

Examining Income and Wealth Inequality**CRN 10256****2 Credit Hours****Fall 2023****Michael Crow**

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Office hours: By appointment
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Class dates: Friday, November 3, 6 – 8:50 pm
Saturday, November 4, 9 am – 4:50 pm
Sunday, November 5, 9 am – 4:50 pm
Classroom: Virtual (link on Canvas page)
Canvas Page: <https://canvas.evergreen.edu/courses/5770>
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Course objectives

Any serious study of American politics and public policy today must include a firm understanding of social policy. Social policy comprises those areas of public policy that distribute or redistribute society's resources across lines of economic class, race, gender and other broad social categories, including such issues as poverty, racial and gender inequalities, taxes, health care, education, urban renewal and labor relations. More often than not, these issues pit social groups in a zero-sum game and thus often generate much political conflict. Moreover, social policy issues have increasingly come to dominate the policy agenda at federal, state and local levels. Studying social policy, then, can shed light on how we govern ourselves today.

Our main objective in this course is to develop analytical tools for *explaining* the causes of social and economic inequalities in society, *analyzing* the impact of social policy on these inequalities, and *evaluating* proposed alternatives in social policy. These skills will prepare you to make effective arguments about public policy and thus are essential for aspiring legislators, policy advocates, nonprofit administrators, professional policy analysts and government officials. In this way, this course complements and expands on the analytic toolkit you have developed in your research methods and policy analysis courses. By the end of this course, you will have demonstrated your ability to:

- Evaluate the impact of social policies on individuals, social groups and society
- Develop arguments about the scope and causes of social and economic inequality
- Critique alternative policy proposals for addressing social and economic inequalities.

Communications

I encourage and expect contact from you over the quarter. The easiest way to reach me is by e-mail (crawm@evergreen.edu). You may also reach me at my office phone during business hours (9 am to 5 pm) and cell phone before 10 pm. Or you may make an appointment with me for a one-on-one meeting, Zoom conference, or phone call.

I use Evergreen's e-mail and the course Canvas system to conduct course business. If you do not use Evergreen's e-mail system, please be sure to forward messages from this account to the e-mail account that you use. I will also place course assignments, handouts and PowerPoint slides on the course Canvas site.

Course Materials

Books: No book purchases are required for this course. Course readings will be made available on the course Canvas site

Course assignments, credit, and assessment

You will be evaluated in this course based on your progress in meeting the course objectives described above, as assessed by the following assignments and requirements. To earn full credit for the course, students must satisfactorily complete all the following requirements:

Course participation: One of the primary objectives of this class is to develop your ability to critically analyze budget policy issues. In class sessions and activities, we will engage in activities such as discussion and group work that will call on you to apply new ideas from the reading to policy problems. Thus, it is important for you to come to the class prepared to participate by having studied the assigned reading. Your participation will be assessed on the following criteria:

--- *Attendance:* You are expected to be present for the scheduled times when we meet together on November 3-5.

--- *Collegiality:* Showing respect for your peers by being in class on time, staying through the entire session, and respecting the views of others in class discussion.

--- *Preparation:* Completing reading before class, coming to class prepared with assignments and reading materials, active participation in discussion and small group work.

--- *Engagement out of class:* Our sessions on November 3-5 are not the only opportunity to discuss course ideas with me. I want to know if you are having trouble with the material and what you like and don't like about the course. You may reach me by e-mail or phone or schedule an in-person or Zoom chat session.

Pre-class reading responses: After you complete the reading for each of the five modules we will discuss over our weekend session, you will prepare a response of about 500 words (1-2 pages double-spaced) to a question or prompt about that reading assignment. These responses will serve as a starting point for discussion on each module. Your pre-class reading responses are due **Monday, October 30th** at 11 p.m.

Analytic essay: After completing our weekend session, you will write an essay of 1500 – 3000 words (5 – 10 pages double spaced) in response to an essay question that I will provide for you in class. This essay will test your ability to integrate course readings, discussions, assignments, and analytic skills in order to apply them to ongoing dilemmas in state budgeting. Your response to this essay question will be due **Monday, December 4 at 11:00 pm.**

Evaluation: Students are encouraged to complete a self-evaluation and faculty evaluation and to participate in an evaluation conference with the faculty member. The evaluations must be submitted using the My Evergreen system (my.evergreen.edu).

Submitting Assignments

Assignments may be submitted to me either on Canvas and/or by email to me (crawm@evergreen.edu). I recommend both uploading your assignment to Canvas and emailing it to me to ensure I receive it. It is your responsibility to assure that I have received your work on time.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity standards will not be tolerated. Any student turning in work that is in violation of Evergreen's academic integrity standards will automatically receive a No Credit in the course and the matter will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for disciplinary action. An overview of academic integrity standards and the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities are available at <https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/student-affairs/student-rights-responsibilities>

Accessibility

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of The Evergreen State College to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (360) 867-6348; accessservices@evergreen.edu) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. For more information, please visit the Access

Services website at <https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/access-services-for-students-with-disabilities>

Course Schedule

Our course will take place the weekend of November 3-5, and will be divided into five modules. Reading assignments for each module are noted below.

Date	Topic and reading assigned
Monday, October 30	Pre-class reading responses due at 11 p.m.
Friday, November 3rd 6 pm - 9 pm	<p>Defining and Describing Economic Inequality Iceland, "Methods of Measuring Poverty" Coy, "The Unfinished Pursuit of a Better Poverty Measure" Stone et al, "A Guide to Statistics on Historical Trends in Income Inequality" Klass, "Measuring Political, Social, and Economic Conditions" Recommended: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2023. An Updated Measure of Poverty: (Re)Drawing the Line. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/26825</p>
Saturday, November 4th 9 am - noon	<p>Racial Inequality and Public Policy Katznelson, "White Veterans Only" Swanstrom, "National Policy and the City/Suburban Divide" Rothstein, "Racial Zoning" Fields, Perry, and Donoghoe. "How the Property Tax System Harms Black Homeowners and Widens the Racial Wealth Gap"</p>
Saturday, November 4th 1 pm - 5 pm	<p>Political and Economic Inequality in America Bartels, "Do Americans Care about Inequality" Hacker and Pierson, "How the Winner-Take-All Economy was Made" Newman and O'Brien, "The Evolution of Southern Tax Structures" Olson, Mancur, 1965, The Logic of Collective Action, pp. 5-16 and 132-167 (Blackboard)</p>

<p>Sunday November 5th 9 am - noon</p>	<p>Is there an equality-efficiency tradeoff? Okun, "Increasing Equality in an Efficient Economy" (Blackboard) Smith, "The Misunderstood French Welfare State" (Blackboard) Pontusson, "Welfare States, Redistribution, and Economic Growth" (Blackboard) Tanner and Hughes, "The Work versus Welfare Trade-Off: Europe" (Blackboard)</p>
<p>Sunday November 5th 1 pm - 5 pm</p>	<p>Analyzing gender inequality and family change Kraft and Furlong, "Public Problems and Policy Alternatives" (Blackboard) Wolf, "Demography, Public Policy and 'Problem' Families" (Blackboard) Goldin, "The Quiet Revolution That Transformed Women's Employment, Education and Family" (Blackboard) Blau and Kahn, "The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends, and Explanations" Recommended: Kraft and Furlong, "Policy Analysis: An Introduction" (Blackboard)</p>
<p>Monday, December 4</p>	<p>Analytic Essay due at 11:00 p.m.</p>