Core General Education Social Sciences (D3)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Dr. Martin Luther King stated that the black revolution of the mid-1950s and 1960s was more than a civil rights movement, as it was “forcing America to face all its interrelated flaws—racism, poverty, militarism and materialism.” King called these social problems—i.e., racism, poverty, and militarism—the “giant triplets” and the “triple evils”, and he saw them related to one another. This class will examine Dr. King’s “giant triplets” (plus one) as a way to meet the Sociology 80 requirements spelled out in the course catalog and the General Education Area D guidelines.

According to the course catalog, Sociology 80 provides: “Sociological analysis of selected contemporary social problems such as housing and homelessness, economy and employment, environment and consumerism, family and divorce, crime and drugs, politics and media, race and gender, wealth and poverty, war and peace.” More specifically, this course will explore the following issues (and more):

- advertising and body image
- Afghanistan and Iraq wars
- domestic surveillance
- domestic violence
- Economic Bill of Rights
- empire
- excessive inequality
- unequal education
- homelessness/houselessness
- housing discrimination
- immigration
- middle class squeeze
- militarism
- poverty
- racism
- school segregation
- sexism
- torture
- workplace discrimination
- who rules America

Importantly, the last part of the class will focus on social solutions.

One last thing: this is a Sociology course, so you should know something about one of the most famous American sociologists, C. Wright Mills. Mills once said that, “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 46 million people in poverty (like in the United States), 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

READING

For this class there is a course reader and my latest book, Ending Extreme Inequality.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR D3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students shall be able:</td>
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<td>• place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.</td>
<td>• readings and lectures</td>
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<td>• to identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation.</td>
<td>• readings, small group work, active-learning exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>• identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.</td>
<td>• readings, lectures, classroom discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.</td>
<td>• readings, essays, classroom discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• to apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.</td>
<td>• readings, essay, and lectures</td>
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This course has three course requirements, which include quizzes, essay exams, and participation.

*Five Very Short Quizzes (5% each / 25% of total grade)*
The purpose of these very 5 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 six 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 (25% each, 50% 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 (25%)*
The creative project provides an opportunity to explore an issue from the course through a drawing, poster board, poetry, photography, or music. You will also write a one-page overview of your creative project.

**GRADING SCALE**
Since the various parts of the course add up to 100%, each percent equals a point. For example, an exam is 25% of your grade; thus, this assignment is worth 25 points. The scale that I use to measure your work is the following:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
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<td>88-89</td>
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<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
<td>F</td>
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**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 service-learning log. In addition, you will be required to write 3-4 paragraphs about what you are learning in your project, to be turned each month on the 15th. 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. Generally, 1-3 points are added to a quiz score. You can do a total of 5 extra credit events.

**SJSU WRITING CENTER**
The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall in Room 126. Please take advance of this resource. The Writing Center website is: [http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter](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 More Quick Links>Faculty Web Pages link on the SJSU home page.

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 80 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

8/28  Poverty and Inequality:  The First Triplet

              King, quotes from 1967 Speeches, p. 4-5
              Eitzen and Johnston, “Social Class in America”, p. 6-7
              Ginsburgh, “Incomes & Inequality” p. 12-22

9/2   Poverty and Inequality:  The First Triplet

              Innocent Report Card: UN Chart on Children’s Poverty, p. 25
              Zuesse, “US Is Now the Most Unequal”, p. 26
              Avalos, “Income High but at What Price?”, p. 32
              Egan, “No Degree and Now Way Back…,” p. 33-34
              Eitzen, “Theories of Poverty,” p. 35-39

    Video: Waging a Living

9/4   The Superrich and the 1%:  Who Rules America?

    READER:  AP, Richest 1% earn biggest share”. p. 40-41
              Reuters, “Richest 1% Hold 46%”, p. 42
              Luhby, “Who are the 1 Percent?”, p. 43-45
              1% Graphs, p. 46-54
              Tables 7.1, 7.2, Figure 7.1, p. 59-61
              NY Times, “Tilting the Tax System in Favor…,” p. 62-65
              Stiglitz, “Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%”, p. 66-68

    Video: Born Rich / Wealth Exercise

9/9   Consequences of Poverty and Inequality:  Poor, Segregated Schooling

    READER:  Kozol, “Savage Inequalities,” p. 69-74
              Myers-Lipton, “Schools Not Jails Rally Speech,” p. 75-76
              Krieger, “School Segregation growing in CALY,” p. 77-78

    Video: From First to Worst, Frontline
9/11 Consequences of Poverty and Inequality: Homelessness / Houselessness

Dreir, “Reagan’s Legacy…” p. 88-92
Peninsula Press, “SJ City Leaders Consider Competing…”, p. 93-94
VanderStaay, “Karla,” p. 99-100

9/16 Racism: The Second of the Three Triplets

READER: Dicky, “Pair Celebrate 55 years of Love”. p. 101
King, “Speech at 10th Convention of SCLC”, p. 102
Hughes, “Let America… & Dream Deferred,” p. 103
Definitions of Racism, p. 104
1997 Louis Harris Poll, p. 105
Ross and Agiesta, Racial Views: Poll Shows…”, p. 106-107
Harris, “How Our Skins…”, p. 115-117

Video: The Power of an Illusion (IRC: XD 1462)

9/18 Racism: African Americans (Historical)

Zinn, “Drawing the Color Line”, p. 121-132
Gibson, The Negro Holocaust, p. 133-139
Ferraro, U.S. Senate Apologizes for Shame,” p. 140-141

Video: Lynching Postcards, Enslaved Voices, Roots

9/23 Racism: African Americans (Contemporary)

READER: DeRango, “Discrimination & Segregation in Housing,” p. 142-143
Massey & Denton, “The Continuing Causes…,” p. 144-156
Murray, “Findings from Black Student Focus Group,” p. 157-165
Jaschik, “Outrage at San Jose State”, p. 166-168
NY Times Editorial Board, “The Death of Michael Brown”, p. 169

Video: True Colors (IRC: XS 2130)

9/25 Racism: Latinos and Mexican Americans

Murray, “Findings from Latino Student Focus Group”, p. 180-192
9/30  Racism: Asian Americans

READER: California Constitution, p. 193
Notice: Western Defense Command, p. 194
Swift, “Despite their success...,” p. 199-201
Salesses, Different Racisms, p. 202-208
Murray, “Findings from Vietnamese Student Group,” p. 209-216

10/2  SJSU Racism

Leonard, “What happened to...,” p. 219-224
Pitts Walker, “It is Finished”, p. 225-229

Video: Fists of Freedom

10/7  IN-CLASS, SHORT ESSAY EXAM #1

10/9  Sexism: The “Triplet” that King Forgot or Blind To

“Socializing Gender Through Toys,” p. 238-239
Pascoe, “Dude, You’re a Fag,” p. 240-241

Video: Hasbro’s Rose Petal Cottage

10/14  Sexism: Gender, Poverty, and Inequality

Tillmon, “Welfare is a Women’s Issue,” p. 254-255
Ehrenreich & Fox Piven, “Without a Safety Net,” p. 256-261

10/16  Sexism: Sex Discrimination

READER: Joyce, “Still Outside the Good Ol' Boys Club,” p. 262-263
Keller, “State of the workplace: Sexual Harassment”, p. 264-270
Morgan “Stanley Sex Discrimination…,” p. 271
Streitfeld, “Lawsuit Shakes Foundation of Tech World”, p. 273-278
Williams, “The Uppity Women of Silicon Valley”, p. 279-280
Reed, “Walmart on Sex Discrimination”, p. 281
10/21  Sexism: Advertising and Body Image

         Media Aware, “Beauty & Body Image,” p. 288–290

*Video: Killing Us Softly*

10/23  Sexism: Domestic Violence

READER:  Wadsworth, “Board of Supervisors to Discuss...,” p. 291-292
         National Coalition Against Domestic, “DV Facts”, p. 293-294
         Knoblock, “Gender and Violence...”, p. 295-304

10/28  Militarism: The “Fourth” Triplet

READER:  Essay on MLK’s, “Giant Triplets”, p. 305-307
         Eisenhower, “Farewell Address,” p. 308-312
         Plummer, “America’s staggering defense budget”, p. 322-324
         Quigley, “Corporations Profit...,” p. 325-327

10/30  Militarism: Is the USA an Empire?

READER:  Zinn, “The End of Empire”, p. 328-330
         Sirota, “Why We Can’t Say Empire,” p. 331-333
         Suri, “Is America Really an Empire,” p. 334-336
         World Nuclear Forces, p. 337
         Gersen, “Deadly Connections: Empire...”, p. 338-347

*Video: The Last Epidemic*

10/31  Militarism: Afghanistan and Iraq

READER:  Snow, “The Unresolved Dilemmas...”, p. 348-361
         Behan, “From Afghanistan to Iraq”, p. 362-373
11/4  Militarism’s Impact: Torture

READER: Snow, “The Iraq War”, p. 374-386
Human Rights First, “Torture, Quick Facts,” p. 387-388
Frontline, “The Torture Question,” p. 389-390
Worthington, “When Torture Kills”, p. 391-400
Danner, “Tales from Torture’s Dark World,” p. 401-406

Video: Frontline

11/6  Militarism’s Impact: Surveillance

Cassidy, “From 9/11 to Prism: A Nation Gone Dotty”, p. 411-412
Bamford, “Connecting the Dots on Prism”, p. 413-414
Clayton, “NSA Data Mining 101”, p. 415-419
Greenwald, “XKeyscore: NSA Tool Collects…”, p. 420-431

11/11  Due Creative Project / Share in class

11/13  Ending Extreme Inequality: An Economic Bill of Rights

BOOK: Prologue

11/18  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Job

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 1: Problems & Current Approaches (not historical section)

11/20  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Living Wage

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 2: Problems and Current Approaches (not historical section)

11/25  No Class

11/27  Thanksgiving
12/2  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Decent Home  
BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 3: Problems and Current Approaches

12/4  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Good Education  
BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 4: Problems and Current Approaches

12/9  Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to Adequate Medical Care  
BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 5: Problems and Current Approaches

12/17, Wed.  Final Exam  
7:15 - 9:30 am