Social Science Scholars Freshman Seminar

**Fall 2020 – PSY292**



**Dr. Brendan Mullan**

**Understanding Inequality: Local, Regional and National Perspectives**

**Social Science Scholars Freshman Seminar**

**PSY292: Understanding Inequality: Local, Regional and National Perspectives**

**Fall Semester, 2020**

**Class Times: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00pm to 4:50pm**

**(Class will meet online synchronously via zoom every M/W beginning at 3:00pm)**

### Instructor Information

**Instructor**: Brendan Mullan Ph.D. **Teaching Assistant:** McKayla Sluga: [Slugamck@msu.edu](about:blank).

**Office**: 405 Berkey Hall; (517) 353-8127; Hours: By appointment. Direct Cell #: (517) 402-3017

**Email**: [Mullan@MSU.edu](about:blank); Class Website: [www.D2L.MSU.edu](about:blank).

**Introduction**

### As explained in *The Social Science Scholars Program Handbook* the fall semester component (PSY292) of the year-1 freshman seminar covers how humans interact within their social worlds at the individual, family, community, and national, levels. The year-1 freshman spring semester component (GEO211) focuses on the relationships between humans and the natural environment, looking at how we have adapted to the natural world; how landscape, climate, and geography have shaped the course of human history; and how we have adversely affected significant aspects of the natural world and what can be done about it. These freshman seminars are designed to: (a) illustrate the importance of basing opinions and policies on properly collected data and logically derived conclusions; (b) allow you to better understand why humans behave, believe, and interact in the ways that they do; and (c) help you to understand if we are condemned to repeat the errors of the past.

### PSY292 Course Description

This class focuses on developing critical thinking, research proficiency, and writing skills to better understand and critique theories, concepts, and methods to examine alternative perspectives and ideologies explaining how human interaction with their social world at the individual, family, community, national, and international levels invariably results in social inequality.

Social inequality is the existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or statuses within a group or society. Social inequality results from a society organized by hierarchies of class, race, and gender that facilitates access to resources and rights in ways that make their distribution unequal. Social inequality expresses itself in a variety of ways, like income and wealth inequality, unequal access to education and cultural resources, and differential treatment by the police and judicial system, among others. Social inequality goes hand-­‐in-­‐hand with social stratification.

This class introduces key concepts, theories, research methods, and research findings and trends associated with the social inequality experienced today in the United States. With income inequality on the rise in the United States, the causes and consequences of inequality are undergoing a fundamental transformation. We will explore, describe, and explain the causes and consequences of inequality at both micro- (individual) and macro- (structural). You will learn how inequality impinges on virtually all facets of American society.

Social inequality continuously affects not only social conditions of every demographic group but also our own personal lives. The economic crises of 2008-2009 and, especially, the turmoil arising from both the current COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide racial tensions have intensified the significance of inequality and the problems associated with it. Individuals are affected differently by these crises and tensions because of economic position, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and gender. Together, a person’s individual attributes, family background, and the political, social, and economic contexts within which people live, affect their attitudes, life orientation, and their quality of life.

Social Scientists have long monitored trends in income inequality, residential and racial segregation, occupational inequality, and gender inequality. This scrutiny has helped resolve debates on the degree of discrimination, the centrality of social class, and the critical importance of understanding segregation and social mobility. However, social scientists largely failed to predict the “take-off” in income equality of the late 20th and early 21st century, were surprised by the resilience of segregation of minority populations, did not foresee the very rapid recent acceptance of LGBT+ rights, were shocked by recent increases nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment, and have not systematically included today’s increased politicization and political ideology in their explanations of inequality.

Traditional theories, while adequate models of the inequality that existed between 1945 and the late twentieth century, do not adequately explain the causes, content, and consequences of today’s inequality. New thinking is needed to explore, describe, and explain contemporary “neo-inequality.” The United States is now experiencing “neo-inequality” in housing, labor markets, migration, income/poverty, immigrant and racial harassment, incarceration, family formation and child rearing, and health access, to name but a few.

Markets and market-oriented thinking have displaced multiple aspects of our lives that were formerly organized, distributed, and regulated by non-market norms and institutions: admission to exclusive for-profit housing, hospitals, and schools, and purely market-allocated access to health, housing, education, safety/security, criminal justice, leisure, reproduction and other social goods define our new age of inequality.

**Course Objectives:**

* You will learn practices of scholarly inquiry, critical thinking, and ways of knowing to access, analyze, and assess information and material to evaluate evidence, construct reasoned arguments, and communicate inferences and conclusions

(*assessed through commentary on assigned readings, weekly writing assignments, self-reflections, discussion board contributions, research paper prospectus).*

* You will comparatively understand the cultural, socioeconomic, and racial diversity of inequality.

(*assessed vis Discussion Boards, Self-Reflections, Writing Assignments, Research Prospectus).*

* As members and participants in local, regional, and national communities with the capacity to lead in an increasingly interdependent world, you will know how the structures of local, regional, and national inequality operate and interact (*assessed through engagement with “visiting” local, regional, and national speakers, contributions to discussion boards, writing assignments, Research Prospectus).*
* You will gain multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions that reflect humane social values. You will learn to appraisevaluejudgements, solve problems, answer questions, and generate new understandings of social inequality **(***assessed through Writing Assignments, Discussion Boards, Research Prospectus).*

Students will fulfill these objectives by:

* Reading the assigned core books, course pack materials, and supplementary materials
* Completing twelve writing assignments
* Actively participating in whole-class and small-group discussions
* Submitting a 1500-word research prospectus (due 12/18/2020)

**Course Site:**

PSY292 content will be delivered predominantly through the MSU’s web-based content management provider D2L. Desire2Learn, or D2L is an integrated learning platform designed to create a single place online for instructors and students to interact, either for a completely online course or as a supplement to a face-to-face course. Access D2L at [https://D2L.MSU.edu](about:blank). For D2L technical assistance call the MSU helpline at (844) 678-6200 or (517) 432-6200. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Course Technology Requirements:**

* A high-speed (broadband) internet connection
* Computer manufactured within the last four years
* Minimum screen resolution of 1024x768
* Access to Desire2Learn

Internet access is necessary to view multi-media content, for uploading assignments, downloading course content etc. If you miss discussion board posts, online content assignments, assignment submission deadlines etc. because of internet connectivity problems, there will be no extensions and late work will not be accepted.

**Course Structure:**

* PSY292 will be delivered through hybrid, synchronous, and asynchronous modalities. As MSU’s Covid19 policies and procedures permit, I will be available for on-to-one and small group (< 5 students) discussions. Interaction, instruction, and content delivery will be synchronous (via zoom) and asynchronous via MSU’s D2L content management platform:
  + Synchronous online teaching is where the instructor is present at the same time as the students. Synchronous online learning is delivered via online learning, through the use of video conferencing and live chat, instant messaging etc. **PSY292 will meet synchronously via zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:00pm**. As with face-to-face environment, students and instructors in a synchronous online environment can ask questions in real time. Everyone needs to be online together, if you miss a class you will miss the real time interactions between us. Our synchronous learning may feature live online lessons, group chats, small group discussions, guest lecturer presentations etc.
  + Asynchronous online teaching is where teaching materials are posted online, and learners read and master these materials in their own time, communicating with each other and the instructors via discussion boards or forums, and email. Asynchronous materials for PSY292 will include a variety of media, including (but not limited to) written text (articles, book chapters etc.), audio and video clips. Asynchronously, you can work at your own pace and at times of day which are convenient for you. There will be deadlines for work to be submitted.
* PSY292’s ‘blended’ approach is designed to bring together the advantages of synchronous and asynchronous online content delivery. Collaboration between students, and between students, the Teaching Assistant, and the professor is critical to the success of both synchronous and asynchronous content delivery ... to create a sense of connection between all participants and to build a sense of community and shared purpose. Collaboration in a synchronous environment can be achieved in much the same way as in a face-to face-classroom, with discussions and group tasks. In the asynchronous environment, collaboration can be trickier but is still very important in reducing the sense of isolation learners may feel when working online. Discussions and group tasks can work just as well asynchronously as synchronously. Because of the lack of time constraints, you can spend time composing a quality response when contributing to an asynchronous online discussion.
* **Synchronous communication will be through zoom.** **Go to** [**https://msu.zoom.us**](about:blank) **to log in using your MSU NetID/password to download zoom.** Click on “Getting Started With Meeting” to learn more.
* **Course content will be delivered online through the D2L course management system. Go to** [**https://D2L.MSU.edu**](about:blank) **to log in using your MSU NetID/password.** Use the Help menu to learn more.
* The [https://D2L.MSU.edu](about:blank) web site will be where you access online lessons, course materials, additional resources, and where assignments will be posted.
* PSY292 is built on a weekly framework. Course materials will become available at 12:00am Eastern time (EST) each Monday. Once posted, course materials will remain available all semester.
* Assignments may be completed any time during the week they are due. All required submissions must be posted to the appropriate D2L folder no later than 11:59pm (EST) on their due dates.
* Office hours and one-to-one discussions will occurs through pre-arranged zoom, skype, facetime, telephone appointments.

**Technical Assistance:**

To learn more about synchronous and asynchronous online learning at MSU and for technical assistance at any time during this course or to report a problem you can:

* Visit the [MSU Guide to Remote Access](about:blank)
* Visit the [MSU Online Learning Platforms](about:blank)
* Visit the [Distance Learning Support Site](about:blank)
* Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](about:blank)
* Visit the [MSU Zoom Help Page](about:blank)
* Visit the [Zoom Help Page](about:blank)
* Call the MSU D2L help line (available 24/7) at (844) 678-6200 or (517) 432-6200
* The student D2L training course, **Students - Getting Started with D2L**, contains video tutorials covering the most commonly used aspects of the D2L Learning Environment as well as success tips and practice activities to complete. Each module is broken into topics designed to help students become proficient with the basics of taking an online course in D2L. A certificate of completion is earned after meeting the minimum criteria. This free training is a valuable learning resource for students. For convenience, you can now self-enroll or unenroll from the course by using the following link: [Students - Getting Started with D2L Self-enrollment Page](about:blank)

**Required Reading:** Five (5) core books are required reading for this class.

***The Craft of Research****,* (4th edition) Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, William Fitzgerald, Joseph Bizup. Chicago, 2016.

*The Craft of Research* is a guide to researching, structuring, organizing, writing, and documenting *any* topic of interest. It is about more than the mechanics of fact gathering: it's a unique introduction to doing research effectively. Clearly written and easy to use, it teaches the skills that are essential to the success of any research project. It is important that you develop good research skills during your time as a Social Science Scholar. While you will read and we will discuss this book very early in the semester, the research skills and techniques described and discussed in the book will be important to your successful completion of all the required assignments throughout the semester and beyond..

***Just Plain Data Analysis*** (2nd edition) Gary M. Klass. Rowman & Littlefield, 2012

This book explores and explains how to find, interpret, and present commonly used quantitative social indicators in a clear and practical way. It develops a framework for evaluating, and developing arguments relying on social indicator data and discusses where to find commonly used measures of political and social conditions; how to assess the reliability and validity of specific indicators; how to present data efficiently in charts and tables; how to avoid common misinterpretations and misrepresentations of data; and how to evaluate causal arguments based on numerical data.

***Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City****,* Matthew Desmond. Crown Books, 2016

Desmond comprehensively and vividly describes the everyday struggles of eight families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While each family has its own unique circumstances, each has suffered from being marginally housed. They either move from place to place with minimum housing stability or reside in trailer parks, where the quality of life is hugely compromised. Using novelistic language, Desmond provokes tremendous empathy for those who try everything just to survive.

***The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit***, Thomas J. Sugrue. Princeton, 2005.

Once America's "arsenal of democracy, " Detroit has become the symbol of the American urban crisis. In this definitive reappraisal of America's dilemma of racial and economic inequality, Thomas Sugrue explores and explains why Detroit and other industrial cities have become the sites of persistent racialized poverty.

***Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System***, Douglas S. Massey. Sage, 2007.

*Categorically Unequal* is striking for its theoretical originality and for the breadth of topics it covers. Massey argues that social inequalities arise from the universal human tendency to place others into social categories. In America, ethnic minorities, women, and the poor have consistently been the targets of stereotyping, and they have been exploited and discriminated against throughout the nation’s history.

**Course Pack:**

In addition to the core books you will need to purchase the course reader, which contains a series of book chapters and articles to accompany the seminars. You can purchase it at Collegeville Bookstore on Grand River Avenue. Additional readings and materials will be made available through the PSY292 D2L web site.

**You can also access the course pack for PSY292 at** [**www.coursepack.allegra.net**](about:blank) **and purchase either an electronic copy OR a printed version with free delivery.** A onetime registration is required at point of purchase.  
  
**A Read-only PDF file** - an instant download to any device: $22.91. NOTE: This file **does NOT** print.

**A printed hardcopy,** with free shipping: $28.64.

For a couple dollars more, **a combination of both**: $32.22.

Orders for printed option, placed by noon during regular business hours, will be printed and mailed the same day. Allow 2 to 3 business days for orders to arrive. For orders placed on weekends, process starts on Monday morning. If you have an issue after ordering a digital pack, please reply to the order email the site sends you and a member of the CP team will respond.

**Assessment:**

T**hree** assessments will ensure that you are keeping up with the material and have opportunity to improve as the course proceeds. Remember that Dr. Mullan is available for writing help - as is the writing center on campus.

1. **Participation**: (a) You are expected to contribute regularly to class discussion and debate; this seminar class cannot function without your eager involvement. As not everyone enjoys speaking in groups and some people take some time to ‘warm up’ we’ll endeavor to create an environment in which everyone feels comfortable: this means that the class must be supportive, respectful and open-minded. (b) Most weeks there will be a formal **class activity** based on the readings which will require everyone to work in a small group to discuss a question and then present to the rest of the class. The grade will be determined according to the group’s familiarity with the readings and the quality and clarity of the presentation. **Points will be deducted for behaviors that undermine the collegial environment of the class**. Participation constitutes **25%** of semester grade.
2. **Friday papers**. TWELVE 500-750 word writing assignments (double-spaced, one-inch margins) will be assigned, one each Monday during zoom class. Assignments must be submitted the following Friday. Every Friday before midnight you must upload to D2L **a 500-750-word** paper on a question that draws on the readings and seminar discussions. The essay assignments are listed in the syllabus below. These essays constitute **60%** of semester grade (we’ll drop your lowest two scores but all papers need to be completed). **As much as is possible you should cite earlier readings: the course has been designed so that each section builds on the preceding ones**.
3. **Research paper prospectus.** A 1,500 word statement of your planned research project. To be uploaded to D2L by midnight on the Friday of exam week (12/18/2020). **15%** of semester grade. Check D2L for more information on this assignment and it will be discussed in zoom class during the semester.

In writing your essays keep the following criteria in mind:

* Have the readings been fully understood?
* Does the paper cover all the main themes?
* Is it sufficiently well-organized that an intelligent stranger would know what it’s about and learn something useful from it?
* Is it interesting?
* Is it properly referenced?
* Has it been adequately proof read?
* Is there a bibliography?

Papers without referencing and bibliography **will not be graded** and will be graded as late when resubmitted.

At the end of each semester you will be provided with a letter summarizing your performance in the program as evaluated by Dr. Mullan and Jenn Arbogast. This letter will highlight areas in which you are performing to the required level or above and areas that require your attention. In extreme cases (please see handbook), this letter will inform you that you have been placed on probation.

**Guidance on writing your weekly papers**

**Read and read again**. The most fundamental requirement of writing a good paper is to have done the readings very carefully. Before you begin to type, make sure that you understand the entire arc of the chapter or article. It’s not enough to pick out a few sections that you find interesting or relevant. Articles and book chapters are usually coherent wholes that need to be read and understood as such. If you don’t “get” the entire article, read it again. This isn’t always enjoyable (!), but it gets much, much easier with practice.

**Think till your head feels like it’s going to burst**. A lot is being asked of you in this course because you are expected to grasp a separate topic or topics each week. You need to endure the mental strain involved in making sense of sometimes dense material. It’s amazing how clear arguments can become once you’ve agonized over their meaning for long enough. Some advice: talk as much as you can with your fellow Scholars – and others – about what you’re reading. Talking about an article is usually a lot more efficient a way to comprehend it than just thinking to yourself.

**Think of your paper, when you’re ready to write, as a judicial summing up**. So your primary goals are (a) to be highly rational and (b) to be wholly unambiguous in your prose. There is some art involved in conveying important and difficult ideas in just a page or so, but it’s mostly a matter of forcing yourself to stick doggedly to the main points and editing (viciously!) for clarity.

**Hit the deck running**. Make sure your first sentence sums up everything you’re going to say. Never start with broad, imprecise statements or clichés. Telling the reader what they’re going to be reading is much more powerful than wordy scene-setting. It is also courteous and more persuasive – you wouldn’t read a newspaper article which meandered for a few paragraphs before getting to the point.

**Back up EVERY point you make with evidence**. You wouldn’t hire a defense attorney who rambled on abstractly while ignoring the fact that someone else’s fingerprints were on the gun. So, to repeat, when writing essays make sure that EVERY point you make is backed up with a decent piece of evidence.

**Keep the language simple and direct**. Avoid over-writing, simply and directly just say what you want to say.

**DON’T SPLURGE!**If you’re not certain that the point you’re making is directly relevant, delete it.

**Use proper footnotes or endnotes**.

Use the following guidelines for citing your work for all of your papers as part of the Social Science Scholars Program:

[**http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\_citationguide.html**](about:blank)

**Lateness policy**

**10%** of the paper grade will be automatically deducted if the paper is late and then another **5%** will be deducted for each additional late day. After midnight, it will be counted as late. **You cannot receive a final grade unless all TWELVE papers have been submitted**.

**Be prompt in all things Scholars related!**

Up to **5%** of the final grade will be deducted for failure to respond promptly to emails requests.

**SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

**DATE CLASS CONTENT/ACTIVITY READINGS**

**SUMMER 2020** Overcoming misinformation, spurious assumptions, *Incendiary: The Willingham Case*

stereotyping, and appeals to our emotions through Available through iTunes and a

critical thinking, empirical research, and logical reasoning. screening will be available in early

September.

*Bad Science: Quacks, Hacks, and Big Pharma Flacks* (Chs. 3 & 10)

Ben Goldacre.

As you view and read through these readings, consider

why we make mistakes and misreport. Make a list of “Why Most Published Research cognitive errors and the reasons why we commit such Findings are False.” John Ionnidis,

errors. *PLOS Medicine* (August 30, 2005).

“Are People Stupid? Knowledge

Is the Antidote to Fear.” Gerd The Incendiary documentary and these readings will Gigerenzer, Pp. 1-16 in *Risk Savvy:* stand you in very good stead over the coming weeks *How to Make Good Decisions*

and are good preparation for the upcoming assignments. Viking Press, 2014).

In reading these assignments don’t just pick out what *Thinking Fast and Slow*, Pp. 19-30 you find interesting. You must understand the entire Daniel Kahneman. (Farrar, Strauss,

arc of the argument(s), how the authors use data, and And Giroux, 2014).

How they value the importance of proper research

methods. You must know: 1) what is the overall argument “Weeding Out Dubious Marijuana

2) what evidence was used; and 3) what are the implications Science.” Alex Berenson. Wall

of the study? Street Journal, May 5, 2019. ([Here](about:blank))

“Eleven Simple Never-Fail

Rules for Not being Misled by

Experts,” David H. Freeman

*Wrong*, David H. Freeman (Little

Brown & Co. 2010), 203-230

“A Social Science Perspective on

Gifts to Physicians From Industry,”

Jason Dana and George Lowenstein

(*JAMA*, July 9, 2003), 252-255.

“The Computer and the Hernia

Factory,” *Complications: A*

*Surgeon’s Notes on an Imperfect*

*Science,* (Picador, 2002), 35-46

**DATE CLASS CONTENT/ACTIVITY READINGS**

**Week 1**

**Wednesday** 9/02 3:00pm: Zoom. Classes begin. Expectations. Review of syllabus.

Guidance on study habits and weekly assignments, research proposal etc.

It is important that we begin to establish strong bonds and create group

“chemistry.” The Social Science Scholars program depends on an atmosphere

of mutual respect and we as humans tend to form arbitrary subgroups defined

by the exclusion of others. We must not insulate ourselves in subgroups. Our

program seeks to establish lifelong friendships, now is the time to begin.

**Homework Assignment**: To introduce you to many of the key issues and

topics that are fundamental to understanding inequality, visit

[The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality.](about:blank) Review these issues, select

**two** key issues that really interest you and come to class on Wednesday prepared

to share & discuss your newfound enthusiasm for understanding these key issues.

**MODULE 1: Critical Thinking & The Craft of Research**

**Week 2**

**Monday** 9/7 Labor Day. No Class.

View *Incendiary*. Details of how to access & watch

this documentary will be discussed during zoom class on 9/2.

Details will also be available on D2L.

**Wednesday** 9/9 **Getting it right and wrong**

How we got to where we are today in the U.S.

Why do we make and adhere to incorrect ideas/beliefs? Have read the summer readings &

have watched *Incendiary*.

“Failed Forensics: How Forensic

Science Lost Its Way and How It

Might Yet Find It,” Michael Saks

and David L. Faigman, *Annu. Rev. Law Soc. Sci.* 2008. 4:149-71.

(Course pack)

**Week 3 Getting it Right and Wrong**

**Monday** 9/14

Cognitive Error. How difficult is it to change minds “[When Beliefs and Facts Collide](about:blank),”

Even with the highest quality data. Can reason prevail *NY Times*, 07/05/14. **ON D2L**

Over prejudice, emotion, and intellectual laziness? Brendan Nyhan.

“Taking Corrections Literally But

Not Seriously? The Effect of

Information on Factual Beliefs

And Candidate Favorability,”

Brendan Nyhan et al. *Political*

*Behavior*, 2019 **ON D2L**

“Weeding Out Dubious Marijuana

Science,” Alex Berenson, [WSJ](about:blank)

05/05/19. **ON D2L**

“Effective Messages in Vaccine

Promotion: A Randomized Trial.”

Brendan Nyhan et al. *Pediatrics*

133 (April 2014) (Coursepack)

**Assignment 1**: due by midnight on Friday 9/18:

Why do people consistently adhere to false beliefs

about the world? **500-750 words.**

Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers. *Craft of Research*, Chs. 1-6.

**Wednesday** 9/16

Research: Making an Argument. *Craft of Research,* Chs. 7-11

Research: Writing Your Argument. *Craft of Research.* Chs. 12-17

**Week 4 Getting it Right or Wrong**

**Monday** 9/21 Gun Crime and Gun Ownership in the U.S. M. Miller et al., “Firearms and

Violent Death in the U.S.”

(Coursepack).

Webster, D. W. et al., “Effects of

the Repeal of Missouri’s Handgun

Purchaser Licensing Law on

Homicides.” (Coursepack).

**Assignment 2:** due by midnight on Friday 9/25:

How have Social Scientists studied the relationship

between gun ownership and the incidence of fatal

crime and/or accidents? Why is this so difficult research

to conduct? Why are claims based on intuition unreliable?

How have researchers gathered reliable data? What are

What are the policy implications of the research?

**500-750 words**.

Research: Data and Methods *Just Plain Data Analysis*. Chs. 1-3.

**Wednesday** 9/23

Research: Data and Methods *Just Plain Data Analysis*. Chs. 4-6.

Research: Data and Methods *Just Plain Data Analysis*. Chs. 7-9.

**Week 5 MODULE 2: The City of Detroit**

Monday 9/28

The City of Detroit in the 1940s Thomas J. Sugrue *The Origins of*

In-class exercise: drawing upon Sugrue’s causal factors *the Urban Crisis*, Pp. 17-57

each group will elaborate on one of the factors that

contributed to the racial divisions in Detroit.

**Assignment 3:** due by midnight on Friday 10/03:

Sugrue emphasizes the multi-causal nature of historical

Developments in Detroit. Identify four (4) of the main factors

interacted to affect the experiences of African Americans in

Detroit in the 1940s. **500-750 words**.

Wednesday 9/30

The City of Detroit (the post war years). Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban*

Labor discrimination, economic pressures, industrial *Crisis*, Pp. 91-153.

flight. Local, national, international pressures on the

automobile industry. White flight and growing racial

tensions and segregation. Build-up to the “1967 riots.”

In-class exercise: Groups will have 20 minutes to create

A 5-minute PowerPoint explaining the attitudes & behaviors

of one of the major constituencies I post-war Detroit.

Guest speaker: Wellness seminar.

**Week 6**

Monday 10/05 The City of Detroit (the politics of home ownership) Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban*

*Crisis,* Pp. 181-271.

**Assignment 4**: due by midnight on Friday 10/09:

What were the major obstacles to the successful

Redevelopment of Detroit in the decades after

the’67 riots? **500-750 words.**

Wednesday 10/07 The City of Detroit (after the riots). Attempts to June M. Thomas, *Redevelopment*

Bring jobs and opportunities back to Detroit. The *and Race: Planning a Finer City in*

Growth of activism. The failure of planning. *Postwar Detroit*. (Coursepack).

Guest Speaker: Amy Dietrickson: Career Development.

**Week 7** **MODULE 3: Housing**

Monday 10/12 Eviction: *Evicted* Prologue, Chs. 1-8

**Assignment 5:** due by midnight on Friday 10/16:

Desmond writes, “If incarceration had come to define

the lives of men from impoverished black neighborhoods,

eviction was shaping the lives of women. Poor black men

were locked up. Poor black women were locked out” (page 98).

How is eviction shaping the lives of black women today?

What are some of the parallels between incarceration and eviction?

Wednesday 10/14 Eviction *Evicted* Chs. 1-8

**Week 8**

Monday 10/19 Eviction *Evicted* Chs. 9-16

**Assignment 6:** due by midnight on Friday 10/23:

If you were unexpectedly evicted from your home,

what would the fallout be? How would this impact your

education, employment, and relationships? How might a

sudden change like eviction affect your physical and mental well-being?

Wednesday 10/21 Eviction *Evicted* Chs.9-16

**Week 9**

Monday 10/26 Eviction *Evicted* 17-24, Epilogue

**Assignment 7:** due by midnight on Friday 10/30:

Throughout Evicted, we learn how eviction essentially

traps poor people in a cycle of poverty, how it makes

securing a future more difficult, can lead to the loss of a job,

and have other damaging effects on families.  Desmond

argues that “eviction” is “a cause and not just a condition

of poverty” (p. 299).  How is Scott's opioid addiction, and

substance abuse generally, related to these cycles of poverty and eviction?

Wednesday 10/28 Eviction *Evicted* 17-24, Epilogue

**Week 10** **MODULE 4: Inequality**

Monday 11/02 How Stratification Works *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 1

“The Sociology of Inequality and The Rise of Neo-Inequality,” Brendan Mullan, *Sociological* *Focus*, 2017, Vol. 50, No.2:105-24

**(ON D2L)**

**Assignment 8:** due by midnight on Friday 11/06:

Conventional approaches to understanding stratification

and inequality do not adequately capture the causes and

consequences of new forms of inequality and poverty that

have emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In what

ways do neo-inequalities affect senior communities and

how might this affect their experiences of loneliness? You’ll

want to apply the readings on neo-inequalities to senior

loneliness and think through how our current environment of

inequalities affects senior communities.

Wednesday 11/04

The Rise and Fall of Egalitarian Capitalism *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 2

“Of Our Spiritual Strivings,” *The Souls of the Black* Folk (Faucet publications, 1961), pp. 15-22.W.E.B. Du Bois (Course pack).

Guest speaker: Wellness seminar.

**Week 11**

Monday 11/09 Reworking the Color Line *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 3

**Assignment 9:** due by midnight on Friday 11/13:

Using Massey's information on immigration and the

color line, how would you update history textbooks to

better reflect categorical inequalities, especially about

race and ethnicity? How would this information help more

accurately represent immigrant communities in the US in

textbooks? What do textbooks often misrepresent when

discussing race, ethnicity, and immigration?

Envy Up, Scorn Down: How Status Divides Us,” (Russell Sage Foundation, 2012), pp. 1-55. (Course pack).

Wednesday 11/11 Building a Better Underclass *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 4

“Envy Up, Scorn Down: How Comparisons Divide Us” Susan T. Fiske. *American Psychologist*, (Nov. 2010), pp. 698-706. (Course pack).

**Week 12**

Monday 11/16 Remaking the Political Economy *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 5

**Assignment 10:** due by midnight on Friday 11/20:

How do gender inequalities influence access to

pediatric palliative care and perceptions of caretaking

for children with complex needs? How might gender

stratification as well as scorn and envy apply to pediatric palliative care?

Wednesday 11/18 Engendering Inequality *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 6

**Week 13**

Monday 11/23 America Unequal *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 7

**Assignment 11:** due by midnight on Friday 12/04:

Massey includes a chapter titled “America Unequal”

that highlights historical trends in US inequalities.

How do the United States’ levels of inequalities compare

to other countries? Is the US unique or leading in terms of

certain inequalities? You can choose to compare the US to

3 other countries with one socio-economic factor (i.e. education),

**OR** you can choose three socio-economic factors to highlight the

US’s inequalities in relation to international trends. Some factors

you could explore are gun violence, senior loneliness, opioid abuse,

child palliative care, education, incarceration, evictions, etc.

Wednesday 11/25 America Unequal *Categorically Unequal* Ch. 7

**MODULE 5: Detroit Revisited**

**Week 14**

Monday 11/30 Predatory Cities: Detroit *Predatory Cities*, Bernadette

**Assignment 12:** Due by midnight on Friday 12/11: Atuahene, *California Law*

You randomly stumble into a Zoom room with Thomas *Review*, Vol 108, No.1.

Sugrue, June Thomas, Matt Desmond, Doug Massey, February 2020. (on D2L).

and Susan Fiske. What inequalities do they talk about?

Do they have agreements/disagreements about ways of

examining inequalities and/or explanations for certain

inequalities? Choose at least three (3) of the authors to

discuss, but you may address more or all of them.

You may write a standard essay, or you may have some or all

of the authors engage in creative dialogue--as long as you

provide a thesis and evidence to support your argument throughout.

Wednesday 12/02 Predatory Cities: Detroit *Predatory Cities*, Bernadette

Atuahene, *California Law*

*Review*, Vol 108, No.1.

February 2020. (on D2L).

**Week 15**

Monday 12/07 Predatory Cities: Detroit *Predatory Cities*, Bernadette

Atuahene, *California Law*

*Review*, Vol 108, No.1.

February 2020. (on D2L).

Wednesday 12/09 Predatory Cities: Detroit *Predatory Cities*, Bernadette

Atuahene, *California Law*

*Review*, Vol 108, No.1.

February 2020. (on D2L).

**Week 16**

Monday-Friday 12/14 – 12/18 EXAM WEEK

**FRIDAY 12/18 RESEARCH PROSPECTUS DUE** (12:00 MIDNIGHT DEADLINE)

**BASIC RULES**

**PLAGIARISM WILL BE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY**. If you violate the honor code (available online and see below) you will fail the paper or, more likely, the course. Remember: if you refer to an idea that is not part of general knowledge in the field, then cite the author. If you use text from any source it must be bounded by speech marks and properly referenced with NAME, TITLE OF BOOK OR ARTICLE, PUBLISHER AND PAGE NUMBERS. **Failing to reference properly is not advised**. Please use the following guidelines for citing your work for all of your papers as part of the Social Science Scholars Program:

[**http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\_citationguide.html**](about:blank)

**AVOID USING THE INTERNET unless it’s JSTOR, Google Books or Scholar, Web of Science, or PubMed.** WIKIPEDIA, for example, is simply not reliable enough. Given that there are excellent peer-reviewed online resources plus [MSU’s very good university library](about:blank), it’s unacceptably lazy and sloppy to use such sites except for checking basic names and dates. Use of inappropriate web resources may lead to a lower grade or a refusal on my part to grade the paper until properly researched. Please use the university’s main library or journals. Published articles and books may well err, but they have normally gone through a much more rigorous process of peer review than anything on the web. If you cannot get hold of a book from the library, check with me since I may have a copy to lend. **To repeat: using non-peer-reviewed web sites will in all likelihood lead to a lower grade or a refusal on my part to grade it**.

**EDIT PROPERLY:** Bad grammar, sloppy editing, and incoherency will seriously affect the grade. If you don’t know when to use ‘they’re’ or ‘their’, ‘its’ or ‘it’s’, and so on, ask me or look it up. Before handing in a paper it needs to pass through several drafts, with errors, inconsistencies and unclear passages being eliminated at each stage. Nobody takes seriously writing that’s riddled with ungrammatical sentences. If you need help, you just need to ask me or Jenn.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** You must provide Jenn Arbogast email ([JennArbo@MSU.edu](about:blank)) **BEFORE** class with a satisfactory reason for any absences from the M/W 3:00pm zoom classes. If you do not, 1% will be deducted from your final grade for each class missed. Remember, you must attend 90% of the seminars in order to retain your place in the program.

**Spartan Code of Honor**

MSU student leaders have recognized the challenging task of discouraging plagiarism from the academic community. The Associated Students of Michigan State University (ASMSU) launched the Spartan Code of Honor academic pledge, focused on valuing academic integrity and honest work ethics at MSU.

***“As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do.”***

The Spartan Code of Honor academic pledge embodies the principles of integrity that every Spartan is required to uphold in their time as a student, and beyond. The academic pledge was crafted with inspiration from existing individual college honor codes to establish an overarching statement for the entire university. It was adopted by ASMSU on March 3, 2016, endorsed by Academic Governance on March 22, 2016, and recognized by the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees on April 15, 2016.

Student conduct that is inconsistent with the academic pledge is addressed through existing policies, regulations, and ordinances governing academic honesty and integrity: Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and General Student Regulations.

Please visit the website to learn more about the [Spartan Code of Honor](about:blank) academic pledge.

**Use of Electronic Devices**

The use of cell phones is **NOT** permitted in this class.

**Turnitin OriginalityCheck in D2L**

Consistent with MSU’s efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool in D2L called Turnitin OriginalityCheck to compare student’s work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student’s work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a “similarity score.” The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student’s work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool.

**Academic Integrity**

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The policies on academic honesty are specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](about:blank) and/or the MSU Web site: [www.msu.edu](about:blank).)

You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use [www.allmsu.com](about:blank) or similar websites to complete any work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

Faculty are required to report all instances in which a penalty grade is given for academic dishonesty.

Please see [http://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html](about:blank) for further information regarding academic integrity at MSU and the academic dishonesty reporting system. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](about:blank) webpage.)

**Limits to Confidentiality**

Essays, papers, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies.  However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others.  As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the Department of Police and Public Safety) if you share it with me:

* Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
* Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff.
* Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to communicate with you about the incident that you have shared.  In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual.  If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

**Disruptive Behavior**

Article 2.III.B.4 of the [Academic Freedom Report (AFR)](about:blank) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.III.B.10 of the [AFR](about:blank) states that "The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." [General Student Regulation 5.02](about:blank) states: "No Student shall obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with the functions, services, or directives of the University, its offices, or its employees (e.g., classes, social, cultural, and athletic events, computing services, registration, housing and food services, governance meetings, and hearings).” Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Judicial Affairs office.

**Note to Students with Disabilities**

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. **Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.)**. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible. The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) can be reached at (517) 353-9642 or [http://MYProfile.rcpd.msu.edu](about:blank).

**Student Resources**

The MSU [Learning Resource Center](about:blank) provides resources and academic, intercultural, and health and wellness services to be a success at MSU.

The MSU English Language Center is located in the Office of International Student Services (oiss.isp.msu.edu) and provides language help and additional support as needed for International Students. These campus resources provide a range of services specifically for international students in the form of tutoring and strategies for improving English

language skills.

**Policy on Grief Absence**

MSU faculty and staff are sensitive to the bereavement process of a student who has lost a family member or who is experiencing emotional distress from a similar tragedy so that the student is not academically disadvantaged in their classes or other academic work (e.g. research). Please familiarize yourself with the MSU [Policy on Grief Absence](about:blank#s13216)