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
This course will use a course reader, and it will be made available at the beginning of the semester.

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

Four 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.

Three Essay Exams in Class (20% each, 60% of total grade)
The exams are your opportunity to demonstrate that you have done the reading, thought about it deeply, and can explain it.

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>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<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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<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</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>68-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<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 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.
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.

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

1/23  Introduction to Course
Go over syllabas and expectations

1/28  Social Class In America: An Overview
Francis, “Where Do You Fall in the American…””, p.
Eitzen/Johnson, “Intro and Social Class

1/30  The United States: We are #1
Myers-Lipton, Preface, p.
AP, Richest 1% earn biggest share”, p.
Petersen, ”McDonald’s and Starbucks CEO Make More”, p.
Reuters, “Richest 1% Hold 46%”, p.

2/4  The United States: We are #1 / The Quintiles
Markham, “The Man with the Hoe”, p.
Graphs

Simulations: Steps and Wealth/chairs
Video: ThinkRealty

2/6  The Middle Class Squeeze
READER: Eitzen and Johnson, “The Disappearing Middle”, p.
Lunby, “Why America’s Middle Class is Losing Ground”, p.
Egan, “No Degree and Now Way Back”
Witte, “Vanishing Middle-Class Job”, p.
2/11 Why Inequality Became Excessive: Capitalism Itself / Change in Economy & Jobs

Peck, “Can the Middle Class be Saved?”, p.

Video: Capitalism: A Love Story

2/13 Why Inequality Has Become Excessive: Change in Tax Policy

Figure 1: Economic Downturn, Financial…”, p.
Fieldhouse, “Rising Income Inequality”, p.

Video: Inequality in America, Reich on marginal tax rates

2/18 Why Inequality Has Become Excessive: Min Wage Held Down/Unions Attacked

READER: The Century Foundation, “Graph: How Inflation Erodes…”
Greenhouse, “Labor’s Decline and Wage Inequality”
Graph, Union membership, p.
Schmitt and Zipperer, “Union Busting is Big Business,” p.

Video: The High Price of Low Prices, union busting

2/20 The 1% Plan

Fortune 500 Graphs
Domhoff, “The Class Domination Theory of Power”

Video: Born Rich

2/20, 2 pm -- Extra Credit: National Screening: “Inequality for All”

2/25 The 5th Quintile: The Poor

READER: Abramsky, “The Other America, 2012”

Video: Waging a Living

2/27 IN-CLASS, ESSAY EXAM #1
3/4 The Dangerous Consequences of Growing Inequality / Katrina

        Alter, “The Other America”

Video: When the Levees Broke

3/6 Social Mobility: No Longer

        Krugman, “The Death of Horatio Alger”
        Wasow, “Rags to Riches”, p.

3/11 Race and Inequality

READER: Definitions of Racism
        King, Speech at 10th Anniversary SLCL, “Curious Formula”

Video: Fists of Freedom

3/13 Race, Gender, and Inequality

        Insight, “Lifting As We Climb”

3/18 Prologue: An Economic Bill of Rights

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

3/18, 2-4 pm Non-Profit & Public Service Forum, Student Union Ballroom
(extra credit)

3/20 Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: The Right to a Job

READER: Ch 1: The Right to a Job: History and Current Approaches
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reader Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: The Right to a Living Wage</td>
<td>Reader: Ch 2: The Right to a Living Wage: Problem &amp; History Section</td>
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<td>4/3</td>
<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: Living Wage (students choose)</td>
<td>Reader: Ch 2: The Right to a Living Wage: Current Approaches</td>
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<td>4/8</td>
<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: The Right to Decent Housing</td>
<td>Reader: Chapter 3: The Right to Housing: Problem &amp; History</td>
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<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: Housing (students choose)</td>
<td>Reader: Chapter 3: The Right to Housing: Current Approaches</td>
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<td>IN-CLASS, ESSAY EXAM #2</td>
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<td>4/17</td>
<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: The Right to a Good Education</td>
<td>Reader: Chapter 4: The Right to a Good Education: Problem &amp; History</td>
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<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: Education</td>
<td>Reader: Ch. 4: The Right to a Good Education: Current Approaches</td>
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<td>4/24</td>
<td>Ending Poverty and Excessive Inequality: Right to Adequate Medical Care</td>
<td>Reader: Chapter 5: The Right to Adequate Medical Care</td>
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<td>4/29</td>
<td>Ending Poverty &amp; Excessive Inequality: Solutions Medical Care</td>
<td>Reader: Ch 5: The Right to Adequate Medical Care: Current Approaches</td>
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<td>5/1</td>
<td>Global Wealth, Poverty, and Inequality</td>
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<td>Reader: Colonialism</td>
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<td>Buzzflash Interview: Stephanie Black, p.</td>
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<td>Video: Life and Debt</td>
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5/6  Global Inequality Revolt: The Arab Spring (Tunisia and Egypt)

         Overview and Garoui, “Out from Behind the Sun, p.
         Overview and Nabulsi, “From Partier to Protestor”, p.

5/8  Global Inequality Rumblings: Spain, Chile, and Greece

         Overview / Martin & Raboso, “We are the 99%”, p.

5/13  Global Inequality Rumblings➔Occupy Wall Street

READER:  Overview / Papahadjis, “No Tears for Greek Demo”, p.
         Gelder, “This Changes Everything”, p.

5/19, Mon.  Final Essay
7:15-9:30 am