SOC 3320: Social Class and Inequality

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3
Lecture Hours/Week: 0
Lab Hours/Week: 0
OJT Hours/Week: *.*
Prerequisites: None
Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 05 - Hist/Soc/Behav Sci

On some level, most people understand that social class matters; rarely do they grasp how by how much. The primary goal of this course is to examine social stratification, particularly focusing on social class, primarily in the contemporary United States, but also including historical and comparative information. It is only by doing so that we can understand why stratification is as it is in the United States and how and why it is different from those systems found elsewhere. We will pursue this goal by contextualizing early work, reviewing central perspectives on stratification and inequality, and using these newfound theoretical skills to explore the issues of political economy, environmental degradation, geopolitics, and constructions of race, class, and gender. [Core Curriculum Goal Area(s) 5 & 7]

B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 01/12/2020 - Present

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. Introduction and explanation of social stratification, the U.S. class structure, process of social stratification, and social stratification beyond the U.S.

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. Differentiate among theoretical concepts associated with micro, meso, and macro levels of social stratification processes.
2. Specify how social class and the political and economic institutions have affected one another over the course of U.S. history.
3. Summarize the historical and contemporary mechanisms resulting in the development of the world stratification system.
4. Compare the early and modern explanations for social stratification.
5. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary theories of poverty.
6. Summarize the development of social class identities in the United States and the extent to which meanings attributed to these identities have changed over time.
7. Discuss how gender and race/ethnicity interact with social class to produce unequal consequences.
8. Compare social mobility opportunities and legitimation processes in the United States.
9. Analyze their own attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding social class and diversity.
10. Differentiate the social classes according to income and wealth, basic necessities, and health and well-being.
E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

   Goal 05 - Hist/Soc/Behav Sci

   1. Examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
   2. Use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
   3. Develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.
   4. Employ the methods and data that historians and social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.

F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

   As noted on course syllabus

G. SPECIAL INFORMATION

   None noted