

## INEQUALITY: ECONOMICS, PHILOSOPHY & LITERATURE

<b>Semester No</b> 7	<b>LA-413</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b> 3-0
----------------------	---------------	-------------------------

### COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Have a profound grasp of the different ways of analysing inequalities, understanding the strengths and weakness of the different methodological approaches to inequality: econometric, ethnographic, philosophical, inter alia.
2. Be able to write a research paper drawing on more than one discipline. To that end, students will enhance their writing skills and they will learn how to write a paper proposal.
3. Apply a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods from different social sciences (which will be taught in four optional methods workshops throughout the semester)

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course students should be able to:

1. Learn about normative approaches to inequality in order to be able to think about the topic outside a narrow economics mindset (it serves us well to remember that economics started as part of moral philosophy).
2. Distinguish equality of opportunity from income inequality and wealth inequality and learn how all of these are measured.
3. Learn how to access and use available data on economic inequality.
4. Learn the basics of the widely publicized neo-Marxian approach to economic inequality by Piketty as well as alternatives and critiques by neoclassical economists.
5. Learn the history of economic inequality in the US and internationally to form some educated guesses of the future of economic inequality and its implications for politics and society.
6. Study one specific topic in the field deeply to produce a term paper on the topic.

### PRESCRIBED TEXT:

1. Atkinson, Anthony, Inequality: What Can Be Done? Harvard University Press, 2015.
2. Milanovic, Branko, Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization, Belknap / Harvard, 2016.
3. Wolff, Edward N., A Century of Wealth in America, Belknap / Harvard University Press, 2017.

**PREREQUISITE:**

**NIL**




**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**




The Cubists were a group of painters including George Bracques, Pablo Picasso, working in Paris in the 1910s who, in addition to other painterly innovations, depicted objects not from one perspective but from multiple perspectives simultaneously. The final painting could sometimes look like a blur, but, or so the theory went, such multiplicity of perspectives could offer a truer, more complete representation of reality than any single perspective. In this class, we shall adopt a Cubist strategy of taking multiple perspectives. But instead of a guitar or a nude, our object of study will be inequality, and the multiple perspectives will not be different angles of seeing but different disciplines: economics, sociology, education, philosophy, and literature. How does each discipline define inequality? What does each have to say about it? And what does each argue, if anything, should be done about it? The class will mostly focus on economic inequality, but as you will discover, discussions of economic inequality quickly involve discussions of other forms of inequality (principally race and gender) besides economic inequality, and we shall consider those as well.


**ASSESSMENT SYSTEM:**



Quizzes	10 %
Assignments	10%
Final Term Paper	20%
Mid Term	20%
ESE	40 %


**Weekly breakdown of course contents is as follows:**

WEEK	TOPICS	QUIZZES	ASSIGNMENTS
1-3	<p> <b>Introduction to the Course: Trans disciplinaryity and Inequality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bourdieu, P. (1988). Vive la Crise!: For Heterodoxy in Social Science.</li> <li>Theory and Society, 17(5), 773-787. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/657639">www.jstor.org/stable/657639</a></li> <li>Lenoir, R. (2006). Scientific habitus: Pierre Bourdieu and the collective intellectual. Theory, culture &amp; society, 23(6), 25-43.</li> <li>Basaran, T., Bigo, D., Guittet, E. P., &amp; Walker, R. B. J. (2016). Transversal Lines. International political sociology: Transversal lines</li> </ul> <p> <b>Is class just about money? Bourdieu and the different Forms of Capita</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bourdieu, P. (1986). Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education</li> <li>Bourdieu, P., &amp; Wacquant, L. J. (1992). An invitation to reflexive sociology. University of Chicago press.</li> <li>Wacquant, L. J. (1993). From ruling class to field of power: An</li> <li>interview with Pierre Bourdieu on La Noblesse d'Etat. Theory, Culture &amp; Society, 10(3), 19-44</li> <li>Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Saez, E., &amp; Zucman, G. (Eds.). (2022). World inequality report 2022. [summary]</li> </ul>		01
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atkinson, A. B. (2015). Inequality: What can be done?. Harvard University Press [Introduction]</li> </ul> <p> <b>Distributive Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required reading: Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy article on distributive jus-tice <a href="http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justicedistributive">http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justicedistributive</a>.</li> <li>Recommended reading: Scanlon 2018.</li> </ul>		

4-5	<p> <b>Normative Dilemmas about Equality: Legitimizing Inequality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a Just Distribution of Wealth? Rawls' "Theory of Justice"</li> <li>• Nagel, T. (2003) 'Rawls and Liberalism' in S. Freeman (ed.), The Cambridge companion to Rawls, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts</li> </ul> <p> <b>Reciprocal preferences: experimental evidence</b></p> <p><a href="http://web.mit.edu/14.193/www/WorldCongressIEWVersion6Oct03.pdf">http://web.mit.edu/14.193/www/WorldCongressIEWVersion6Oct03.pdf</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "InequalityAversionTheoryB1.pdf"</li> </ul>	01	
6	<p> <b>Equality of Opportunity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John E. Roemer and Alain Trannoy, "Equality of Opportunity: Theory and Measurement", Journal of Economic Literature, 2016, 54(4), 1288—1332, selected pages</li> </ul>		01
7	<p><b>Capital in The twenty First Century</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solow's summary of Piketty's book from After Piketty; Blume</li> <li>• and Durlauf, Capital in the Twenty-First Century: A Review Essay, Journal of Political Economy, 2015</li> </ul>	01	
8	<p><b>Laws of Capitalism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acemoglu and Robinson, "The Rise and Decline of General</li> <li>• Laws of Capitalism", Journal of Economic Perspectives, 2015</li> </ul>		
9	<b>Mid- Term</b>		

10-11	<p> <b>Wage Compression &amp; The Gender Wage Gap</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawrence Kahn, Wage Compression and the Gender Wage Gap, <a href="http://wol.iza.org/articles/wagecompressionand-genderpaygap/long">http://wol.iza.org/articles/wagecompressionand-genderpaygap/long</a>; Emmons, William R. and Noeth, Bryan J., “Race, Ethnicity and Wealth”, in “The Demographics of Wealth”, The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, February 15, <a href="https://www.stlouisfed.org/householdfinancialstability/thedemographics-of-wealth">https://www.stlouisfed.org/householdfinancialstability/thedemographics-of-wealth</a>.</li> <li>• Wolff, A Century of Wealth in America, Chapter 15.</li> <li>• Atkinson.pdf, and Thompson, Jeffrey P. and Suarez, Gustavo, 2015, “Exploring the Racial Wealth Gap Using the Survey of Consumer Finances”, Finance and Economics Discussion Series 2015-076.</li> </ul>		01
	<p>Washington: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.17016/FEDS.2015.076">http://dx.doi.org/10.17016/FEDS.2015.076</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wolff, A Century of Wealth in America, Chapters 9 &amp; 11</li> </ul>		

12-13	<p> <b>Inequality and Poverty in Developing Countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential readings (three (very) short complementary papers):</li> <li>• Chi, G, Fang, S, and Blumenstock, JE (2022). "Microestimates of Wealth and Poverty for all Low- and Middle-Income Countries."</li> <li>• Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 119(3), 1-11. [See the complementary maps here].</li> <li>• Blumenstock, JE (2018). Estimating Economic Characteristics with Phone Data, American Economic Review: Papers and Proceedings, 108, 72-76</li> <li>• Blumenstock, JE, Cadamuro, G, On, R (2015). Predicting Poverty and Wealth from Mobile Phone Metadata, Science, 350(6264), 1073-1076</li> <li>• Alvaredo, F., Atkinson, A. B., Piketty, T., &amp; Saez, E. (2013). The top 1 percent in international and historical perspective. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 27(3), 320.</li> <li>• Alvaredo, F., Assouad, L., &amp; Piketty, T. (2018). Measuring Inequality in the Middle East 1990–2016: The World’s Most Unequal Region?.</li> </ul> <p> <b>Review of Income and Wealth, 65(4), 685711.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alvaredo, F., Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Saez, E., &amp; Zucman, G. (2018, May). The elephant curve of global inequality and growth. In AEA Papers and Proceedings (Vol. 108, pp. 103-08).</li> </ul>	01	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donaldson, Dave, and Adam Storeygard. 2016. "The View from Above: Applications of Satellite Data in Economics." Journal of Economic Perspectives, 30 (4): 171-98.</li> <li>• Heitmann, S., and Sinja Buri (2023). "Poverty Estimation with Satellite Imagery at Neighborhood Levels. Results and Lessons for Financial Inclusion from Ghana and Uganda". IFC World Bank</li> </ul>		

14-15	<p> <b>Genetics and Inequality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paige Harden, K. (2021) The Genetic Lottery: Why DNA Matters for Social Equality, Princeton University Press</li> <li>O'Brien, D., Laurison, D., Miles, A., &amp; Friedman, S. (2016). Are the creative industries meritocratic? An analysis of the 2014 British Labour Force Survey. Cultural Trends, 25(2), 116-131.</li> <li>Markovitz, D. (2019) The Meritocracy Trap: How America's Foundational Myth Feeds Inequality, Dismantles the Middle Class, and Devours the Elite, Penguin Books, London.</li> <li>Sandel, M. J. (2020) The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good, Penguin Books, London</li> </ul>	01	01
16	<p><b>Exposure Inequalities: Pollution and Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jayanchandran, S. (2009). "Air Quality and Early-Life Mortality: Evidence from Indonesia's Wildfires." Journal of Human Resources, Fall 2009, vol. 44 (4), pp. 916-954.</li> <li>Borck, R., Philipp Schrauth (2021). "Population density and urban air quality." Regional Science and Urban Economics, Volume 86, 103596, ISSN 0166-0462.</li> <li>Carozzi, F., Sefi Roth (2023). "Dirty density: Air quality and the density of American cities." Journal of Environmental Economics</li> </ul>	01	
	<p>and Management, Volume 118, 102767, ISSN 0095-0696.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chancel, L. (2022). "Global carbon inequality over 1990–2019." Nature Sustain 5, 931–938 (2022)</li> <li>Chancel, L., and Yannick Rehm (2023). "The Carbon Footprint of Capital: Evidence from France, Germany and the US based on Distributional Environmental Accounts". Working Paper.</li> </ul>		
17	<b>Term Project + Case Study + Presentations</b>		
18	<b>END SEMESTER EXAMINATION</b>		