COURSE DESCRIPTION
According to the course catalog, Sociology 165 is “[A]n examination of the causes and consequences of inequality along the dimensions of social class, race/ethnicity, gender, citizenship status, and/or sexualities. The approach will be local, national, and international.”

This class will explore why the USA has such a high level of poverty, what is the relationship between its high poverty rate and it being the wealthiest nation in the world, why is inequality increasing between the wealthy and the poor, and what are various solutions to this poverty and excessive inequality.

Note that Sociologists are interested in examining social or public problems and solutions. As the renowned sociologist C. Wright Mills stated, “personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues - and in terms of the problems of history making.” For example, if in a nation, there is just a small minority of the population in poverty, then it is the individual’s personal trouble, and for its relief we properly look to the character of the person and her or his skills. But if in that nation, there are 47 million people in poverty (15% of the population), then that is a social problem, and relief must come from a change in social structure (i.e., the arrangement of society). Mills called this approach to understanding reality the sociological imagination. Get ready—we will be using our sociological imagination throughout this course.¹

COURSE READINGS
There is a reader for the course and Ending Extreme Inequality by Scott Myers-Lipton.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This course has three course requirements, which include quizzes, essay exams, and participation.

Very Short Quizzes (5% each / 20% of total grade)
The purpose of these very short quizzes (i.e., less than 5 minutes) is to encourage reading. In order to encourage the reading process, you will be given short quizzes throughout the semester. Actually, you will take five quizzes and the lowest one will be dropped. If you do the reading for each class, these short quizzes will be very easy to answer.

Two Essay Exams in Class (20% each, 40% of total grade)
The exams are your opportunity to demonstrate that you have done the reading, thought about it deeply, and can explain it.

Creative Project (20%)
The creative project provides an opportunity to explore an issue from the course through a video, drawing, poster board, poetry, photography, or music. You will also write a one-page overview of your creative project.

Participation (20%)
The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage and reward students who come to class prepared to discuss and engage with the reading. Your participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

Excellence (A) requires that you play a leadership role in the classroom discussion (particularly in the large group). This leadership role includes reading and thoughtfully considering the text, discussing points articulately and responding intelligently to other's views, asking insightful questions, and taking responsibility for the overall quality of the conversation.

Above average (B) requires that you participate regularly in the classroom discussions, demonstrate good knowledge of the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; work to achieve understanding, listen to other viewpoints, ask sound questions, but you do not take a strong leadership role in the overall class discussion.

Average (C) requires that you follow the discussion actively in the classroom, make occasional comments, have a basic knowledge of the text, and sometimes ask questions.

Below average (D) requires that you occupy a seat and occasionally show signs of life.

Failure (F) requires that you occupy a seat but show no signs of life.

At the end of the course, you will be asked to evaluate your level of participation. This evaluation will be taken seriously when participation grades are determined.

GRADING SCALE
Since the various parts of the course add up to 100%, each percent equals a point. For example, your participation is 20% of your grade; thus, this assignment is worth 20 points. The scale that I use to measure your work is the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-87</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-77</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>68-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXTRA CREDIT: SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT
Students who want to receive extra credit can be involved in a service-learning project focused on poverty and income inequality, and requires a 1-2 hour commitment per week throughout the semester. Students will be required to keep track of your hours in a log. In addition, you will be required to write 3-4 paragraphs about what you are learning in your project, to be turned in on the first of each month. If the service-learning hours and reflection papers are completed, students will receive a minimum of a 1/3rd to a full grade increase on their final grade, depending on the quality of the work.

There will also be other extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. To receive the extra credit, you need to go to the event highlighted in the reading schedule, and then write 3-4
paragraphs reflection paper on how the event is connected to this course. Depending on the quality of the extra credit paper, one to three points will be added to a quiz. You can do a total of 4 extra credit events.

SJSU WRITING CENTER
The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall in Room 126. Please take advantage of this resource. The Writing Center website is: http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter.

FACULTY WEB PAGE
You can download a copy of the syllabus at my faculty web page, which is at: http://www.sjsu.edu/people/scott.myers-lipton. You can also get to my web page at the SJSU home page and go to More Quick Links>Faculty Pages link.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
According to the University’s Academic Integrity Policy, “cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means” (see Section 1.1.1 through 1.1.7), while plagiarism is “the act of representing the work of another as one’s own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and/or submitting it to fulfill academic requirements” (see Section 1.2.1 and 1.2.2). The university’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at: http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf.

If I determine there has been a violation of this policy, students will receive an automatic zero for the paper. In addition, I will file a report with the Academic Affairs Judicial Officer regarding the violation of the academic integrity policy. (Please note: I often checks papers on the web!) To learn more about student conduct and ethical development, go to http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

CAMPUS POLICY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT
Sociology 165 complies with campus policy regarding the American Disabilities Act. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (e.g., if you need a note taker, you need to view the course readings on a screen, or you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated), please contact me as soon as possible. In addition, if your disability Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that a student with a disability register at SJSU’s Disability Resource Center (DRC, Admin 110, 924-6000) to establish a record of that disability.

OTHER INFORMATION
1. Cell Phones and Computers: All cell phones are BANNED from this classroom. Please do not have them out. If you have a cell phone out during class, I will give you a warning, and then the next time it is out, I will ask you to leave the class for the day. You are free to return the following class, of course, without the cell phone. In addition, any type of networking on the computer is banned. If you use your computer, and it is open to Facebook, gmail, etc, I will give you one warning, and then ask you to leave the class if it occurs again.

2. Office Hours: My office hours are on Tuesday and Thursdays. Office hours are generally used to help clarify information from lectures, discussions, group activities, readings, essays, or social action projects. However, at least once this semester, I would appreciate it if you stopped by my office so that I can get to know you better on a personal basis.
READING SCHEDULE

8/26  Introduction to Course

Go over syllabus and expectations

8/28  Social Class In America: An Overview

         Francis, “Where Do You Fall in the American…”, p. 4-5
         Eitzen/Johnson, “Intro and Social Class”, p. 6-9

9/2   The United States:  WE ARE NUMBER 1!

         Innocent Report Card: UN Chart on Children’s Poverty, p. 17
         Myers-Lipton, Preface, p. 18-19
         Husting, “A Chapter in Poverty”, p. 20-21
         Melendez, “American Number One in Wealth”, p. 22-23
         AP, Richest 1% earn biggest share”. p. 25-26
         Peterson,”McDonald’s and Starbucks CEO Make More”, p. 27
         Reuters, “Richest 1% Hold 46%”, p. 28

VIDEO: There’s Gold Out West: youtube.com/watch?v=-GgmQodYjO0

9/4   The United States: We are #1 / The Quintiles

READER:  King, “Speech at 10th Convention of SCLC,” p. 29
         Markham, “The Man with the Hoe”, p. 30-31
         Ginsburgh, “Incomes & Inequality”, p. 32-42
         Graphs, p. 43-53

 Simulations: Steps and Wealth/chairs
 Video: ThinkReality

9/9   The Middle Class Squeeze

READER:  Eitzen and Johnson, “The Disappearing Middle”, p. 54-55
         Lunby, “Why America’s Middle Class is Losing Ground”, p. 56-58
         Avalos, “Income High but at What Price?”, p. 59
         Egan, “No Degree and Now Way Back”, 60 - 60.1
         Witte, “Vanishing Middle-Class Job”, p. 61-65
         Eitzen & Johnson, “Social Mobility”, p. 66-67
         Krugman, “The Death of Horatio Alger”, p. 67-68
         Wasow, “Rags to Riches”, p. 68-70
9/11  Why Inequality Became Excessive: Capitalism Itself / Change in Economy & Jobs

READER:  Johnson, “The Forest and the Trees,” p. 71-74
         Peck, “Can the Middle Class be Saved?”, p. 75-83

Video:  *Capitalism: A Love Story*

9/16  Why Inequality Has Become Excessive: Change in Tax Policy

READER:  Eitzen and Johnson, “The Inequality Gap”, p. 99-100
         NY Times, “Tilting the Tax System”, p. 100-104
         Figure 1: Economic Downturn, Financial…”, p. 105-
         Fieldhouse, “Rising Income Inequality”, p. 106-116

Video:  *Inequality in America*, Reich on marginal tax rates

9/18  Why Inequality Has Become Excessive: Min Wage Held Down/Unions Attacked

         Aronwitz, “The Offline Wage Wars of Silicon…,” p. 119-129
         Greenhouse, “Labor’s Decline and Wage…”, p. 130-131
         Graph, Union membership, p. 132
         Schmitt and Zipperer, “Union Busting is Big…,” p. 133-134

Video:  *The High Price of Low Prices*, union busting

9/23  The 1% Plan

         Fortune 500 Graphs, p. 139-142

Video:  *Born Rich*

9/25  The 5th Quintile: The Poor

READER:  Abramsky, “The Other America, 2012”, p. 155-164
         Ginsburgh, “Poverty in the United States,” p. 165-171
         Eitzen, “Theories of Poverty,” p. 179-183

Video:  *Waging a Living*

9/30  IN-CLASS, ESSAY EXAM #1
10/2  Katrina and The Dangerous Consequences of Growing Inequality

READER: Alter, “The Other America”, p. 184-187
Quigley, “How to Destroy an African American …”, p. 188-192
Collins & Yeskel, “Dangerous Consequences…”, p. 193-210

Video: When the Levees Broke

10/7  Race and Inequality

READER: Definitions of Racism, p. 212
King, Speech, 10th Anniversary SCLC, “Curious Formula”, p. 213
Luhby, “Wealth Inequality Between Blacks…”, p. 216-217
Shapiro, “The Roots of the Widening Racial Gap”, p. 218-224

Video: Fists of Freedom

10/9  Race, Gender, and Inequality

READER: Korgen & White, “Sex, Gender and Power”, p. 227-232
Insight, “Lifting As We Climb”, p. 241-248

10/14  Prologue: An Economic Bill of Rights

BOOK: Prologue and Problem Section of Ch. 1, Right to a Job

10/16  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Job

BOOK: Ch 1: The Right to a Job: History and Current Approaches

10/21  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Living Wage

BOOK: Ch 2: The Right to a Living Wage: Problem & History Section

10/23  Ending Extreme Inequality: Living Wage (students choose)

BOOK: Ch 2: The Right to a Living Wage: Current Approaches

10/28  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to Decent Housing

BOOK: Ch. 3: The Right to Decent Housing: Problem & History
10/30 Ending Extreme Inequality: Housing
BOOK: Ch. 3: The Right to Decent Housing: Current Approaches

11/4 Due: Creative Project

11/6 Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Good Education
BOOK: Ch. 4: The Right to a Good Education: Problem & History

11/11 Ending Extreme Inequality: Education
BOOK: Ch. 4: The Right to a Good Education: Current Approaches

11/13 Ending Extreme Inequality: Right to Adequate Medical Care
READER: Ch. 5: The Right to Adequate Medical Care

11/18 Ending Extreme Inequality: Medical Care
READER: Ch 5: The Right to Adequate Medical Care: Current Approaches Epilogue

11/20 Global Wealth, Poverty, and Inequality
READER: Colonialism, p. 249-250
Isbister, “A World of Poverty,” p. 251-257
Buzzflash Interview: Stephanie Black, p. 269-275

Video: Life and Debt

11/25 No Class

11/27 Thanksgiving
12/2  Global Inequality Revolt: The Arab Spring (Tunisia and Egypt)

READER:  Stiglitz, Globalism’s Discontents, p. 276-283  
          Overview and Garoui, “Out from Behind the Sun, p. 288-294 
          Overview and Nabulsi, “From Partier to Protestor”, p. 295-300

12/4  Global Inequality Rumblings: Spain, Chile, and Greece

READER:  Kinninmont, “The Economics of the Arab…,” p. 301-304  
          Overview / Martin & Raboso, “We are the 99%”, p. 305-310 
          Overview / Jackson, “Students of Change, p. 311-315

12/9  Global Inequality Rumblings→Occupy Wall Street

READER:  Overview / Papahadijis, “No Tears for Greek…”, p. 316-322  
          Schiffrin & Kircher-Allen, “Overview”, p. 323-324  
          Gelder, “This Changes Everything”, p. 325-327  
          White & Lasn, “The Call to Occupy…”, p. 328-329  
          Berger, “What I Learned From Occupy…”, p. 330-331

12/12  Final Essay: Economic Bill of Rights and Global Inequality

2:45-5 pm