

**Sociology 311 Online**  
**Survey of Social Inequality and Stratification**

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**Instructor:** Jonathan Jarvis  
Office: Saunders 232  
Phone: 956-7502  
Email: jonathan.jarvis@hawaii.edu

**Class Schedule:** Online

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 2:00pm to 3:00pm. By appointment or Skype.

**Reading Materials:**

1. Martin Marger. 2011. *Social Inequality: Patterns and Processes*. McGraw Hill (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) (ISBN 978-0-07-352830-4)
2. Correspondents of *The New York Times*. Introduction by Bill Keller. *Class Matters*. Times Books, 2005 (ISBN 978-0-8050-8055-1)

**Supplementary Readings:** Will be provided by the Instructor.

**Class Objectives:**

This course examines inequality and stratification in industrial societies and the theories that attempt to explain the persistence of inequality. We will examine fundamental questions about the fairness of inequality and the mechanisms by which the Upper, Middle and Lower classes compete for resources and reproduce their class positions and how this is changing with globalization. Questions about social class and social mobility are fundamental to our understanding of American and global societies as we are bombarded by media and political platforms both vilifying and lauding the merits and achievements of various social actors. How much of this success or lack thereof is due to ascriptive factors (i.e. family background, race, gender) and just how meritocratic is our society? The objective of this course is to examine the social world critically in an attempt to recognize these stratifying mechanisms we often take for granted and discuss how and why many of them are so persistent. This is an interactive course where we will use the academic texts, newspapers, magazines, television programs and film as discussion points centering on stratification and as an opportunity to internalize and understand these principles.

**Assignments:**

**Readings**

You are expected to have the readings completed in the week they are assigned in order to complete the written responses and to participate in the weekly discussion forums with me other students.

\* The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the reading materials prior to the course beginning and to accommodate the progress of lectures and projects. Supplementary reading materials will also be distributed throughout the course.

**Weekly  
Discussions**

As an online course, one of the most important responsibilities is regular discussion of the weekly readings in an online interactive format. For your weekly discussions, every week you are expected to do two things:

(1) Make an original comment related to the readings that is intended to provoke discussion and comments. This is due on Wednesday at midnight of each week.

(2) After the original comments have been posted on Wednesday, make a response comment to at least one of the other original comments made by a classmate must be posted by Saturday night at midnight. You are encouraged to comment and post more than once a week to stimulate discussion on the weekly topic. This is a vital component of this course and comprises 30% of your grade. If you do not participate you will not receive a score for that week. Because the topic changes every week, you cannot make-up points by 'over-participating' the following week. Also, it is not considered participating in a discussion if you merely post something without thought. Your comment or post should be an extended, interactive communication between the instructor and all students dealing with the particular topic of the week.

**Written  
Responses**

10 responses must be submitted throughout the semester. The responses are to be based on the course materials (text, supplementary readings and any video posted). These responses are not a summary of the readings or merely an extension of your weekly post, but a discussion of your thoughts and/or questions from the materials. These responses are to be roughly one page in length (roughly 250 words). They must be emailed to me by midnight on the Saturday of the week they are assigned in either a PDF or Word format. I will post topics for the responses for each week.

**Written  
Assignment**

Students are responsible for completing **ONE** assignment during the course. You have two choices for you assignment due on March 19<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

- (1) A Photo Essay: The photo essay should illuminate an element of stratification discussed during the course with a series of photos taken by the student as well as 2-3 pages of written discussion.
- (2) Current-Event Essay: The current event essay is an opportunity to use an article from a newspaper, magazine or a video clip from the internet as an example of social stratification you wish to discuss (3-4 pages).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Further details on these assignments will be provided on Laulima.

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**Final Exam** There will be a final exam drawn from the course texts and supplemental material. The final exam will be posted on the Monday of the final week of class and due on the last day, Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup> at midnight. The final will be composed of 3 long answer responses to questions on the course materials.

**Grading:**

15 Weekly Online posts – 30%  
10 Weekly Responses – 20%  
1 Written Assignment – 20%  
Final Exam – 30%

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

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**Week 1** (January 28<sup>th</sup> — February 3<sup>rd</sup>): Introduction to Stratification and Social Inequality  
Readings: The Shadowy Lines that Still Divide (NY Times) & Chapter 1 (Marger)

**Week 2** (February 4<sup>th</sup> – February 10<sup>th</sup>): Theories of Class and Social Inequality  
Readings: Chapter 2 (Marger)

**Week 3** (February 11<sup>th</sup> – February 17<sup>th</sup>): Class in America  
Readings: Chapter 3 (Marger)

**Week 4** (February 18<sup>th</sup> – February 24<sup>nd</sup>): The American Elite  
Readings: Richest are Leaving even the Rich Behind (NY Times) & Chapter 4 (Marger)

**Week 5** (February 25<sup>nd</sup> – March 3<sup>rd</sup>): The Middle Classes  
Readings: No Degree and No Way back the Middle (NY Times) & Chapter 5 (Marger)

**Week 6** (March 4<sup>th</sup> – March 10<sup>th</sup>): The Lower Classes  
Readings: Chapter 6 (Marger)

**Week 7** (March 11<sup>th</sup> – March 17<sup>th</sup>): Social Mobility  
Readings: Chapters 7 (Marger) & Outliers Chapter 2 (Gladwell) provided by Instructor

**Week 8** (March 18<sup>th</sup> – March 24<sup>th</sup>): Opportunity and Legitimation  
Readings: Chapters 8 (Marger) & Outliers Chapters 3-4 (Gladwell) provided by Instructor

**Week 9** (March 25<sup>th</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>): Spring Break  
Readings: No Readings

**Week 10** (April 1<sup>st</sup> – April 7<sup>th</sup>): Stratification by Race  
Readings: Chapter 11 (Marger)

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**Week 11** (April 8<sup>th</sup> – April 14<sup>th</sup>): The Intersection of Race and Class

Readings: Chapter 1 Class and Schools (Rothstein) provided by Instructor

**Week 12** (April 15<sup>th</sup> – April 21<sup>st</sup>): Stratification by Gender

Readings: Chapter 12 (Marger)

**Week 13** (April 22<sup>nd</sup> – April 28<sup>th</sup>): Globalization of Stratifying Institutions

Readings: Chapter 1 (Wildavsky 2011) provided by the Instructor

**Week 14** (April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 5<sup>th</sup>) Neo-Liberal Globalization and Inequality

Readings: Koo (2007) provided by the Instructor

**Week 15** (May 6<sup>th</sup> – May 10<sup>th</sup>): No New Readings - **Final Exam (Due May 10<sup>th</sup>)**

### **Kokua**

Any student in need of additional help, due to disability, can contact me personally and the KOKUA program officer to discuss ways to accommodate specific needs. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 or by email ([kokua@hawaii.edu](mailto:kokua@hawaii.edu)).

### **Plagiarism**

*“Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual’s work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student’s language and style; paraphrasing a passage so closely that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; and “dry-labbing,” which includes obtaining and using experimental data from other students without the express consent of the instructor, utilizing experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms, and fabricating data to fit the expected results.”*

- University of Hawai‘i at Manoa Student Conduct

< <http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm> >

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