire Book</p> <p>Parks, Bradley C. and J. Timmons Roberts. "Inequality and the Global Climate Regime: Breaking the North-South Impasse." <i>Cambridge Review of International Affairs</i> 21:621-648. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Skim: Hayami, Yujiro; A.K. Dikshit, and S.N. Mishra. 2006. "Waste Pickers and Collectors in Delhi: Poverty and Environment in an Urban Informal Sector." <i>Journal of Development Studies</i> 42:41-69. (On Blackboard)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due ❖ Research Project Detailed Outline is due</p>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics/Readings/Tasks</u>
11	3/28	<p><i>Issues in Global Poverty: Hunger and Agro-Food Systems</i></p> <p>Magdoff and Tokar: Entire Book McMichael, Philip and Mindi Schneider. 2011. "Food Security Politics and the Millennium Development Goals." <i>Third World Quarterly</i>. 32:119-139. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Skim: McMichael, Philip. 2009. "The World Food Crisis in Historical Perspective." <i>Monthly Review</i> Volume 61. (On Blackboard)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
12	4/4	<p><i>No Regular Class—Student research day and individual meetings with Professor Scanlan will take place with students to discuss progress on the final term paper project</i></p>
13	4/11	<p><i>Global Poverty, Conflict, and the Future?</i></p> <p>Collier: Entire book Atwood, J. Brian. 2004. "The Link between Poverty and Violent Conflict." <i>New England Journal of International Affairs</i> 19:159-165. (On Blackboard) Prowse, Martin. 2009. "The Chronic Poverty Report 2008–2009." <i>European Journal of Development Research</i> 21:160–168. (On Blackboard)</p> <p>Skim: Gissinger, Ranveig and Nils Petter Gleditsch. 1999. "Globalization and Conflict: Welfare, Distribution, and Political Unrest." <i>Journal of World-Systems Research</i> 5:327-365. (On Blackboard)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Critical Reflection is due</p>
14	4/18	<i>Student Presentations of Research Projects</i>
15	4/25	<i>Student Presentations of Research Projects</i>
Exam Week		<i>Student Presentations of Research Projects (if necessary)</i>
Final Research Project is due Thursday May 2 at 11:59 p.m.		

Intellectual copyright policy

The lectures, classroom activities, and all materials associated with this class developed by the instructor or over which the instructor has proprietary control are copyrighted in the name of Stephen J. Scanlan on January 14, 2013.