

SOC436: Social Inequality

Spring, 2009

Clifford L. Staples, Ph.D.

Class: TuTh 11:00-12:15, ED2

Office Hours: MW 11:00-3:00 and by appt.

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Required Texts

Scott Sernau, *Worlds Apart: Social Inequalities in a Global Economy* 2/e (Pine Forge: ISBN: 1-4129-1524-4)

Assigned Readings.

Overview

This is an *advanced* course in the sociology of global capitalism and the social inequalities it both challenges and creates. It is *not* an introductory level course, and therefore I expect the students in the course to have a background in Sociology or an avid interest in the topic, and preferably both. In this class we will explore how global capitalism, sometimes called “globalization,” is creating new winners and losers as it transforms pre-capitalist social relations in the peripheral regions of the world and deepens capitalist social relations in the already capitalist nations of the world. Within this framework we will also, of necessity, consider how inequalities based on race, gender, ethnicity, and other factors further stratify individuals and groups within the United States and around the world.

Requirements:

Reading. 40%. It’s important to keep up with the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Consequently, I will be giving un-announced quizzes on the required readings throughout the semester.

Writing. 30% of your grade is based on a term paper. For this paper you will be required to identify some dimension or aspect of inequality from your own experience, narrow and focus this topic, and then write a paper reporting on what the sociological evidence tells us about this issue. You will want to be thinking about this paper from the first day of class, and there are deadlines to be met throughout the semester (see Course Schedule) that will factor into your final grade for it. You are required to present your paper to the class at the end of the semester.

Speaking, Listening, and Engagement. 30% of your grade is based on your class participation and involvement. You are expected to be an active listener and speaker. I will take attendance, but just showing up isn’t nearly enough. If you are routinely absent from and/or disengaged from the class you can expect a low grade for this portion of the course, and probably no more, and quite possibly less, than a “B” in the course.

Policies:

My office hours are listed above. Unless there is some sort of emergency or meeting I have to attend during those hours I will be there to see students, first come, first served. You are also free to drop in to see me anytime I am in my office. If you want to make an appointment to see me at a specific time, in or out of office hours, we can do that too. Probably the best way to get hold of me and get a quick response is via e-mail (address above). Leaving messages on my voice mail is probably not a good idea. If you have any sort of learning disabilities that I should be aware of, please let me know ASAP. If you are having any trouble with the class, or if you have any personal problems with anything I or anyone else in the class has done or is doing that disturbs you or impedes your learning in any way, university policy states that you come and talk to me about it first. If, however, you feel you can't approach me, or you have and still feel troubled, your next step should be to see Professor Kathleen Tiemann, Chairperson of the Department of Sociology.

Soc436 Spring, 2009 Class Schedule
C. Staples

Week 1	Readings	Due dates
1/13	Syllabus and Overview	
1/15		
Week 2		
1/20	Sernau Chapter 1	
1/22	Sernau Chapter 1	
Week 3		
1/27	Sernau Chapter 2	
1/29	Sernau Chapter 2	Paper topic proposal
Week 4		
2/3	Sernau Chapter 3	
2/5	Sernau Chapter 3	
Week 5		
2/10	Sernau Chapter 4	
2/12	Sernau Chapter 4	
Week 6		
2/17	Sernau Chapter 5	
2/19	Sernau Chapter 5	Revised paper topic proposal
Week 7		
2/24	Sernau Chapter 6	
2/26	Sernau Chapter 6	
Week 8		
3/3	Sernau Chapter 7	
3/5	Sernau Chapter 7	
Week 9		
3/10		
3/12	No class	
Week 10		
3/17	Spring break	
3/19	Spring break	
Week 11		
3/24	Sernau Chapter 8	Paper topic
3/26	Sernau Chapter 8	
Week 12		
3/31		
4/2	No class	
Week 13		
4/7	Sernau Chapter 9	
4/9	Sernau Chapter 9	
Week 14		
4/14	Sernau Chapter 10	
4/16	Sernau Chapter 10	
Week 15		
4/21	Sernau Chapter 11	
4/23	Sernau Chapter 11	
Week 16		
4/28	Sernau Chapter 12	Paper Drafts due
4/30	Sernau Chapter 12	
Week 17		
5/5	Paper presentations	Paper presentations
5/7	Paper presentations	Paper presentations
5/14		Paper due