

Global Poverty and Inequality in the 21st Century [Online]

Policy, Planning & Design 115

Blum Center

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Hours: TBD

Course Description

This course – Policy, Planning & Design (PPD) 115 Global Poverty and Inequality in the 21st Century – addresses two of the most complex, and intertwined, problems of our time: poverty and inequality. We are building this course on the premise that we all have an obligation to do something to deal with the challenge of poverty, and that those who have the greatest capability have the greatest obligation. Students will be challenged to identify and communicate their role in poverty alleviation – this course offers an entry point for their contributions.

The world has begun to move away from measuring progress on poverty in strictly economic terms. The structure of this course is informed by a new way of thinking about poverty – as a multidimensional set of deprivations. The class will introduce the very complicated topics of poverty and poverty alleviation in the 21st century, addressing questions such as: What are the challenges that communities around the world experience? What the capabilities that we have to address those challenges?

We will begin by examining the various definitions of poverty and then we will dive into the various dimensions and perspectives of poverty and inequality in the remaining modules:

income and wealth; health; education; environment; governance; communities and neighborhoods; disaster and conflict; stigma and identity; and engineering and technology.

We will address questions such as: How does environmental stress contribute to poverty? How does our education system reinforce poverty?

The course will broadly cover poverty and inequality, both in the US and globally, with the goal of preparing students to think critically about the subject on both macro and community levels.

The course will present theory, broad trends, and empirical evidence and will prepare students to critically analyze issues and policy, utilizing data. Throughout the modules, we will discuss poverty interventions that have had both positive and negative impacts. This course will be informed by cutting edge research on the character of poverty. The class will be rooted in economics, political science and sociology, but as poverty alleviation benefits from collective action, so this course will delve into poverty from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students will hear from experts throughout the UC system, and we also expect that students will bring their diverse academic backgrounds and interests to this class.

Throughout, the course aims to make poverty less abstract. The numbers – 1.6 billion people on the planet living in extreme poverty and 47 million people in the United States alone living below the poverty line – can be overwhelming, but this course aims to make poverty more concrete and more visible. This course, we hope, will trigger a lifelong interest in poverty action, not only preparing students to delve further into development studies, pursue graduate work, and work explicitly in the area of poverty alleviation, but also facilitating personal transformation. For all students, including those who go on to become entrepreneurs, doctors, or lawyers, we hope that core lessons of this course will contribute to and inform their life decisions. Whether it's writing a grant proposal for a service learning project or developing a concept note on a poverty-related innovation, we hope that this course will be a platform that allows students to take the next step in poverty action.

Student Learning Objectives

By successfully completing this course, students will:

- Describe the different definitions of poverty depicted in the class materials
- Critically analyze and evaluate competing perspectives on the causes of poverty, how these theories are invoked in public discourse, and their implications for governmental response
- Conduct research on how governmental and other actors have tried to reduce poverty
- Compare the cost/benefit of poverty interventions
- Utilize an interdisciplinary approach to understanding, analyzing, and acting on different aspects of poverty
- Uncover their own role as a global citizen and decide whether to pursue leadership

opportunities in this field in their academic or professional life

- Prepare for careers in community-based organizations or NGOs working on poverty alleviation; prepare for an immersive field study or service-learning experience related to class themes; prepare for further coursework in poverty-related fields; and/or develop proposals for competitions focused on solutions to poverty alleviation, such as those in existence across the entire UC system and at other universities such as TCU, MIT, and Michigan

Course Organization

The course will consist of 10 discrete modules examining poverty from different angles.

Modules include:

- video lecturettes
- guest expert webinar
- quiz
- discussion forum prompt
- readings
- links to additional resources

Webinars are a required component of the class. Students are expected to complete all readings prior to the webinar session.

Assignments and Grading

Grades are calculated as:

- Course surveys: Completion necessary to advance to course modules and complete the course
- Weekly quizzes: 10%
- Webinar attendance and engagement: 10%
- Discussion posts and peer reviews: 10%
- Module assignments (2): 30% (15% each)
- Capstone project: 40%

Pre-and post-course surveys:

Students will be required to complete two course surveys. **The pre-surveys must be completed before students can advance to the course modules. The poverty knowledge post-survey must be completed before students can submit their final capstone project.**

- Online course pre-survey: This survey will measure students' familiarity with online courses.
- Poverty knowledge pre- and post-survey: These surveys will measure students' knowledge of poverty at the start and end of the course. Students should submit a screen shot of their score on Canvas.

Weekly quizzes:

By the end of each week, students will complete a short 10-question quiz that will assess their knowledge of the module content. Quizzes will be based on the lectures and course reading. Students should complete each quiz by **11:59 pm on the Sunday** of the module week.

Webinar attendance and engagement:

Students will be required to attend the weekly guest speaker webinars and participate in the webinars by asking questions and offering comments. Webinars will take place online on **Tuesdays from 8:00-8:50 pm.**

Discussion posts and peer reviews:

The instructor for each week will post a discussion prompt in the module's discussion forum. Students should submit a 200-word response to the instructor's prompt by **11:59 pm on the Wednesday** of the module week. They should also submit a 100-word comment on a peer's response by **11:59 pm on the Sunday** of the module week.

Module assignments:

Each module includes an assignment that asks students to engage more deeply with the module content. Students only need to choose **two** assignments to complete throughout the course. Although students may choose any two to complete, one of the assignments must be from Modules 1-5. The due dates for the assignments are posted on each assignment description in Canvas.

Capstone Project:

There are three options for the capstone project, and students should choose to complete one of the three options. They should indicate their choice **by 11:59 pm on Sunday, February 5**. The final assignment is due by **9:00 am on Thursday, March 23**. Please see the Canvas site for further details on each assignment option.

- Option 1: Students should develop a solution to a problem related to poverty and inequality. Their proposals should meet the criteria for the Blum Center's Designing Solutions for Poverty competition.
- Option 2: Students should complete a briefing report about an issue of interest that relates to poverty and/or inequality. In their report, students should describe the issue, present different policy solutions, evaluate the pros and cons of the different solutions, and recommend a particular solution.
- Option 3: Students should identify a service project that addresses poverty (i.e., Peace Week, Refugee Awareness Week, etc.). The student should get approval for the project from the course TA before Week 4. They should develop a monitoring and evaluation report of the project. The report should describe 1) what the project aimed to accomplish 2) the student's role in the project, 3) measurement of the project's impact, 4) whether the project met its organizers' expectations, 5) recommendations for improving the project.

Readings:

Articles and readings will be available as an electronic course reader.

Overview of Course Schedule:

	Modules	Lectures	Contributing Faculty
1	Definitions and Measures	• Introduction to Course • Defining Poverty • Measures of Poverty and Inequality	Richard Matthew, UCI
2	Income and Wealth	• Income and Wealth I • Income and Wealth II	David Brady, UCR
3	Health	• Health and Nutrition • Improving Health and Nutrition	Emily Hall, UCSF
4	Education	• Educational Inequality	Greg Duncan, UCI

		• Improving Educational Opportunity	
5	Environment	• Environmental Impacts on the Poor • Environmental Interventions	Fonna Forman, UCSD
6	Governance	• Poor Governance • Public Policy	Richard Appelbaum, UCSB
7	Communities & Neighborhoods	• Crime, Incarceration and Neighborhood Effects • Improving Communities and Neighborhoods	Maria Rendon, UCI
8	Disasters and Conflict	• Disasters, Conflict, and Poverty • Addressing Disaster	Richard Matthew, UCI
9	Stigma and Identity	• Families and Gender • Improving Policy and Outcomes	Andrew Penner, UCI
10	Engineering and Technology	• Internet and the Digital Divide • Harnessing Innovation and Technical Solutions	Richard Matthew, UCI with on-site interviews at UC Berkeley

Course Policies

Internet connectivity

Please ensure that you have a stable Internet connection when you are taking the quizzes.

Whenever possible, use a wired connection instead of a wireless connection. Connectivity issues that arise during a quiz may prevent you from completing the quiz or may cause scoring errors.

Communication

In an online course, the majority of our communication takes place in the course forums.

However, when we have a need for communication that is private, whether personal, interpersonal, or professional, we will use individual email or telephone.

Questions concerning class materials should be posted on the class forum called "General Discussion Forum," so that all students can benefit from reading the answer. Discussion postings are archived and will be available throughout the course. Please do not email the instructor with questions about the readings or video lessons. They should be posted to the discussion forum. I will do my best to respond quickly to questions.

Expectations of Students

I expect you to:

- keep up with the material covered every week
- complete your homework and quizzes on time every week
- participate actively and courteously in the forums
- abide by the standards of academic honesty and student code of conduct
- seek help (instructor, TA, or homework forums) when you don't understand a topic

Expectations of the Instructor

You can expect me to:

- provide comprehensive learning material on time every week
- provide one scheduled live office hour every week
- provide a continuing “office hour” / instructor help forum, check it at least three times a week and respond to student postings
- create quizzes and assignments that reflect the stated learning expectations for the course
- do my best to get you to appreciate and enjoy the course material

Plagiarism

The University of California seeks to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity. Any work submitted by a student must represent original work produced by that student. Any source used by a student must be documented through normal scholarly references and citations, and the extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. The University further considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the course instructor about how much help may be received in completing an assignment or exam or project and what sources may be used. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the University. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, visit the following web site: <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism>.

Disability Services

If you need support or assistance because of a disability, you may be eligible for accommodations or services through the Disability Service Center at UC Irvine. Please contact the DSC directly at (949) 824-7494 or TDD (949) 824-6272. You can also visit the DSC's website: <http://www.disability.uci.edu/>. The DSC will work with your instructor to make any

necessary accommodations. Please note that it is your responsibility to initiate this process with the DSC.

Code of Conduct

All participants in the course are bound by the University of California Code of Conduct, found at http://www.ucop.edu/ethics-compliance-audit-services/_files/stmt-stds-ethics.pdf

The learning environment at the University of California, Irvine is one based on honesty and integrity. This environment can be maintained only if all participants recognize the importance of maintaining the highest ethical standards. It is critical for all concerned that all student work be the sole work of each individual student. The tests in this course are to be taken by you and you alone, without help. You may not print the tests. You are to take the tests without assistance from printed materials, the Internet, your cell phone, or any other way in which you could gather information. Doing so constitutes academic dishonesty. Please familiarize yourself with the UCI Academic Honesty Policy. Anyone caught cheating or in any other way in violation of the university policy on academic honesty will receive an F in the class. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Netiquette

In an online classroom, our primary means of communication is written. The written language has many advantages: more opportunity for reasoned thought, more ability to go in-depth, and more time to think through an issue before posting a comment. However, written communication also has certain disadvantages, such a lack of the face-to-face signaling that occurs through body language, intonation, pausing, facial expressions, and gestures. As a result, please be aware of the possibility of miscommunication and compose your comments in a positive, supportive, and constructive manner.