I. Course Overview: This seminar will provide students with an overview of the literature on social stratification. The course is oriented toward helping students who would like to conduct research in the sociological areas of stratification, inequality, and mobility. During the class, we will read literature on a wide variety of topics, including those in the title of the course, and also ranging from theory and methods to families and education. The objectives of the course are to:

- Explore many of the topics evaluated by scholars of stratification;
- Apply strategies for reading and organizing sociological research and theory;
- Develop different approaches to writing reviews of the literature, which can be used in responding to exam questions and in writing research articles; and
- Identify potential gaps in the existing literature that can lead to research questions.

II. Course Readings:

Required

Other articles are noted in the schedule and are available through jstor, which you can access on the class web-site on Blackboard. (Instructions for how to do so are also posted on Blackboard.)

Recommended
III. Course requirements and grades:
This is a graduate seminar examining research and theory on the topic of social stratification, and has three categories of requirements, those expected for: 1) every class, 2) two classes that you choose during the semester, and 3) a final project.

1) For every class, you will be expected to a) read the assigned readings before the seminar and b) participate constructively during the seminar. These requirements should be self-explanatory and constitute 10 percent of your grade.

In general, I have tried to assign approximately 100 pages or 4-6 articles per class meeting. For approximately half of the class sessions, we will read excerpts from the “Grusky reader.” Do not be intimidated by the number of readings! There are a lot of discrete readings because most of these excerpts are quite short. During seminar, we will not be exploring each of these readings in great detail. Instead, you should think about what the excerpts as a whole say about the week’s topic as a debate or conversation among scholars.

For week 14, we will be reading the book Evicted. While we will discuss the entirety of the book, each student will be assigned to focus on one of the approximately 100-page sections. The students who have read that section will take the lead in presenting the over-all conclusions and details to their classmates.

2) For two seminars during the semester, you will be expected to a) prepare and distribute essays to your fellow classmates that synthesize the week’s readings and b) facilitate discussion during the seminar. At the first meeting of the semester, you will choose the weeks for which you want to prepare essays and facilitate class discussion. The essays will be structured along the lines of essays that you would read in the Annual Review of Sociology. In the essays, you should use the assigned readings as the beginning of your search for other readings that will help you write the essay. You should post your essays to Angel by Monday evening before the specified class. With regard to leading the seminar, you should be prepared to give an overview of the essay that you posted and then have prepared several questions that you will use to facilitate discussion. These requirements constitute 30 percent of your grade. NB: You should plan to facilitate the class session without showing a video.

3) During the semester you will conduct research on the topic of social stratification resulting in either: a) a 15-20 page literature review paper modeled on those found in the Annual Review of Sociology; b) a 15-20 page research paper; or c) a 15-20 page research proposal for research you plan to conduct. In all three cases, you will need to submit a rough outline detailing your topic and plan by the beginning of class on Wednesday, October 14. In all cases, you should hand in either the paper or proposal by the end of the final exam period for this class. This final project constitutes 60 percent of your grade.
V. Course Expectations and Guidelines

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

University policy states that: “Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the university and will be strongly enforced in this course.” For the purposes of this class, violations of academic integrity include (but are not limited to):

- Copying words from another source without properly indicating that they are someone else’s by the use of quotation marks (even if the source is cited);
- Slightly changing or re-ordering words from another source, in other words, improperly paraphrasing (even if the source is cited);
- Copying ideas or words from another source without properly citing them;
- Submitting the same paper for credit in more than one course;
- Submitting material written by someone else as your own;
- Allowing someone else to submit your work as their own.

I take violations of this policy very seriously. Therefore, any student who violates these standards ON ANY ASSIGNMENT OR EXAM THAT IS SUBMITTED FOR CREDIT will receive an F for the course. I will report all violations of this policy to Student Affairs. For a very concise discussion of how to avoid plagiarizing when paraphrasing, read The Craft of Research section on “inadvertent plagiarism” (pp. 191-5 in my copy, but different pages in other editions). If you have any questions about any of this, please bring it up for discussion with the class or privately with me during office hours or through email. We can all benefit from more discussion of this topic.

Disability Accommodation

I am happy to make accommodations for all students who need them. Such accommodations, however, must be approved and requested by the Disability Resource Center (DRC), which is located in Washington Building, Room 217. You can stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

Emergency Notification System

You should be familiar with the WSU Campus Safety Plan (http://safetyplan.wsu.edu) and the emergency management website (http://oem.wsu.edu). You should also regularly check the WSU ALERT system (http://alert.wsu.edu) for updated news about emergencies and other alerts. And you should register your emergency contact information for the Crisis Communication System (CCS). You can do this on the web at myWSU. Register in the Emergency Notification box (right side of the page).

Technology policy

Research has shown that high levels of multi-tasking are bad for focus and concentration. In addition, students who use keyboards during class have been shown to learn less than those who do not. (For a recent review of the research, as well as experimental demonstration of these issues, read: Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. 2014. “The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking.” Psychological Science 25 (6):1159-1168.) My own experience has been that the classroom environment is greatly improved by removing individual keyboards and screens.

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For these reasons, we will have a no technology policy (unless you have a documented disability) for this class. This policy means no cell-phones or computers are to be used during class-time.

University Dates and Deadlines:  http://registrar.wsu.edu/academic-calendar/
VI. Preliminary Schedule of Readings

*These readings are subject to change. Note that the readings that are not in the assigned books can be accessed through jstor. See link explaining how to access journal articles on Angel.*

Week 1 Class


Week 2 Theories


Optional:

Week 3 Status attainment


Week 4 Inter-generational Mobility


Optional:
- Bowles and Gintis. The Inheritance of Inequality. Pp. 3-30 in JEP.

Intra-generational mobility:
- Western. The Impact of Incarceration on Wage Mobility and Inequality. Pp. 526-546 in ASR.
Week 5 Methods


Optional:

- Sampson. Moving to Inequality: Neighborhood Effects and Experiments Meet Social Structure. Pp. 189-231 in AJS.

Week 6 Families

- Avery and Rendall. Lifetime Inheritances of Three Generations of Whites and Blacks. Pp. 1300-1346 in AJS.
Optional (family):
- Mare. Five Decades of Educational Assortative Mating. Pp. 15-32 in ASR.

Optional:
- Mare. Change and Stability in Educational Stratification. Pp. 72-87 in ASR.
- Gamoran and Mare. Secondary School Tracking and Educational Inequality: Compensation, Reinforcement, or Neutrality? Pp. 1146-1183 in AJS.

Week 7 Education

- Buchmann and DiPrete. The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement. Pp. 515-541 in ASR.
Week 8 Race

- Saperstein and Penner. The Dynamics of Racial Fluidity and Inequality. Pp. 687-695 in Grusky.

Optional:
Week 9 Gender


Optional:

Week 10 Military

- Dechter and Elder. World War II Mobilization in Men's Work Lives: Continuity or Disruption for the Middle Class. Pp. 761-793 in AJS.
Optional (military):


Week 11 Income

- Firebaugh and Goesling. Accounting for the Recent Decline in Global Income Inequality. Pp. 283-312 in AJS.
- Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson. Income Inequality, Global Economy and the State. Pp. 77-111 in.

Optional:

- Morris and Western. Inequality in Earnings at the Close of the Twentieth Century. Pp. 623-657 in ARS.

Week 12 Wealth

Week 13 Poverty


Week 14 Evicted

  We will discuss the whole book, but different students will be assigned either part 1, part 2, or part 3 to read closely and report to the class to start discussion.

Week 15 Labor Markets

Optional (labor markets):
- Cohen, Broschak, and Haveman. And Then There Were More? The Effect of Organizational Sex Composition on the Hiring and Promotion of Managers. Pp. 711-727 in ASR.
Full citations for sources not from required books:


