Socy 661: Social Stratification
Fall 2014

Thursday, 6:30-9:00 p.m., ASY 1101
Prof. Philip N. Cohen
pnc@umd.edu
Office hours: By appointment

This is the core required course for students specializing in Stratification in sociology. We will develop a familiarity with the theoretical foundations in the area, and explore recent substantive research in that light. Along the way, we will work to develop the ability to critically analyze work in this field; and advance our own research.

We will use the following books:

We will read about one-quarter of the Grusky book; you need to read the current edition. I recommend buying it, but you can work something else out if you like. Additional readings are listed below. Web links are provided as a convenience and are subject to IP authentication and/or pay walls. Please leave yourself enough time to obtain the articles however necessary.

**Course policies**

**Universal Learning**: I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our interactions be as inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning. Any student with particular needs should contact UMD Disability Support Service (http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/), which can recommend accommodations. Then you and I can work out the details of any accommodations needed for this course.

**Class participation**: Students are expected to do all required readings prior to class and attend every class. We will address the readings’ theoretical approaches, conclusions and implications, as well as methods and empirical findings. *No laptops, tablets, or phones during the seminar discussions.* Bring paper copies of the readings. (Why? Here’s a good article on the no-laptop policy: [http://bit.ly/1ARaTpg](http://bit.ly/1ARaTpg).)

**Weekly writing**: To facilitate the discussion and develop your skills, each week students will submit a short critical comment on the readings of less than two pages double-spaced, including your response to the readings generally and one specific question that you would like to discuss from each reading. Email this to me by 5 p.m. Wednesday.

**Seminar paper**: Students will write an in-depth research proposal on a specific issue in stratification. The seminar paper is to be a research proposal, including: literature review; statement on how the proposed study would contribute to this literature, and its limitations; a
description of methods and data, with as much specificity as possible (e.g., sample and variables or research site and collection strategy), and; statement of your thesis and hypotheses to be tested or explored. Good final papers will probably be about 20-25 pages. Students who already have research projects underway may submit more advanced forms of the project. The topic, with preliminary references (2-3pp.) is due **October 23**. A working outline and literature review (5-8 pp.) is due on **November 20**. Final papers are due **December 11**.

**Grading:** The final grade will be based on roughly equal weighting of (a) class participation, (b) weekly writing, and (c) the seminar paper.

**Academic integrity:** There is zero tolerance for academic dishonesty in this course. The UMD Code of Academic Integrity is here: [http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf).

**Note:** Students religious conflicts should inform me of their needs at the beginning of the semester so we can arrange accommodations.

**Schedule**

**September 4: Introductions**

**September 11: Who cares?**
- Grusky & Weisshaar, and Grusky & Szelenyi (Ch 1)
- Functions and dysfunctions: Davis and Moore (Ch 2), Tumin (Ch 3), Fischer et al. (Ch 4)

**September 18: Marx & Weber**
- Marx (Ch 14), Darherndorf (Ch 15), Wright (Ch 16)
- Weber (Ch 18), Giddens (Ch 19)

**September 25: Durable Inequality**

**October 2: Race inequality and segregation**

• Wilson (Ch 40)

• Massey and Denton (Ch 44)

• Bertrand and Mullainathan (Ch 86)


### October 9: Social capital and elites


• Bourdieu (Ch 114)

• Lareau (Ch 116)


### October 16: Gender theories


### October 23: Gender in the contemporary U.S.

• Correll et al. (Ch 96)

• Gorman and Kmec (Ch 103)

• Charles and Grusky (Ch 104)

• Blau (Ch 108)

• England (Ch 111)

• Cotter et al. (Ch 112)

• Ridgeway (Ch 113)


### October 30: Family inequality


Edin et al (Ch 39)

Sharkey and Elwert (Ch 47)


November 6: Networks

- Granovetter (Ch 74)
- Fernandez and Fernandez-Mateo (Ch 77)

November 13: Incarceration


November 20: Insecurity

- Kalleberg (Ch 71)
- Rosenfeld (Ch 73)

December 4: Health disparities


December 11: Global inequality

• Stiglitz (Ch 131)
• Firebaugh (Ch 132)