Poverty, Inequality, Discrimination & Public Policy
19:910:544

Term:
Instructor:
Email:
Office Hours:

I.   Course Description

Confronting issues of poverty, inequality, and discrimination is a core value of the social work profession. This course will provide students with a theoretical, empirical, and analytical understanding of poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US. This course will explore how these fundamental elements of the social environment affect the well-being of individuals, families, and communities and the role of public policies in both creating and addressing these social problems. Throughout the course students will also consider the role that social workers have played and can play in both contributing to and confronting these forms of oppression.

II.   Course Overview

The course will address the following four broad areas.

First, we will explore a number of competing theoretical perspectives on the causes of poverty and inequality and examine the roles of ideology, values, and social position in the response to poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US and other wealthy nations.

Second, we will examine the extent and characteristics of poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US. This will include an understanding of how these concepts are measured, as well as their patterns and dynamics over recent decades. The course will explore how the risks of experiencing these forms of oppression vary with respect to differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, family background, and geographical residence. Comparisons will be made with other developed countries.

Third, the course will critically examine the complex interplay of processes and contexts that contribute to and are also consequences of poverty and inequality across the life course. These will include discrimination, segregation, family structure, employment, incarceration, health, exposure to violence, and child development. We will again compare these processes and consequences with those in other wealthy nations.

Fourth, throughout the course, we will highlight and discuss social policies in the US that directly or indirectly contribute to or work to reduce poverty, inequality, and discrimination and will compare them to those in other developed countries. We will also examine the role of social work in addressing and confronting issues of poverty, inequality, and discrimination.

As students read through this syllabus, they should also remember to closely review the School-Wide Syllabus in Canvas or the Student Handbook to find information on the

School of Social Work mission statement and learning goals, school-wide policies (including academic integrity policies and the standardized attendance policy), and student resources and supports.

III.   Place of Course in Program

This course serves as a foundation or advanced year general elective as well as a MAP specialization and policy elective. The course is also open to doctoral students and to graduate students from other schools and departments with the instructor's permission.

IV.   Council of Social Work Education's Social Work Competencies

The MSW Program at Rutgers is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Students are welcome to review CSWE's accreditation standards at www.cswe.org.

In keeping with CSWE standards, the Rutgers School of Social Work has integrated the CSWE competencies within its curriculum. This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers: (A) Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and (B) Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings. Social workers: (A) Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and (B). Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Explore the entire set of 2022 CSWE competencies.

V. Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will:

1. Critically evaluate the theoretical background and the roles of ideology, values, and social position in society's views of and response to poverty, inequality, and discrimination.

2. Describe the different measures of poverty, inequality, and discrimination and the consequences of these measures for the social construction of the problem, policy response, and political debate.

3. Identify the extent, patterns, and trends of poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US and how they are distributed across demographic groups and geographic areas in the US.

4. Describe how poverty, inequality, and discrimination impact all aspects of individual, family, and community well-being in the US and describe the fundamental role that these forms of oppression play in human behavior across the life course.

5. Identify the role of public policy and its implementation in producing, maintaining, and alleviating poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US and how this compares with other developed countries.

6. Identify and critically evaluate the role that social workers can play in addressing and confronting issues related to poverty, inequality, and discrimination through clinical practice, policy practice, research, advocacy and all aspects of social work practice.

VI. Required Texts & Readings

There are **NO required texts to be purchased** for this course! **All** required readings and materials are posted on the **Canvas** course site as either web links or PDF documents or both. For some readings please click on the web link in the syllabus (or on the **Canvas** site) because they include interactive features that may not be captured in a PDF.

Students are expected to scan national (***The New York Times***, ***The Washington Post***, or ***National Public Radio***) and New Jersey (***NJ Monitor***) news sources regularly to be fully informed of current events related to issues of poverty, inequality, and discrimination in the US, NJ, and globally.

Rutgers University Libraries has purchased an institutional subscription to **The New York Times**, which provides **full FREE access** to NYTimes.com and The New York Times app. Students **MUST** create a personal account to access the NY Times for free.

Please do this right away as many readings require access to the NY Times. After clicking the Connect button in the site and arriving at The New York Times website, select "Create

Account" to create a NYTimes.com personal account. After creating your account, you may use it to log into NYTimes.com and The New York Times app from any location on any device.

VII.   Course Attendance and Participation Policies

Attendance
Please refer to the school-wide syllabus for the standard attendance policy for classes in on-the-ground (traditional) program, intensive weekend program (IWP), and asynchronous online program.

Late Assignments
Late assignments will <u>not</u> be accepted, unless the student has made arrangements prior to the assignment due date. The instructor reserves the right to reduce the letter grade for late assignments.

Teaching methods
A variety of teaching methods are utilized in this class, including lectures, discussions, class exercises and assignments, videos, audio clips, and readings. The course outline contains a list of the required and supplementary readings for each session. Students are expected to have read the **required readings** prior to class and **to be prepared to discuss them and participate in class discussions and exercises**. Supplementary readings are listed as resources for students to pursue as they choose; thus they are not required.

Respect for others in the classroom
Social work courses often cover material and topics that can be provocative and polarizing, with room for multiple and diverse perspectives. We all must treat each other with respect when opinions are shared. Language should be used that recognizes diversity and is respectful of others. It is also imperative, as we struggle with complex political, personal, and social issues, that we not silence others by assuming that there are "politically correct" lines of thought that cannot be challenged. **Nonetheless**, as social workers, our opinions and conversations should always be in line with the **Social Work Code of Ethics**.

VIII. Course Assignments and Grading
All written assignments **must** follow APA format. The professor reserves the right to reduce the letter grade for any assignment that does not confirm to APA format.

1. **Weekly reading responses (*starting in Module 2*) (30%).**
   Each week, starting with Module 2, you will submit through Canvas **your responses to the questions posed about** the required readings (or videos, radio clips, etc.) for that module. **Submissions must include citations to the readings/materials** you are referencing and should **adhere to the suggested word count,** which may differ across weeks.

2. **Weekly Class Discussions (40%).**
   Each week students will engage with a specific activity and discussion, which may include another reading, conducting some research, watching a video, or listening to a podcast. You will be expected to engage with the activity and then post a thoughtful response to the

prompts/questions posed as well as respond to at least 2 of your peers for most discussion boards. Specific instructions, due dates, and topics are available on each discussion page. The responses to each other can be anytime throughout the week.

3. **One policy advocacy blog post, opinion piece, or infographic (30%)**
   You will select a social problem, related to poverty, inequality, or discrimination, that is of particular interest to you and write a blog post or an op-ed (opinion) piece, or create an infographic. This piece will: 1) **Describe the social problem; 2)** Advocate for a particular **policy position** with regards to this social problem; and **3)** make a case for **why social workers should be engaged with this issue**. The post should be clear and concise – no more than two single-spaced pages (800 words max). Detailed assignment instructions available on Canvas.

IX. Course Evaluation

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and the instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-semester evaluation.

X. Useful Resources for Further Exploration

- American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare Grand Challenges Initiative
- The Sum of Us Podcast. Builds on the book below, Heather McGhee travels across the country unearthing stories of how people are working together across racial and class divides to build a better America for everyone.
  - Heather McGhee. 2021. *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs All of Us and How We Can Prosper Together* (new book)
- Growing Apart: A Political History of American Inequality. 2013. Gordon, Colin.
- Inequality.org: Documenting Inequality in the US & Advocating for Policies to Reduce Inequality
- Stanford Center on Poverty & Inequality
- Opportunity Insights
- Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research
- Center on Poverty & Social Policy. Columbia University
- Social Welfare History Project. Virginia Commonwealth University
- Police and Criminal Legal System Reform:
  - Portals Policing Project
  - Abolition (of the carceral state) Movement
  - Network to Advance Abolitionist Social Work
- Seven Up Documentary Series. British documentary following 14 children of different class backgrounds from when they were 7 years old in 1964 every few years. Last episode was 2019, when they are 63. Considered one of the most important studies of inequality and effects of class on outcomes.
- Documentary Film: Race: The Power of An Illusion (Watch here)
- The 1619 Project. The legacy of slavery in the US. By Nikole Hannah-Jones, Pulitzer Prize winning essays.

- o Nikole Hannah-Jones, 2021. *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*. New book based on the NY Times project.
- [The Atlantic Magazine Series on Race and Racism](#)
- [The America We Need](#). Series from the NY Times. 2020. Essays on how the Pandemic has revealed and aggravated inequality and ideas about how this crisis provides an opportunity to build a better America.

XI. Detailed Course Outline

PART I: UNDERSTANDING, DEFINING & MEASURING POVERTY, INEQUALITY & DISCRIMINATION

Module 1
Topic: Course Overview & Intro to Poverty, Inequality & Discrimination
Learning Objectives:
- Identify the course requirements from the syllabus and locate all the course materials on our Canvas course site
- Describe why social workers, and all of society more broadly, should care about poverty, inequality & discrimination
- Discuss what the pandemic revealed about poverty and inequality in the US

Required Readings:
- The America We Need: Introduction. NY Times Series on the Effect of the Pandemic on the US. OR listen to the podcast of this essay (20 minutes – scroll a bit down to reach the audio option) https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-inequality-america.html
- AASWSW. 2016. Grand Challenges for Social Work. 2016. Reversing Extreme Inequality. Working Paper No. 16. (***The Increase in Inequality: p. 3-8).*** http://aaswsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/WP16-with-cover-2.pdf

Module 2
Topic: Views, Perspectives, Myths, and Facts about Poverty
Learning Objectives:
- Discuss some of the differing views about the causes of poverty & inequality in the US, and how each individual's own social position (including: experiences, political ideology, religion, racial and ethnic identity, gender, age) contribute to how we view these issues.
- Identify the common myths about poverty and respond to these myths with facts and data.
- Discuss why these myths persist and what purpose might they serve.

Required Readings:
- Rank, M.R, Eppard, L.M., & Bullock, H.E. 2021. *Poorly Understood: What America Gets Wrong About Poverty.* Oxford University Press. (Available online through Rutgers Libraries): https://academic-oup-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/book/39419
  - o ***Chapter 1: Introduction***, ***(p. 1-5).*** (

- o ***Read the summaries of the 4 sections*** of the book in the pdf document *(1.5 pages)*
- o Each of the 15 chapters in these sections addresses a common myth about poverty. ***Read two of these chapters (select your chapters on Canvas)*** to understand what these myths are and what the facts tell us.

Module 3
Topic: Measuring Poverty

<u>Learning Objectives:</u>

- Describe the different ways to measure poverty and discuss the debates around these measures.
- Discuss how political ideology plays a role in these debates.
- Identify the official poverty measure in the US and describe the problems with this measure.
- Describe the extent of poverty in the US and who is most likely to be affected, with regards to the role of age, gender, race, ethnicity, region of the US, and family structure
- Discuss how our poverty rates compare to other wealthy nations.

<u>Required Readings:</u>

- Iceland, J. 2013. *Poverty in America: A Handbook (3ʳᵈ ed).* University of California Press. https://www-jstor-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/10.1525/j.ctt3fh34c
  - o Chapter 2: *Methods of Measuring Poverty (p. 1-17)*
- How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty. (***1 page infographic***) https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2021/demo/poverty_measure-how.html
  - o ***More details and an example***: https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html
- Poverty Rate Soared in 2022 as Aid Ended and Prices Rose. *The New York Times,* September 12, 2023. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/12/business/economy/income-poverty-health-insurance.html

Module 4
Topic: Economic Inequality

<u>Learning Objectives</u>

- Describe the meaning of economic inequality and describe how it differs from poverty.
- Identify the difference between income and wealth inequality, how these are measured, the extent of both types of inequality in the US, and how we compare to other countries.
- Discuss why and how inequality may be a problem for individuals and for society as a whole.

<u>Required Readings:</u>

- Inequality.org: Read the section on **Income Inequality** *(6 pages, mostly figures)*: https://inequality.org/facts/income-inequality/
- Inequality.org: Read the section on **Wealth inequality** *(4 pages, mostly figures)*: https://inequality.org/facts/wealth-inequality/

- Is Inequality a Problem? Samuel Scheffler. 2020. *The New York Times*. The America We Need Series *(2 pages)*. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/opinion/economic-inequality-moral-philosophy.html
- Pew Research Video: How do Americans view inequality (3 mins) https://youtu.be/ubKBuoK30j0

Module 5
Topic: Economic Inequality & Economic Mobility
<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- Identify the role that social and economic policies have played in creating the racial wealth gap in the US.
- Describe the concept of economic mobility and explain how it is related to inequality?
- Describe the difference between absolute and relative mobility and between intra- and inter-generational mobility.
- Discuss how much social mobility there is in the US and how has it changed over time, and how we compare to other rich nations?

Required Readings:
- Demos. 2019. The Asset Value of Whiteness: Understanding the Racial Wealth Gap. (13 pages with graphs and figures) https://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/Asset%20Value%20of%20Whiteness_0.pdf
- Economic Mobility Memo 1: Definitions and Trends, Institute for Research on Poverty. University of Wisconsin-Madison (***Read p. 1-10 ONLY***). https://www.irp.wisc.edu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Economic-Mobility-Memo-1-Definitions-and-Trends-April-2020.pdf
- Watch Pew Video: Absolute vs. Relative Mobility (3 minutes). https://youtu.be/fTDhi12rqYc
- Vox Media video: Racial Wealth Gap Explained. (16 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mqrhn8khGLM

Supplementary Reading:
- Oliver, Melvin & Thomas M. Shapiro. 2006. *Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality, 2nd edition*. New York: Routledge. https://www-taylorfrancis-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/books/mono/10.4324/9780203707425/black-wealth-white-wealth-melvin-oliver-thomas-shapiro
  - Chapter 1: "Race, Wealth, and Inequality." (p. 11-33).
  - Chapter 2: "A Sociology of Race and Inequality." (p. 35-54).
- Pew Research. 2012. Pursuing the American Dream: Economic Mobility Across Generations. (p. 1-27 w/charts) http://www.pewtrusts.org/~/media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs_assets/2012/pursuingamericandreampdf.pdf
- Pew Research Center. 2017. How wealth inequality has changed in the US since the great recession by race, ethnicity, and income. (5 pages) http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/01/how-wealth-inequality-has-changed-in-the-u-s-since-the-great-recession-by-race-ethnicity-and-income/

- Pew Research. 2011. Does America Promote Mobility As Well As Other Nations? Economic Mobility Project. (p. 1-5 w/charts) https://www.russellsage.org/sites/all/files/does-america-promote-economic-mobility.pdf

Module 6
Topic: Discrimination and Race & Ethnicity
<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- Describe the different ways to measure discrimination and how they can produce very different results about the existence and extent of discrimination.
- Identify the role of social policy in creating, perpetuating, or addressing discrimination in the US.
- Discuss the construction of racial and ethnic categories and what purposes the construction of these distinctions serve.
- Discuss how discrimination (in education, employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets) is both a cause and a consequence of poverty and inequality?

<u>**Required Readings:**</u>
- Pager, Devah & Hana Shepherd. 2008. "The Sociology of Discrimination: Racial Discrimination in Employment, Housing, Credit, and Consumer Markets." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34:181-209. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29737787

- NPR, Fresh Air, interview with Heather McGee, author of 2021 book, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together.* (35 min). https://www.npr.org/2021/02/17/968638759/sum-of-us-examines-the-hidden-cost-of-racism-for-everyone
- Color of Change, 2018. Dangerous Distortions of our Families Investigative Report: ***Read the Study Background & Approach and Summary of Findings, p. 15-25 Only (10 pages).*** https://colorofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/COC-FS-Families-Representation-Report_Full_121217.pdf
    - Key findings also highlighted here: https://colorofchange.org/dangerousdistortion/#key_findings

<u>**Supplementary Readings:**</u>
- Documentary Film: *Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America.* 2021. By Jeffery Robinson. (1 hr 57min).
    - Watch through Rutgers library: https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/watch/who-we-are?utm_campaign=Video&utm_medium=MARC&utm_source=aspresolver
    - Also available on Netflix
- Reskin, Barbara. "The Race Discrimination System." *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 38, 2012, pp. 17–35. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23254585

Module 7
Topic: Discrimination and Gender
<u>Learning Objectives</u>

- Describe how we measure & define gender discrimination and why this may be even harder to pin down than racial discrimination.
- Discuss the roles of motherhood, care work, and unpaid work in gender discrimination in the labor market and how this may be related to poverty and inequality.
- Identify how gender discrimination is related to gender-based violence and oppression.
- Discuss the role of social policies in perpetuating or addressing these forms of discrimination.

Required Readings:
- England, Paula. 2005. "Gender Inequality in Labor Markets: The Role of Motherhood and Segregation." *Social Politics* 12: 264-288.
- Gender Economic Inequality. 2022. https://inequality.org/facts/gender-inequality/
- Women's Unpaid Labor is Worth $10.9 Trillion. 2020. *The New York Times* (very short). https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/04/opinion/women-unpaid-labor.html
- Movement Advancement Project. LGBTQ Equality Snapshot
  - LGBTQ Equality Maps Updates (March 2024, continually updated): **Browse these maps**
- Reproductive rights:
  - Hyatt, EG, McCoyd, JLM, Diaz, MF. 2022. From Abortion Rights to Reproductive Justice: A Call to Action. Affilia: Feminist Inquiry in Social Work 37(2): 194-203 (7 pages).
  - Guttmacher Institute - (continually updated maps on abortion laws in every state). Look at your state and several others: https://states.guttmacher.org/policies/ohio/abortion-policies

Supplementary Readings:
- *The New York Times.* Why Men Don't Want Jobs Mostly Done by Women. 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/04/upshot/why-men-dont-want-the-jobs-done-mostly-by-women.html?_r=0
- Christopher Uggen & Amy Blackstone. 2004. Sexual Harassment as a Gendered Expression of Power. *American Sociological Review*, 69(1).
- Banks, Nina. February 5, 2020. Black Women in the US and Unpaid Collective Work: Theorizing the Community as a Site of Production. *The New York Times* https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/05/business/black-women-economists-nina-banks.html
- Bans on Transition Care for Young People Spread Across the US. 2023. *The New York Times*. The Upshot: https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/15/upshot/bans-transgender-teenagers.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare

PART II: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES & SOLUTIONS

Module 8
Topic: Social Policy 1: Power & Representation
Learning Objectives
- Discuss the state of democratic representation in the US today and how it is being improved or eroded?

- Identify the tools of voter suppression being enacted across the country and whom these tools primarily affect?
- Discuss how our system of power & representation is both a cause and a consequence of poverty, inequality, and discrimination?
- Identify the role of the social work profession and social workers in promoting access to representation across all the settings in which we work.

Required Readings:
- *The New York Times*. A Dream Undone: Inside the 50-year Campaign to Roll Back the Voting Rights Act: https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/29/magazine/voting-rights-act-dream-undone.html?_r=0
- ACLU. Block the Vote: How Politicians are Trying to Block Voters from the Ballot Box. 2021. https://www.aclu.org/news/civil-liberties/block-the-vote-voter-suppression-in-2020
  - Brennan Center. Voting Laws Roundup, May 2024 (continuously updated, click on most recent update): https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-may-2024

- Best Explanation of Gerrymandering you will ever see. *The Washington Post*. Video (2 minutes). https://youtu.be/bGLRJ12uqmk
- Watch this 3 minute music video by YelloPain, My Vote Don't Count

Recommended Activities
Voting is Social Work initiative: https://votingissocialwork.org/#

REGISTER TO VOTE AND HELP SOMEONE ELSE REGISTER TO VOTE:
Voter Registration Sites:
- NJ: https://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml
- NY: https://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html
- PA: https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx

Supplementary Reading
- Brennan Center for Justice. Ensure Every American Can Vote: https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ensure-every-american-can-vote
  - Explore the 3 specific areas that the Center focuses on in this issue area:
    - Voting Reform
    - Vote Suppression
    - Voting Rights Restoration
- Page, B. & Gilens, M. 2017. *Democracy in America? What Has Gone Wrong and What We Can Do About It.* University of Chicago Press. (Available through Rutgers Libraries): https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6129650#goto_toc
- Democracy Docket Explainer: What is the Filibuster: https://www.democracydocket.com/explainers/what-is-the-filibuster-and-how-can-the-senate-reform-it/
- For Native Americans, a Historic Moment on the Path to Power at the Ballot Box. 2018. The New York Times https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/04/us/native-american-voting-rights.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share
- Gerrymandering Explained. 2015. Vox.com

Disenfranchisement:
- Democracy Docket Explainer: What is Felony Disenfranchisement
  https://www.democracydocket.com/explainers/felony-disenfranchisement-explained/
- Uggen, Christopher, Larson, Ryan, & Shannon, Sarah. 2016. *The Sentencing Project.* 6 Million Lost Voters: State-level Estimates of Felony Disenfranchisement, 2016. https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/6-million-lost-voters-state-level-estimates-felony-disenfranchisement-2016/
- Staples, Brent. 2014. The Racist Origins of Felon Disenfranchisement. The New York Times. November 18, 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/the-racist-origins-of-felon-disenfranchisement.html?_r=0

Voter Fraud:
- Brennan Center for Justice. NYU Law School
  The Myth of Voter Fraud – just quick skim of the evidence here
  https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/voter-fraud
- Resources on Voter Fraud Claims (comprehensive list of studies exploring all aspects of voter fraud claims)
  https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/resources-voter-fraud-claims

Module 9
Topic: Incarceration & the Criminal Legal System
Learning Objectives
- Discuss how incarceration is both a cause and a consequence of poverty, inequality, and discrimination.
- Describe how incarceration policies in the US are tied to the legacy of slavery and discrimination.
- Identify the groups that are most at risk of involvement with the criminal legal system and discuss why this might be so.
- Discuss the connections between the detention and incarceration systems and the economic system in the US.

Required Readings:
- Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie. 2022. Prison Policy Initiative. (look at the charts and graphs): https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2022.html
- Bryan Stevenson, 2019. Slavery gave America a fear of Black people and a taste for violent punishment. Both still define our criminal-justice system. The 1619 Project. *The New York Times*. https://nyti.ms/2SPnPNF
- Detained: How the US created the largest immigrant detention system in the world. 2019. Emily Kassie. *The Marshall Project & The Guardian*. Short text and about 20 minutes of short videos. https://www.themarshallproject.org/2019/09/24/detained

Supplemental Readings
- Coates, Tanehisi. 2015. The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration. *The Atlantic Magazine*. October 2015. (about 40 pages w/photos and charts)

http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/
- MacFarquhar, Larissa. 2016. Building a Prison-to-School Pipeline. *The New Yorker*. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/12/12/the-ex-con-scholars-of-berkeley

Module 10
Topic: Segregation, Neighborhoods & Housing
<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- Discuss the relationship between discrimination and segregation.
- Describe the role that housing policies played (and continue to play) in driving segregation and access to housing in the US.
- Describe how housing policies impact poverty, inequality, education, and contribute to children's life chances.

Required Readings
- NPR (*35 minute podcast*). Interview with Richard Rothstein, author of *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of how the US Government Segregated America*. 2017. https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america
  - **OR** Read Transcript: https://www.npr.org/transcripts/526655831
- What does a traffic jam in Atlanta have to do with segregation? Quite a lot. Kevin M. Kruse. 1619 Project. *The New York Times.* 2019. https://nyti.ms/2Vg3nqY
- Testing the Divide – 3-Year Undercover Investigation of Housing discrimination on Long Island *New York Newsday* (2016). Watch the first 5 minutes of this 41-minute investigative report: https://projects.newsday.com/long-island/real-estate-investigation-videos/
- How Homeownership Became the Engine of American Inequality. Matthew Desmond. *The New York Times*. 2017: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/09/magazine/how-homeownership-became-the-engine-of-american-inequality.html?_r=0
- How the US Made Affordable Homes Illegal. Jerusalem Demsas. Vox Explainer, 2021. Watch this 9-minute video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Flsg_mzG-M

Supplementary Readings

- Rothstein, Richard & Leah Rothstein. 2023. *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law*. Liveright Publishing. https://www.justactionbook.org/
- A vast wealth gap, driven by segregation, redlining, evictions and exclusion, separates Black and white America. 2019. Trymaine Lee. 1619 Project. *The New York Times*. https://nyti.ms/2HIC54j
- *The New York Times*. Kamin, D. August 25, 2022. Home Appraisal with a Black Owner: $472,000. With a White Owner: $750,000. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/18/realestate/housing-discrimination-maryland.html
- *The Atlantic* Series on Segregation & Housing Policies. Alana Semuels. 2015. Where Should Poor People Live? June 2, 2015.http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/where-should-poor-people-live/394556/

Module 11
Topic: Schools & Education
Learning Objectives
- Identify the connections between neighborhoods, segregation, and inequalities in educational access and outcomes.
- Describe how educational experiences and opportunities differ between children in higher and lower-SES families and how these differences may affect child outcomes.
- Discuss the roles of institutions and policies in driving differences in children's educational experiences and opportunities.

Required Readings:
- EdBuild. 2020. Fault Lines: America's Most Segregating School District Borders *(15 pages w/lots of figures)*. https://edbuild.org/content/fault-lines
- Urban Institute. 2022. Policies Available to School Districts to Dismantle Racial Segregation in Public Schools. https://www.urban.org/racial-equity-analytics-lab/structural-racism-explainer-collection/policies-available-school-districts-dismantle-racial-segregation-public-schools
- ACLU 2020. Cops and No Counselors. How the Lack of School Mental health Staff is Harming Students. ***(Read Executive Summary & Introduction, p. 4-10; and Recommendations, p. 40-43; and Skim the maps & charts in the rest of the document)*** https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf

Supplementary Reading:
- New Jersey Policy Perspectives. 2021. Separate and Unequal: Racial and Ethnic Segregation and the Case for School Funding Reparations in NJ. https://www.njpp.org/publications/report/separate-and-unequal-racial-and-ethnic-segregation-and-the-case-for-school-funding-reparations-in-new-jersey/
- Harming Our Common Future: America's Segregated Schools 65 Years after Brown. Frankenberg, Erica, Jongyeon Ee, Jennifer B. Ayscue, Gary Orfield. 2019. UCLA Civil Rights Project. (**READ Introduction (p. 6-15) AND Recommendations (p. 35-38)).** https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/harming-our-common-future-americas-segregated-schools-65-years-after-brown/Brown-65-050919v4-final.pdf
- Vox.com. 2015. The School to Prison Pipeline Explained: https://www.vox.com/2015/2/24/8101289/school-discipline-race

Module 12
Topic: Employment & Labor Market Conditions
Learning Objectives
- Discuss the changes have occurred in the labor market with regards to income, wages, benefits, and employee/employer power differentials over the last several decades.
- Describe how these changes power differentials might be causes and consequences of poverty, inequality, and discrimination.
- Discuss the role of policies that have contributed to these changes in the labor market.

Due before class: *Submit description of social problem to focus on for op-ed/blog post assignment.*

Required Readings:
- The Jobs We Need. 2020. *The New York Times.* Read (12 pages) or listen to audio podcast (20 minutes).: https://nyti.ms/3dZaUA0.
- How much people are actually making. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/02/opinion/wage-salary-inequality-compensation.html
- State of the Unions: What happened to America's Labor Movement. 2019. Caleb Crain. *The New Yorker*. (7 pages) or listen to audio podcast (20 minutes): https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/08/26/state-of-the-unions
- Anderson, Sarah. 2023. 10 Victories for the Working Class in 2023 Inequality.org. https://inequality.org/great-divide/10-victories-for-the-working-class-in-2023/

Supplementary Readings:
- Mishel, Lawrence. 2013. Declining Value of the Federal Minimum Wage is a Major Factor Driving Inequality. Issue Brief #351. Economic Policy Institute. (p. 1-8) http://www.epi.org/files/2013/minimum-wage.pdf
- Peri, Giovanni. Immigrant Workers, Native Poverty and Labor Market Competition. Policy Brief Vol 1, Number 3. Center for Poverty Research, University of California-Davis. **(Policy Brief Only: p. 1-2**). http://poverty.ucdavis.edu/policy-brief/immigrant-workers-native-poverty-and-labor-market-competition
- NY Times Magazine Series on *The Future of Work*. 2019. Matthew Desmond. Dollars on the Margin: The $15 Minimum Wage Doesn't Just Improve Lives, It Saves Them. https://nyti.ms/2GCxJNH

Module 13
Topic: Health & Well-being
Learning Objectives:
- Identify the socioeconomic gradient in health and describe what is meant by social determinants of health.
- Discuss the evidence behind socioeconomic and racial disparities in health?
- Discuss how poverty, inequality, and discrimination "get under the skin" to affect health and how they can impact child development & children's life chances?

Required Readings:
- Williams, David, Lawrence, Jourdyn & Davis, Brigette. 2019. Racism and Health: Evidence and Needed Research. *Annual Review of Public Health* 40:10-1255. https://www-annualreviews-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-040218-043750
- Villarosa, Linda. 2018. Why America's Black Mothers and Babies are in a Life-or-Death Crisis. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/11/magazine/black-mothers-babies-death-maternal-mortality.html
- Evans, Gary, Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne & Klebanov, Pamela. 2011. Stressing Out the Poor: Chronic Physiological Stress and the Income-Achievement Gap. *Pathways*. Stanford

University Center for the Study of Inequality. (4 pages).
https://web.stanford.edu/group/scspi/_media/pdf/pathways/winter_2011/PathwaysWinter11_Evans.pdf

<u>Supplemental Reading</u>
- Inequality & Health. Cross-National Comparisons & Inequality and Health in the US. Inequality.org: https://inequality.org/facts/inequality-and-health/
- Wakefield, Sarah & Wildeman, Christopher. 2014. Children of Imprisoned Parents and the Future of Inequality in the United States. Scholars Strategy Network. (*2 pages*). https://scholars.org/brief/children-imprisoned-parents-and-future-inequality-united-states
- Goodman, Lisa A., Smyth, Katya Fels, Borges, Angela M. & Rachel Singer. 2009. When Crises Collide: How Intimate Partner Violence and Poverty Intersect to Shape Women's Mental Health and Coping. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* 10(4): 306-329.
- Gilroy, Heidi, Nava, Angeles, Nava, Maddoux, John, McFarlane, Judith, Symes, Lene, Koci, Anne & Nina Fredland. 2015. Poverty, Partner Abuse, and Women's Mental Health: New Knowledge for Better Practice. *Journal of Social Service Research* 41:145-157.
- Shonkoff, Jack. 2011. Building a Foundation for Prosperity on the Science of Early Childhood Development. *Pathways*. Stanford University Center for the Study of Inequality. https://stanford.edu/group/scspi/_media/pdf/pathways/winter_2011/PathwaysWinter11_Shonkoff.pdf

Module 14
Topic: Action Steps – Moving towards Social Change
<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- Identify some of the most promising social policies that may address the social issues of poverty, inequality, and discrimination.
- Describe how these policy solutions may work to reduce these forms of oppression.
- Identify what the arguments are for and against these policies, and who is making these arguments.
- Discuss what we as social workers and individuals can do to move this agenda forward.

<u>Required Readings</u>
- Why We Need Reparations for Black Americans. Rashawn Ray and Andre Perry. 2020. Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/BigIdeas_Ray_Perry_Reparations.pdf
- Zucman, Gabriel. It's Time to Tax the Billionaires. *NY Times Opinion*. May, 2024. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/05/03/opinion/global-billionaires-tax.html?smid=url-share
- Why the US Should Provide Universal Basic Income. The Atlantic (3:20 minute video). https://youtu.be/RnWsPIgl8_s?si=n241yphM8771fBc
- Checklists of Various Promising Policies
  - How Can We Fix Income and Wealth Inequality in America: Checklist. *The New York Times*. https://nyti.ms/2NXL9p7
  - Poor people's campaign: 14 policy priorities: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/resource/policy-and-legislative-priorities/
    - Their Jubilee platform: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/about/jubilee-platform/

- o Tackling Race Inequalities in Health and Housing. Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings.edu/research/time-for-justice-tackling-race-inequalities-in-health-and-housing/
- Universal Basic Income Explained. Vox Media (2 minute video). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9xVWOfXW7U&feature=youtu.be

Supplementary Readings

- Vox. A better way to tax the rich. Wealth Tax Explained (3:45 minutes). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTwPHuE_HrU
- Emmanuel Saez & Gabriel Zucman, Authors of Triumph of Injustice. Brookings Institution. (Video 5:20 minutes). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qM7Vy4DK-A
- Bold Visions for Ending Poverty. 2017. Pathways Magazine. Stanford Center on Poverty & Inequality. *(These are all short w/lots of graphs & pictures)*
  - o Chapter 1: A New Anti-Poverty Policy Litmus Test (p. 1-5). Edin, Kathryn, Shaefer, Luke & Tach, Laura. http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_Spring2017_Litmus-Test.pdf
  - o Chapter 2: Cash Matters and Place Matters (p. 1-7). Smeeding, Timothy. http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_Spring2017_Cash-Place.pdf
  - o Chapter 3: A New Safety Net for 21st Century Families. (p. 1-6). Berger, Lawrence. https://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_Spring2017_Family-Safety-Net.pdf
  - o Chapter 4: It's Time to Complete the Work-Based Safety Net. (p. 1-5). Shaefer & Edin. http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_Spring2017_Work-Safety-Net.pdf

Module 15
Topic: Wrap Up & Debrief

Final assignment due end of day week 15