

HISTORY 249
 HISTORY of POVERTY in the UNITED STATES
 Spring 2013
 Mon & Wed, 3:00-4:15

Dr. Gail S. Murray	Office Hours: M & W 1:30-3:00
202 Buckman	Th: 3:00-4:00
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will examine stereotypes of the poor over time; voluntary aid; myths about poverty; generational poverty; middle-class assumptions about the poor; poor communities organizing for change; gov't programs that help & hurt; health issues among the poor; school challenges in poor communities

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To place public policy about the poor in historical context
- To trace historically the interplay between private benevolence and public assistance
- To understand assumptions behind various private and public anti-poverty initiatives
- To understand how attitudes & assumptions affect public policy & private benevolence
- To practice critical skills when reading primary documents
- To enhance analytical writing skills
- To gain some experience with the poor or agencies which serve them

COURSE GUIDELINES:

- Papers are always due on the day they appear on the syllabus. Penalties for late papers are assessed at one degree per calendar day late, including weekends.
- Attendance and discussion is expected. Absences will seriously impair your participation grade.
- Cell phones and other electronics remain off.
- All disabilities will be accommodated. See the instructor during the first week of class.
- Since there is no "correct" way to think about poverty or the poor themselves, a variety of understandings and perspectives will emerge. Exercise tolerance. Opinions different from your own are learning opportunities.
- Any idea is subject to criticism; people are not. Lively disagreement is encouraged; civility and tolerance are expected.

ASSESSMENT:

Class Participation	15%
Analytical Papers (3)	30%
Midterm Exam	15%
Community Reflection paper	15%
URCAS paper	5%
Final Exam	20%

Final grades are determined on the basis of percentages: 94%-100% of total points earns an "A"; 90%-93% earns an "A-" etc.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: History 249 is essentially a discussion class and you will be graded on the quality of your participation. Quality involves (1) asking thoughtful questions of other students or the instructor; (2) raising thoughtful questions about assigned reading or related news, local or national; (3) responding to questions posed by the instructor.

PAPERS (3) : Short essays (maximum 5 pages)to address specific historical issues. The essay prompts are based on assigned readings. These are not research papers. See calendar for specific dates

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION and REFLECTION: Students will participate three times with a local agency or program that works with poverty-level individuals. Students may elect to spend 3 sessions at the same location or may choose 3 different experiences. You will log your participation in class on the Honor Code system. Your Reflection Paper will use the concepts learned in class to critically assess the aims and

effectiveness of the program (s) the student has participated in. If you are already involved in a Kinney Program that works with people in poverty, you may continue that project and use it for your reflection. In addition to volunteering your time, students will want to ask questions of program workers. Use discretion in querying recipients.

EXAMS (2): Given in class and covering assigned readings, class discussion, and lecture material. Questions will combine short answer with longer essays.

URCAS PAPER: Students are required to attend URCAS and submit a detailed description of one poster relating to urban problems or the poor. Type, double-spaced, and Honor Pledge.

REQUIRED BOOKS (in order of use):

- David Shipler, The Working Poor: Invisible in America (2005)
- James Patterson, America's Struggle against Poverty, 1900-1980 (1981, revsd 2000)
- Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work (1997)
- Carole Stack, All Our Kin (1974)
- Peter Edelman, So Rich, So Poor (2012)

Other readings posted on MOODLE, identified with ** Download and bring to class.

ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I: Defining Contemporary Poverty

W, Jan. 9: Introduction to the course and class members

Lecture: Defining poverty today and Historical definitions

M, Jan 14: The Face of Poverty today

Shipler, Intro and Chapters 1-4

In-class clips from "Frontline: Poor Kids" (available online at PBS Frontline)

W, Jan 16: Health Disparities in the 21st C.

Shipler, Chpts 5-8

Guest: Dr. Kendra Hotz, Dept. of Religious Studies

M, Jan 21: MLK HOLIDAY – NO Class

Possible opportunities for community participation

W, Jan 23: Assets of the Poor

Shipler, Chpts 9-11

Exercises on Class Assets

Kinney Program Information

UNIT II: Pre-Industrial America & the "Worthy Poor"

M, Jan 28: British models: Worthy & Unworthy Poor

** "New York Society for the Prevention of Pauperism" (1818)

W, Jan 30: Private Charity & Moral Reform

** "The Friendly Society" (1797)

** Ely, "Preacher to the Poor in N.Y." (1811)

M, Feb. 4: Institutional Solutions: Almshouses, Houses of Refuge, & Orphanages

**Rules for the Government of the Almshouse" (1801)

**The Quincy Report" (1821)

** Subjects of the NY House of Refuge" (1825)

Guest: Dr. John Murray, Economics Dept.

W , Feb 6: Different Analysis: Structural Assessments of Poverty

**Skidmore, "Rights of Man to Property" (1829)

** Carey, "Address to the Wealthy of the Land" (1831)

UNIT III: Industrial Capitalism & Reformers**M, Feb 11: Introduction to Post-Civil War America**

Lecture: Economy and the poor after War and Emancipation

Paper #1 DUE

W, Feb 13: The Progressive Reformers and the Poor

Patterson, *America's Struggle against Poverty*, Ch.1- 2

M, Feb 18: Decaying Urban Landscape

**Katz, Ch. 5, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*

Film clips: Photographers Jacob Riis & Lewis Hine

W, Feb. 20: The Great Depression

Patterson, Ch. 3

Academic Volume, "Background on James Agee" This page includes Analytical

Paper Assignment #2

Agee & Evans Photo Essay, Academic Volume

M, Feb. 25: Govt. response: the New Deal

Patterson, Ch. 4

Paper #2 DUE

W, Feb. 27: MIDTERM EXAM**UNIT IV: The Rediscovery of Poverty****M, Mar 4: The "Rediscovery" of Poverty in the 1960s**

Patterson, Ch. 6

Patterson, "Moynihan" **

Stack, *All Our Kin* Introduction

W, Mar 8: African American persistent poverty & assets

Stack, Ch 1- 3

***** SPRING BREAK *****

M, Mar 18: Strategies for survival in urban America

Stack, Ch. 4-6

W, Mar 20: Johnson's "War on Poverty"

Film clips in class: "LBJ"

Patterson, Ch. 7

M, Mar. 25: Transformation of the Welfare State

Patterson, Ch. 8 & 9

W, Mar 27:

PAPER #3 DUE

Easter Break begins at 10:00 p.m.

M, April 1: Single-parent Poverty

Edin & Lein, *Making Ends Meet*, Ch. 1-3

Payne budget exercises

W, Apr 3:

Edin & Lein, Ch. 6-8

M, Apr 8: Homelessness as a new problem

Patterson, 10

Guest: Prof. Ari Eisenbergam, History Dept.

W, Apr 10: Reagonomics and PWORA

Patterson, Ch. 14 & 16

UNIT V: The Present

M, Apr 15: Financial Collapse of 2008

Film:

Edelman, *So Rich, So Poor*, Intro & Ch. 1

W, Apr 17: Revisiting 21st C. Poverty

Edelman, Ch 3 & 4

Review notes from Jan 9

M, Apr 22: Moving toward solutions

Edelman, Ch 6

Guest, Dr. Heather Jamerson, Sociology Dept.

W, Apr 24: Exam Prep

Community Reflection Paper DUE

F, Apr. 26: Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity Symposium (URCAS).

FINAL EXAM TBA. Turn in URCAS paper at this time