

## PS 10000/20000: Introduction to Poverty Studies

### Instructor:

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### Course Description

This course introduces students to academic research about the nature and consequences of poverty (in both advanced and developing nations), highlighting the contributions of scholars from the social sciences, humanities, and the law. We begin by examining several multifaceted definitions of poverty put forth by governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and by mapping the incidence of poverty (geographically and demographically). We then examine a series of policy issues crowding the political agenda including low wage rates; sub prime lending practices; discrimination in hiring and promotion; enforcement of fair labor standards and treatment of low-skilled immigrants and migrant workers; inadequate access to quality education and health care; rehabilitating addicts, alcoholics, and ex-convicts; sexual abuse and broken families; and nutrition problems ranging from malnourishment to obesity.

Throughout, the readings and lectures reveal that collaboration across the various disciplines enhances our understanding of what it means to be poor and of the array of interlocking problems that lead to poverty, and guides the formulation of policies to prevent and alleviate poverty.

It is my hope that by the end of the course you will be familiar with the approaches of the multiple disciplines engaged in poverty research and appreciate the difficulties of designing policies to address the challenges of life with low income. Equally important, I hope you will be familiar with the resources that will enable you to pursue poverty alleviation in greater depth into the future.

### Office Hours

My office is in 245 O'Shaughnessy, the Economics and Policy Studies departmental office. My office hours are by appointment. When requesting an appointment, please indicate two or three times that are convenient for you and I will do my best to choose one of these times. Most days I will be working in my office and you are welcome to drop in. It is better, but not necessary, to call ahead.

### Email

I read email during the workweek and try to respond to student messages within 48 hours of receipt. If an emergency arises and you will not be able to fulfill an important responsibility, **do not rely upon email** to communicate with me. In emergencies it is best to call my office between 8 am and 5 pm, or my home between 9 am and 9 pm. Remember, just because you send an email does not mean your responsibility has ended. Your issue is not resolved until I reply to you.

I will send you emails frequently throughout the semester to update readings assignments as guest speakers send materials to me, forward news articles of interest, or distribute miscellaneous information. Watch for these messages! You will fall behind if you ignore them.

### Required Readings

The following book is available at the ND Bookstore and at on line bookstores.

- David K. Shieler. *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York: 2004.
- National Urban League, *The State of Black America 2007: Portrait of the Black Male*. The Beckham Publications Group, Inc., Silver Springs, Md.: 2007.

### Recommended Book

- Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*. Anchor Books, New York, New York: 1999.

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### Poverty News

The Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison provides a free email news service entitled the *Poverty Dispatch*. This service compiles and distributes links to Web-based news items dealing with poverty, welfare reform, and related topics twice a week. You may view the latest news (by category) by linking to <http://www.irp.wisc.edu/initiatives/outreach/dispatch.htm>. In addition, if you want to subscribe to this news service, send your request to [rsnell@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:rsnell@ssc.wisc.edu). Periodically reviewing the links sent to you is an excellent way to discover what issues are current as well as the variety of ways our 50 States respond to these issues.

### Electronic Reserves

Some of the course materials that will be posted on Electronic Reserves (eReserves) at the Hesburgh Library site (<http://www.library.nd.edu/>). Look for Library Services and click on electronic reserves. Choose our course (PS 20000) and select the appropriate reading.

### Lectures

Some of my lectures are illustrated by PowerPoint presentations. These presentations are available on my web site (<http://www.nd.edu/~jwarlick>). Select "Courses" and then under Fall 2008, PS 20000, choose "Lectures." Please review the appropriate ppt presentation before coming to class and identify any questions you wish to ask about the slides.

### Course Work and Grading System

Course work includes quizzes, weekly thought papers, and midterm and final exams. The weight assigned to each of these in the determination of the course grade is as follows:

Research Proposal	20 percent
Personal Journal	20 percent
Class participation	20 percent
Midterm exam	20 percent
Final exam	20 percent

### Research Proposal

I need to expand my understanding of the issues that interest students and the kinds of questions students ask about these issues from various disciplinary perspectives. Consequently, I am asking each student to prepare a research proposal regarding some aspect of poverty that reflects their disciplinary interests. The description should include a clear statement of the question(s) to be explored, a section providing background information that explains why the question is important, and an outline of how you would proceed to answer the question including an annotated bibliography of typical length of your discipline. Please feel free to consult me at all stages of the development of this proposal.

### Personal Journal

Each student will keep a personal journal in which they record a separate entry for each chapter of the books we read in class. The purpose of the journal is to create a chronological record of your understanding of and reflections on these readings. At the end of the semester this record should be useful in drawing overall conclusions about the readings.

The journal can be kept electronically and conveyed to me via email, or in the your own handwriting in an 8 7/8 x 11 inch, one subject, college ruled, spiral notebook. Please write legibly. Entries should follow the following format:

Title of chapter

Date of the entry

Brief statement of the major issues—the message that DeParle is trying to convey

Brief list of things that you learned and/or surprises, if any

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Your honest reaction to the contents of the chapter

Each entry other than the last should *not exceed two pages*, and you should number the pages of your journal for easy reference when you write your final reflection. This final entry should record your overall impressions for each book and may exceed two pages.

I will collect and review the journals several times over the semester. Your grade will be based on the completeness of the journal and my evaluation of the seriousness with which you recorded your reflections. Because the entries are subjective, I will not grade them for correctness.

### Midterm Exam and Final Exam

The midterm and final exams will be a combination of true/false, multiple choice, matching, short answer questions. The questions will be based on the assigned readings and class discussion. *Students with documented learning disabilities should consult me for alternatives.*

Makeup exams will only be administered for students whose absence is excused. Valid reasons for absences include job and internship interviews, illness, medical emergencies or deaths involving family members, participation in official university events, and so on. **Please notify me in advance in writing if you foresee that you will miss an exam. It is up to you to explain your absences.** If I do not receive a written explanation, I will count your absence as unexcused, you will not be allowed to make up the exam and you will receive a grade of **F** for that exam.

Requests for re-grading examinations must be made in writing no later than one class day after the exams have been returned.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is required. Only university-authorized absences will be accepted. Every unexcused missed class will reduce your class participation grade by .33 points.

### Honor Code

My expectations regarding the sources you may consult including your classmates will be specified on each assignment. Deviations from my instructions will be considered a violation of the honor code and treated accordingly.

### Calculation of Course Grade

Your performance on each component of the course will be indicated by a letter grade. Each letter grade has a corresponding numerical value as follows:

A	4.00	B	3.00	C	2.00	F	0.00
A-	3.67	B-	2.67	C-	1.67		
B+	3.33	C+	2.33	D	1.00		

Your course grade will be based on the weighted-average of these numerical values. The exact formulation is: **Course grade = .20 (Research Proposal) + .20 (Personal Journal) + .20 (midterm exam grade) + .20(final exam grade)**. This weighted-average will be converted into a letter grade as follows:

3.75 - 4.00	A	2.75 - 3.24	B	1.75 - 2.24	C	below 0.75	F
3.50 - 3.74	A-	2.50 - 2.74	B-	1.50 - 1.74	C-		
3.25 - 3.49	B+	2.25 - 2.49	C+	0.75 - 1.49	D		

**Tentative Course Schedule**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Speaker/Topic/Reading Assignment*</b>
1	8-27 W	JW/Introduction: America's Views on Poverty and Welfare
		<b>Defining and Measuring Poverty</b>
2	9-3 W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Working Poor</i>: Introduction, pp. 3-12</li> <li>Review all the links at <a href="http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/overview.html">http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/overview.html</a>; For official poverty thresholds see <a href="http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld.html">http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld.html</a></li> <li><i>World Development Report 2000/2001</i>, Chapter 1: The Nature and Evolution of Poverty-- <a href="http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/0,,contentMDK:20194762~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:336992,00.html">http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/0,,contentMDK:20194762~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:336992,00.html</a></li> <li>Optional: Amartya Sen, <i>Development as Freedom</i>. Anchor Books, New York, New York: 1999. For a brief description of each chapter, see <a href="http://dannyreviews.com/h/Development_Freedom.html">http://dannyreviews.com/h/Development_Freedom.html</a></li> </ul>
		David Betson (ECOP, <a href="http://www.nd.edu/~dbetson">http://www.nd.edu/~dbetson</a> )/Measuring Poverty
3	9-10 W	<b>Financial Constraints—Higher prices for the poor and bankruptcy</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Working Poor</i>: Chapter One: Money and It's Opposite, pp. 13-38</li> <li>Required Readings for The Foreclosure Crisis (See <a href="http://www.nd.edu/~jwarlick/courses">http://www.nd.edu/~jwarlick/courses</a>)</li> <li>Required Readings for Bankruptcy</li> <li>Ppt Lecture: Amitava Dutt, (ECOP, <a href="http://www.nd.edu/~adutt">http://www.nd.edu/~adutt</a> ) "Poverty, Debt and Bankruptcy"</li> </ul>
		<b>Why Work Often Doesn't Work (Journal Check)</b>
4	9-17 W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Working Poor</i>: Chapter Two: Work Doesn't Work, pp. 39-76</li> <li>Required Readings for Wal*Mart</li> <li><i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Five: The Daunting Work Place</li> </ul>
5	9-24	Sustainable Energy Forum—What shall we do?
6	10-1 W	<b>Importing the Third World to America</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Working Poor: Chapter Three: Importing the Third World, pp. 77-95</li> <li>The Working Poor, Chapter Four: The Harvest of Shame, pp. 96-120</li> <li>Edward R. Morrow, <i>Harvest of Shame, 1960</i></li> </ul>
7	10-8 W	<b>Immigration from the View of the Sending Country</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required Readings by Jason DeParle; for video see <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/27/world/americas/27migration.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/27/world/americas/27migration.html</a></li> <li>Distribute Take Home exam</li> </ul>
8	10-15	<b>Government Policies to Make Work Pay</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take Home Exam due</li> <li>Dan Graff (HIST)/Unionizing Low-income Workers (available under Lectures on my web site)</li> <li>Ppt Lecture: Taxes, the Poor, and the EITC</li> <li>Required Readings for "Eligibility for the EITC" and "Minimum Wage"</li> </ul>
		<b>The Role of Families (Journal Check)</b>
9	10-29 W	<b>Sex Abuse: <i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Six: Sins of the Fathers</b>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Family Support:</b> <i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Seven: Kinship</li> <li>• Greg Duncan and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, selected readings from <i>Consequences of Growing Up Poor</i></li> </ul>
10	11-5 W	<b>Health Matters</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ppt Lecture by Harvey Weingarten DDS "Dental Problems of Low-income Persons"</li> <li>• Required Reading for "Oral Health"</li> <li>• <i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Eight: Body and Mind</li> <li>• Required Readings for "Body and Mind"</li> <li>• Ppt Lecture by John Borkowski, Developmental Delays in the Children of Adolescent Parents"</li> </ul>
11	11-12	<b>Education</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Nine: Dreams</li> <li>• Film: Children in America's Schools</li> <li>• Film: Hard Times at Douglass High</li> <li>• Required Readings for "Education"</li> </ul>
12	11-19 W	<b>The Special Situation of Black Americans (Journal Check)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The State of Black America 2007</i>, pp. 9-58; and selected essays</li> <li>• Jason DeParle, "The Plantation: Mississippi, 1840-1960," Chapter 2 in <i>American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and A Nation's Drive to End Welfare</i>, Penguin Books, 2004.</li> <li>• Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," <a href="http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm">http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm</a></li> </ul>
13	12-3 W	<b>Current Aid for the Poor and the Politics of Poverty (Research Proposal Due)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW/<i>The Working Poor</i>, Chapter Ten: Work Works</li> <li>• Recommended Readings for "Politics of Poverty"</li> <li>• Ppt Lecture, "Overview of Welfare Programs"</li> </ul>
12-10		<b>Remaining Challenges (Journal Check)</b>
		<i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Eleven: Skill and Will
		Final Exam

\* Reading assignments should be completed before class on the day they are listed