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. This semester will also include a section on the rise of economic nationalism, the “Alt-Right”, and Donald Trump, and their connection to 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 43 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, which we will use throughout this course.¹

READINGS
There is a reader for this course, which is available at San Jose Copy (408-297-6698), located on 109 E. Santa Clara Street, two stores down from the Chevron gas station. In addition, my book entitled Ending Extreme Inequality is required for this course. It is available at the Spartan Bookstore or on-line.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This course has four course requirements: quizzes, essay exams, a creative project, and participation.

Five Very Short Quizzes (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 six quizzes and the lowest one will be dropped. This comes in handy if you miss a quiz, as there are no re-takes for the quizzes. 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. 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:

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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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<td>93-97</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
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<td>59 &amp; below</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 1/3 to a full grade increase on your 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 campus event, 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 two points will be added to your participation grade. You can do a total of 5 extra credit papers/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
My faculty web page is 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 not allowed. 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

8/29 Social Class and Privilege
Francis, “Where Do You Fall in the American…”, p. 4-5
Eitzen/Johnson, “Intro and Social Class”, p. 6-9
Sehgal, How “Privilege Became a Provocation”, p. 15-19

8/31 Quintiles and Gini: Discussing Inequality using Sociological Terms
READER: King, “Speech at 10th Convention of SCLC,” p. 20
Markham, “The Man with the Hoe”, p. 21-22
Ginsburgh, “Incomes & Inequality”, p. 23-33
Charts on Income p. 34-41
Lepore, “Richer and Poorer”, p. 42-43
Gini Index: 2 charts, p. 44-45

Simulation: Steps and wealth chairs and ThinkReality video

9/5 USA is #1 in Poverty, Inequality & Wealth
Sherman, “America is the Richest…”, p. 49-50
Melendez, “American Number One in Wealth”, p. 51-52
Saez, “US Top 1 Percent…” p. 53-54
Schwartz, 35 Mind Blowing Fact…”, p. 55-58
Peterson,” McDonald’s and Starbucks CEO Make More”, p. 59
Oxfam Reports, p. 60-68
Thompson, How You, I, and Everyone…”, p. 69-72

Video: We are #1, Jon Stewart

9/7 The 3rd and 4th Quintiles: The Working & Middle Class Squeeze of the 20% to 60%
READER: Eitzen and Johnson, “The Disappearing Middle”, p. 73-74
Pew Research Center, “The American Class Loses…”, p. 75-77
Lunby, “Why America’s Middle Class is Losing…”, p. 78-80
Avalos, “Income High but at What Price?”, p. 81
Egan, “No Degree and Now Way Back”, 82-83
Witte, “Vanishing Middle-Class Job”, p. 84-88
Eitzen & Johnson, “Social Mobility”, p. 89
Krugman, “The Death of Horatio Alger”, p. 90-91
Wasow, “Rags to Riches”, p. 91-93

Video: Waging a Living
9/12 The 5th Quintile: The Bottom 20% (i.e., the Poor)

READER: Poverty Facts, p. 94-95
Eitzen, “Theories of Poverty,” p. 96-100
Abramsky, “The Other America, 2012”, p. 101-110
Kurhi, “Seniors on the Street”, p. 113-115
Kurhi, “San Jose: Huge Surge in Homeless…” p. 116-119
Gould and Wething, “U.S. Poverty Rates Higher…”, p. 120-126

Video: 60 minutes

9/14 Extreme Inequality Analysis: Capitalism Itself / Change in Economy & Jobs

Peck, “Can the Middle Class be Saved?”, p. 131-139

Video: Capitalism: A Love Story

9/19 Extreme Inequality Analysis: Change in Tax Policy

READER: Eitzen and Johnson, “The Inequality Gap”, p. 147
NY Times, “Tilting the Tax System”, p. 148-152
Chart: Millionaires Tax Rate and Share of Fed Tax, p. 153
Fieldhouse, “Rising Income Inequality”, p. 156-166

Video: Inequality in America, Reich on marginal tax rates

9/21 Extreme Inequality Analysis: Min Wage Held Down/Unions Attacked

Aronwitz, “The Offline Wage Wars of Silicon…”, p. 169-178
Semuels, “Fewer Unions, Lower Pay…”, p. 179-181
Fairchild, “Middle Class Decline…”, p. 182-183
Graph: “Private vs. Public Sector Unionization Rate”, p. 185
Schmitt and Zipperer, “Union Busting is Big…”, p. 185-186

Video: The High Price of Low Prices

9/26 Extreme Inequality Analysis: The 1% Plan

Fortune 500 Graphs, p. 191-195

Video: Born Rich
9/28 Extreme Inequality Analysis: Intersectionality: Race and Class

READER: Definitions of Racism, p. 208
King, Speech, 10th Anniversary SCLC, “Curious Formula”, p. 209
Pew, “King’s Dream Remains an Elusive Goal”, p. 210-225

10/3 Extreme Inequality Analysis: Intersectionality: Gender, Race, and Class

READER: Kerby, “How Pay Inequity Hurts Women of Color”, p. 252-259
Insight, “Lifting As We Climb”, p. 260-283

10/5 SJSU Social Action: Smith and Carlos

READER: Bonk, “San Jose Statement”, p. 233-234
Pitts Walker: Speech at Smith/Carlos Statue Unveiling, 235-239
Gazzaniga, “The White Man in the Photo”, p. 246-251

Video: Fists of Freedom

10/10 IN-CLASS, ESSAY EXAM #1

10/12 Implications of Extreme Inequality → Hurricane Katrina

READER: West, “Exiles from a City and from a Nation,” p. 284-285
Quigley, “How to Destroy an African American …”, p. 286-290
Alter, “The Other América”, p. 291-294
Quigley, “New Orleans Pain Index…”, p. 295-296

Video: When The Levees Broke

Extra Credit: Tuesday, October 10, 12-1 pm: Legacy Month: Amplifying Your Student Activism Through Strengths Based Leadership, Meeting Room 3B, 2nd floor, Student Union, RSVP is required at benedicto.llave@sjsu.edu

10/17 Implications of Extreme Inequality → Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter

READER: Schiffrin and Kircher-Allen, Overview, p. 297-298
Gelder, “This Changes Everything”, p. 299-301
3 Charts on the 1%: p. 302--304
Captain, “The Inside Story of Occupy WS”, p. 305-316
NY City Gen Assembly Condensed Doc, p. 317-318
Berger, “What I Learned From Occupy WS”, p. 319-320
McClatchy-Tribune, “Rioting in Ferguson prompted…”, p. 321-325
10/19  Implications of Inequality: Rise of Economic Nationalism, Trump & Alt Right

READ: websites will be emailed (draft)

- Rotondaro, The Science of White Working Class Pain
- Hirsh, “Why Trump and Sanders Were Inevitable”
- Spannus, Roots of Trump’s Economic Nationalism
- Drezner, Who Benefit’s From Bannon’s Economic Nationalism”
- Roy, “What is the Alt-Right”
- Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism is Rising”

Extra Credit: Thursday, October 19th, 6-8 pm: Legacy Month: Keynote Speaker: Franchesca Ramsey, Student Union Ballroom, 2nd floor: Join us in conversation about the intersections of social justice, activism, and what students can do today to change the world, with American comedian, YouTube personality, actress, and activist.

10/24  Donald Trump on Inequality, Tax Policy, Labor Unions, Min Wage and Unions

READ: websites will be emailed (draft)

- Kopf, “Trump’s new chief Economist is Known for Arguing that US Inequality Isn’t an Issue”
- Sherman, “What Trump Administration Might Mean For Income Inequality”
- Ballard, “Many of Trump’s Policies Will Further Income Inequality”
- Davidson, “How Trump’s Tax Plan Would Affect Households”
- Lamarque, “Donald Trump’s Loud Silence on Unions”

10/26  Trump Policies on Health Care, Education, and Housing

READ: websites will be emailed (draft)

- Petrilli, “Why Betsy Devos Will be a Great Education Secretary”
- Alcindor, “Don’t Make Housing For the Poor Too Cozy, Carson Warns”
- Hannah-Jones, “Trump’s Inconvenient Racial Truth”

Extra Credit: Thursday, October 26, 5-8 pm, Tower Hall Lawn: Legacy Month: A Social Justice Musical and Arts Festival: Join the CCCAC in celebrating our 10th Annual Legacy Month with a lineup of social justice musical artists, poets, a variety of local vendors, and arts.
An Economic Bill of Rights

BOOK: Prologue and Problem Section of Ch. 1, (ix-xvii) and p. 1-8

The Right to a Job

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 1: History/Current Approaches, p. 8-21

The Right to a Living Wage

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Ch. 2: Problem & History Section, p. 23-32

Ending Extreme Inequality: Living Wage (students choose campaign to discuss)

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 2: Current Approaches, p. 32-41

Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to Decent Housing

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 3: Problem & History, p. 43-55

11/9: Extra Credit -- 12th Annual Poverty Under the Stars

Due: Creative Project

No Class: Personal Holiday in Preparation for Giving Thanks

No Class: Giving Thanks

Ending Extreme Inequality: Housing (students choose)

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 3: Current Approaches, p. 55-64

Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Good Education

BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 4: Problem & History, 65-83
12/5 Ending Extreme Inequality: The Right to a Good Education (students choose)
   BOOK: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 4: Current Approaches, p. 83-93

12/7 Ending Extreme Inequality: Right to Adequate Medical Care (students choose)
   READER: Myers-Lipton, Chapter 5, p. 95-119
   Epilogue

   Video: The Matrix

12/19 FINALS: IN-CLASS, ESSAY EXAM #2
   12:15-2:30 pm