THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE

March 24th to May 12th, 2020
Tuesdays, 5:15 PM to 7:30 PM
Online via Zoom

COURSE COORDINATOR:

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TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The last two to three decades have seen significant growth in social inequalities both within and between countries. Local, national, and international leaders and organizations have expressed concerns about this development and its impact on the health and well-being of their populations. This course analyzes the nature of the phenomenon of social inequality, the different types of inequalities (class, race, gender, age, and nationality, among others), and explores different theories that have been developed to explain their origins and effects.

Themes to be analyzed in this course include:
1) What is meant by social inequalities?
2) What are the major causes of the growth of inequalities?
3) What are the health and social consequences of greater inequality?

CLASS SESSIONS:

Class will be held every Tuesday from 5:15 – 7:30 PM via Zoom at:

https://JHUBlueJays.zoom.us/my/kieferahn

It is recommended that you save/favorite this link on your browser so you don’t have to look it up every week. Let the TAs know if you are having difficulty connecting to Zoom.
MODUS OPERANDI:

This course is primarily conducted in an interactive seminar format, which functions as a reading club and relies on active student participation to discuss and debate the issues covered. Each week, students will lead discussions of each assigned reading. As an average, each student will be expected to review one or two articles throughout the course. Please see Guidelines for Leading a Seminar Discussion below for an overview of the expected content and format of the discussions.

STUDENT EVALUATION:

Evaluation will be based on participation in discussion of assigned readings. Students taking the class for a letter grade will prepare a 10-page paper on a subject of their choice that relates to the course content. For those students writing the paper, proposed paper topics must be submitted to Kellan Baker (kbaker39@jhu.edu) no later than April 30th for approval. Papers are due the last day of class.

ETHICAL CONDUCT:

Academic ethics as discussed in the Policy and Procedure Memorandum for Students will be adhered to in this class.

GUIDELINES FOR LEADING A SEMINAR DISCUSSION:

This course will primarily be conducted in an interactive seminar format. Each week, all readings in the syllabus are mandatory for all participants to read thoroughly before the next class session. Each week, one student will be expected to lead a discussion of one assigned reading. Four to five readings will be discussed in each class period, meaning that four or five students will present each week. The assignment is to summarize the readings, bring out the main points, share your reflections, and pose questions to the group for discussion. You must follow these guidelines for leading a seminar discussion; we suggest you create a document in which you write a response to each of the points below to prepare for and structure your presentation:

- Give a very brief overview of the paper (aim for 2-3 sentences, bullet points okay)
- Do not summarize the article – everyone must do all of the readings, so you can assume that your classmates have read the article you’re presenting on
- Identify the 1-3 main ideas or arguments of the readings
- Identify a contribution that this paper makes to the literature on social inequalities
- State whether you agree or disagree with the author’s ideas and why
- Present a minimum of 3 discussion questions (consider using short direct quotations from the reading or themes addressed in previous class sessions to spark discussion)

The presentations should be no longer than 7 minutes, followed by approximately 15 minutes of discussion facilitated by the student presenter.
**READINGS:**

All required readings will be available on CoursePlus. Those further interested in the topics addressed during the course might consider the optional background texts, which are available in the Welch Library e-reserves. Another valuable source is the *International Journal of Health Services*, which is a quarterly peer-reviewed journal available through the Welch Library that contains articles assessing health and well-being in the context of national and international health and social policy, political economy, sociology, history, philosophy, ethics, and law.

**Background Texts:**


**Required Readings:**

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<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definitions and Consequences of Neoliberalism</strong></td>
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### Evidence on the Origins and Growth of Inequalities

**Week 3**
**Apr 7**


### Class Structures

**Week 4**
**Apr 14**


### The Consequences of Inequalities

**Week 5**
**Apr 21**


### Class, Race, and Gender

**Week 6**
**Apr 28**

### Week 7

**May 5**

#### Critiques of Current Thinking and Trends


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### Week 8

**May 12**

#### A Way Forward: Alternative Solutions and Research Agendas