This course examines the actual and potential distribution of economic opportunities and outcomes in the United States (with some international comparisons). Topics include the relationships between access to economic resources and opportunities for human flourishing, how inequalities in distribution are properly measured and compared, various social scientific explanations for existing inequalities, and related political economic policy questions.

The course meets 1-3 pm TuWeTh in 142 Lorch. Office hours by appointment schedulable via https://www-a1.lsa.umich.edu/AdvAppts/AA_StuSelfSvc1.aspx?ctgy=ECON and after class at Dominick's (412 Monroe).

**Reading:**

Three books are required and are available commercially as well as in the University Reserves:


Other course reading is available on our CTools coursesite.

**Writing:**

The midterm exam will be given in class on Thursday, 19 May, (20% of course grade); the final exam will be given 8:00-10:00 on Thursday, 23 June, (40% of course grade).

This is an Upper-Level Writing Requirement course and thus involves a substantial amount of writing. Two papers are required, a short paper on a set topic early in the semester (10% of course grade) and a longer term paper on a mutually agreed topic (30% of course grade). Guidelines for the paper assignments will be distributed. Students must submit a first draft of each paper which will be returned with comments on composition and substance. (First and final drafts of the two papers are to be uploaded to the Drop Box on our CTools coursesite by 1:00 pm on their due dates.) Extra credit or discredit may be due via surprise quizzes in class. Because of the substantial amount of interactive evaluation involved in the course, there will be no make-up exams and late papers will not be accepted.

Some aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate full participation and fair evaluation of students with SSD recognized disabilities. Students needing such an accommodation should make this known at the beginning of the course. (Such information will be treated as private and confidential.)

**Discussion:**

Discussion in class and beyond is strongly encouraged. In particular students are urged to participate via inequality_econpolsci_425@ctools.umich.edu.

**Preliminary Outline Schedule of Assignments:**

3-4 May: **Introduction.**

   **Reading:**


“Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%,” by Joseph Stiglitz. *Vanity Fair*, May 2011.

5-19 May: **Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility.**

Reading:

*PID*: Part I (Chapters 2-6).


5 May: Short Paper assignment distributed.

12 May: Short Paper first draft due.

12 May: Midterm Examination study questions distributed.

17 May: Short Paper first draft returned.

19 May: Midterm Examination.

20-26 May: **A Theory of Justice.**

*JF*, all.


24 May: Short Paper final draft due.

24 May: Term Paper assignment distributed.

27 May - 2 June : **Explanations of Inequality and Poverty.**

Reading:

*PID*: Part II (Chapters 7-11).


3–9 June: **Discrimination.**

Reading:

*PID*: Part III (Chapters 12-14).

9 June: Term Paper first draft due

10-16 June: The Role of Public Policy on Poverty and Inequality.

Reading:

PID: Part IV (Chapters 15-16).

14 June: Term Paper first draft returned.

16 June: Final Examination study questions distributed.

16 June: Term Paper final draft due.

23 June (8:00-10:00): Final Examination.

http://www.bitstorm.org/gameoflife/