

PS 10000/20000: Introduction to Poverty Studies

Instructor:

Jennifer Warlick, Associate Professor of Economics and Chairperson, Department of Economics and Policy Studies; office: 245 O'Shaughnessy; telephone: 631-6335; email: jwarlick@nd.edu. Visit my web site for the course syllabus and other information: <http://www.nd.edu/~jwarlick>

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 Mondays, 3:00-5:00 pm and 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.

i-Clicker

You must also purchase an i-Clicker student remote, ISBN: 0-7167-7939-0, and bring it to class each and every day! We will use it for opinion polls and daily quizzes. I-Clickers are also available at the ND Bookstore and can also be purchased on line from Amazon and other on line bookstores. If you purchased an i-clicker for another course, it will work in this course also.

PS10000/20000 Introduction to Poverty Studies

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. 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

Guest lecturers will address special topics throughout the semester. They may ask you to read 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 10000/20000) 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 Spring 2008, PS 10000/20000, 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:

Quizzes	15 percent
Thought papers	20 percent
Midterm exam	35 percent
Final exam	30 percent

Daily Quizzes

I will occasionally begin class with multiple-choice questions that you will answer with your i-clicker. You will not be able to make up these quizzes or take them in hard copy, so make it a point to bring your i-clicker to class everyday! I will assign your grade on according to the percent of questions you answer correctly as shown in the table below:

Percent answered correctly	Grade
80 and higher	A (4.00)
70 to 79	B (3.00)
60 to 69	C (2.00)
50 to 59	D (1.00)
Below 50	F (0.00)

Weekly Thought Papers

At regular intervals (see Course Schedule), you will be required to submit a thought paper that reflects on the *materials assigned and presented* in the preceding classes days.¹ Occasionally I will assign a specific

¹ For example, the first thought paper is due on January 31 and should reflect on some aspect of the "Introduction" to *The Working Poor*, and/or the materials presented in by Professor Betson or myself on the previous class days. The second thought paper should reflect on Chapter One, "Money and its Opposite," the supplementary materials I present on January 24, and the presentation by Professor Williams; the third

PS10000/20000 Introduction to Poverty Studies

topic or question that will be the subject of your paper. At other times you will be free to choose from the following topics:

- What most caught your attention and why
- Which of the last few days assignment you would like to pursue in-depth and why
- What you have learned in your other courses that provides a perspective or context for your understanding of the issues, including references for additional reading!

All papers should be typed in a font no smaller than 11 point, should be double-spaced, and should not exceed two pages in length. Please print on both sides of the paper if your printer allows.

The thought papers will be graded with whole letters, *A - F*, without pluses or minuses. The grade of *A* will be reserved for papers that are synthesize creatively or offer insightful commentaries on the readings and lectures, and that provide citations for related reading that you have encountered elsewhere. *A* papers must also be well-written and free of grammatical and syntax errors. The grade of *B* will be given to papers that are basically sound and well written (only a few grammatical errors and typos), but are not especially insightful. Papers that simply summarize rather than engage the material, employ a trite vocabulary, and contain multiple grammatical errors will be given a *C*. Papers that are without focus and are riddled with writing errors will be given a grade of *D*. If you fail to submit paper, your grade for that assignment will be an *F*.

The course schedule shows **twelve** dates on which thought papers are due. You must turn in **ten** thought papers during the semester, five before the midterm exam and five after. The choice of which **two** thought papers to skip is yours.

Late papers will not be accepted without a University excuse. Even then, no paper will be accepted more than one class day late *except under extraordinary circumstances* that must be explained to me by you or a dean representing you. Lateness may result in a deduction in your grade.

Be careful not to plagiarize another student's work. I encourage you to discuss the materials with your classmates, but you should write independently.

Please keep all your thought papers in a folder so that you can help me avoid errors in your final grade.

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.

Extra Credit

Attend three special events, write a one-page reflection on each, and receive a bump up of one step on

thought paper will consider Chapter Two, "Work Doesn't Work," and the presentation by Dr. Harvey Weingarten; and so on.

PS10000/20000 Introduction to Poverty Studies

your midterm exam grade (from a B to a B+ for example). For a list of opportunities, see "Extra Credit Events," at <http://www.nd.edu/~jwarlick/courses.html>. You may also seek approval beforehand for relevant events not listed.

Attendance Policy

Attendance other than for exams is encouraged but not required. Note that your performance on the quizzes will suffer if you are chronically absent!

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 = .15 (Quizzes) + .20 (Thought Papers) + .35 (midterm grade) + .30(final exam)**. 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		

PS10000/20000 Introduction to Poverty Studies

Tentative Course Schedule

	Date	Speaker/Topic/Reading Assignment*
1	1-15 T	JW/Introduction
2	1-17 R	JW/America's Views on Poverty and Welfare <i>The Working Poor</i> : Introduction, pp. 3-12 Review all the links at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/overview.html ; For official poverty thresholds see http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld.html
3	1-22 T	David Betson (ECOP, http://www.nd.edu/~dbetson)/Measuring Poverty
4	1-24 R	<i>First thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> : Chapter One: Money and It's Opposite, pp. 13-38 Extra Credit Event: William Julius Wilson Lecture, Sunday, Jan. 27 th , 7:00 pm, 101 Debartolo Hall!!
5	1-29 T	Rich Williams (SOC; http://www.nd.edu/~rwilliam/personal/biography.html) and Judy Fox (LAW, http://law.nd.edu/people/faculty-and-administration/clinical/judith-fox) "Foreclosed and Abandoned Houses in SB/ Changing Face of Inequality," https://www3.nd.edu/~rwilliam/ndonly/rwpubs/SocialProblems2005.pdf
6	1-31 R	<i>Second thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> : Chapter Two: Work Doesn't Work, pp. 39-76
7	2-5 T	Harvey Weingarten DDS/Dental Problems of Low-income Persons
8	2-7 R	<i>Third thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Chuck Craypo (ECON emeritus; http://www.nd.edu/~econplcy/faculty_staff/craypo.html)/Wal*Mart
9	2-12 T	Amitava Dutt (ECOP, http://www.nd.edu/~adutt)/Bankruptcy
10	2-14 R	<i>Fourth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> <i>The Working Poor</i> : Chapter Three: Importing the Third World, pp. 77-95
11	2-19 T	Kasey Buckles (ECOE) http://al.nd.edu/resources-for/faculty-and-staff/faculty-list/bio/kbuckles/ /Economic Impact of Undocumented Workers
12	2-21 R	<i>Fifth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Four: The Harvest of Shame, pp. 96-120
13	2-26 T	Karen Richman (LS&ANTHRO) http://al.nd.edu/resources-for/faculty-and-staff/faculty-list/bio/krichman/
14	2-28 R	<i>Sixth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Angela Miller-McGraw (CSC&THEO) http://socialconcerns.nd.edu/about/staff/miller-mcgraw.shtml /Helping Immokalee Migrant Workers

PS10000/20000 Introduction to Poverty Studies

	3-4 T	Spring break
	3-6 R	Spring break
15	3-11 T	Dan Graff (HIST) http://al.nd.edu/resources-for/faculty-and-staff/faculty-list/bio/dgraff/ Unionizing Low-income Workers
16	3-13 R	Midterm exam
17	3-18 T	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Five: The Daunting Work Place
18	3-20 R	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Six: Sins of the Fathers
		<i>Easter break, March 21-24</i>
19	3-25 T	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Seven: Kinship (Last day to drop courses)
20	3-27 R	<i>Seventh thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Eight: Body and Mind
21	4-1 T	Guest Speaker, Daniel Lende (ANTH)--Invitation extended
	4-3 R	<i>Eighth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Guest Speaker, John Borkowski (PSY)
22	4-8 T	CHILDREN IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS —Bill Moyers' documentary
23	4-10 R	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Nine: Dreams
24	4-15 T	<i>Ninth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Guest Speaker: Bill Carbonaro (SOC), http://www.nd.edu/~wcarbona/ Inequality in America's Schools
25	4-17 R	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Ten: Work Works
26	4-22 T	<i>Tenth thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Guest speaker on the Politics of Poverty, Lou Ayala (POLSCI)—invitation extended
27	4-24 R	JW/ <i>The Working Poor</i> , Chapter Eleven: Skill and Will
28	4-29 T	<i>Eleventh thought paper due at the beginning of class</i> Grand Finale
	5-9 F	Final Exam 10:30-12:30

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