Course Info:  
Title: SW 842- Social (In)equality and equity  
Section: 001  
Term: Spring/Summer 2015  
Times/Dates: Mon 9:00 am to 12 noon, January 11- April 11, 2016

Instructor: Reuben Jonathan Miller, PhD, AM  
Assistant Professor, School of Social Work  
Faculty Associate, Population Studies Center  
Faculty Affiliate, Department of Afro-American and African Studies  
University of Michigan

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Office Hours: Mondays, 12:30 to 2:30 pm by appointment only

Course Description: This course covers readings on major themes in the subfields of social equity, social stratification and social inequality. Beginning with “the classics,” we examine inequality in primarily American institutions (but with an eye toward global trends) and the range of experiences and outcomes associated with it. This course is designed to help students to grasp classic and contemporary frameworks on social inequality and to better understand the mechanisms and effects of inequity on diverse populations.

Course Requirements: There are three course requirements:

- **Weekly Readings:** Students are expected to attend all classes and read all of the materials before each class session. The readings are copious and subtle. They will take time to digest. Give yourself enough time to read and sit with the course content. If you do not, you will not be able to contribute, in a meaningful way, to our discussions and will not get much out of the class.

  Each week, students will post questions they have from the readings on our class discussion board. These questions will help guide our discussions.

- **Presentations:** Each week, two students will present the readings. One student will take a position in support of the readings, the other as a critic (against the authors’ work). This means that each student will present twice in the course—once to defend a work and the other to criticize it. Each presentation will require a summary of the readings for the week
and a discussion of its strengths and weaknesses. Guidelines will be posted on CANVAS.

- **Assignment 3:** Each student will write a final paper on a topic of their choosing related to social inequality. The final paper should be no more than 20 double spaced pages and will be due at the end of class. You must let me know what you intend to write by the fourth class.

**Class structure:** Each week, students will present readings (this will likely take 45 minutes to an hour given the presentations in support and against the readings), I will lead a 30-45 minute lecture-based discussion to give the readings broader context (I take this to mean historical, intellectual, cultural, and political), and we will discuss student questions. This may happen in any order depending on the flow of the class. Some weeks, I expect the discussion to generate more interest than what I have to say. In other weeks, the students’ questions will be more interesting and insightful. We will therefore spend more time and attention addressing these. Some weeks, I may have something to say that’s worth dwelling on. We'll play this by ear so that the class flows smoothly.

**Course Content:** The course employs frameworks of social justice, intersectionality and other core social work values for the critical examination of theoretical perspectives on social inequality. Students will examine theories related to poverty, inequality, difference, oppression, privilege, the political economy, and culture.

**Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS):** This course will use a variety of pedagogical strategies including readings, case studies, and debates, to address the CSWE Education Policy and Accreditation Standards.

- **Social Justice:** Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed within the goals and assumptions of each theoretical approach. Most of the course will focus on social justice goals and conceptualizing and operationalizing social change.
- **Multiculturalism & Diversity:** Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed in this course by identifying theories espoused by and compatible with different cultural traditions, by critiquing theories from different cultural perspectives, and through course examples about the uses of theory in different interest and ontological groups.
- **Behavioral and Social Science Research:** Behavioral and Social Science Research will be addressed by examining the evidence used to build theory and test theory through its applications in practice.
- **Social Work Ethics and Values:** We will spend considerable time thinking through the ethical dimensions of equity and social inequality.

**Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS):** This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students to develop a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply
intersectionality and intercultural frameworks, and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

**Course Design:** This is a seminar course. Students are expected to facilitate discussions of the assigned readings and participate in class. All journal articles assigned are available through the University of Michigan library system. Some books you will have to buy. Book chapters not available through the library will be posted in the CANVAS website or a link will be provided for ease of access.

**Cell Phones, Laptops, Video and Voice Recorder Policy:** Cell phones should be turned off at the beginning of each class and stored appropriately; laptop use is to be confined to taking/making notes. Students requiring an exemption from these rules for any given class should discuss this with the instructor prior to the beginning of that class.

**Grading and Requirements:** The overall grade for the course will be based on the following:
1. Class attendance and participation (25%)
2. Presentation of the readings (25% of grade)
3. Final paper (50% of final grade)

**Grading:** A 100 point system is used:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>64 or fewer points</td>
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“A” is awarded for **exceptional performance** and the mastery of the material
“B” is awarded for papers that demonstrate mastery of the material
“C” is awarded when mastery of the material is minimal
“D” indicates deficiency and carries no credit
“E” indicates failure and carries no credit

**Submitting written assignments:** Questions from the reading should be posted on the discussion board the night before class. Students should bring their questions with them and write them on the board in the 10 minutes before class begins each week.

The final paper should be submitted by no later than 11:59 PM on December 14, 2015 through the course website and turn in a hard copy to me on or before the day it is due.

**PLEASE NOTE:**
If you are differently-abled or have a condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, 734-763-3000.
Although the University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, it has long been the University's policy that every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Absence from classes for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Students who expect to miss in-class assignments as a consequence of their religious observance shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent. Such notice must be given by the drop/add deadline of the given term. Students who are absent on days of class assignments shall be offered an opportunity to make up the work, without penalty, unless it can be demonstrated that a make-up opportunity would interfere unreasonably with the delivery of the course.

I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE ASSIGNMENTS WITHOUT A DOCTORS NOTE. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.

Students are to use the guidelines of their respective disciplines when writing assignments. While these guidelines may vary, each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes.

IF YOU PLAGIARISE IN THIS COURSE YOU WILL FAIL IT.

Plagiarism includes:
- Taking credit for someone else’s work (i.e. paraphrasing their work without citing them, or using text from their work without attributing it to them)
- Turning in work you’ve submitted for a grade in another course
- Please review the Student Guide section on “Ethical Conduct in the University Environment.” This section specifically addresses plagiarism and the possible consequences for engaging in this behavior. The University of Michigan Library system has an on-line resource that can assist you in preparing proper citations for assignments using APA format. Go to:
  (http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citationguide/AP5thed/pdf)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Required Readings:

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

**January 12, 2016, 2016: Introductions**
Introduction to the course

**January 19, 2016: Re-Reading the Classics**

**January 26, 2016: Re-reading the Classics II**

**February 2: Racism and its legacy**

**February 9, 2016: Gender as a social institution**

**February 16, 2016: The state of inequality**
February 23, 2016: The state of education

March 1, 2016: Spring Break: No Class

March 8, 2016: On Rights and Social Inclusion
Marshall, T.H. Citizenship and Social Class (PDF posted in CANVAS)

March 15, 2016: Studying up Pt. 1: Making the elite

March 22, 2016: Studying up 2: Notes on Privilege and Exclusion

March 29, 2016: On Rights and Social Exclusion

April 5, 2016: Notes on Severe Deprivation

April 12: The Carceral State (We will select an alternative date for this class)

April 19 (No class, Turn in finals)