

THE STRUCTURE OF POVERTY, GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY
POLS 380-01, SOC 393-03, PPS 393-09

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
Dr. Michelle Lorenzini

Description

This course examines the theoretical and empirical literature on the structural causes of poverty at the global and local level from a multidisciplinary perspective. While other variables will not be discounted, this course focuses on the social, political, and economic structures that produce and perpetuate cycles of poverty. The global dimension of the course will focus primarily on developing countries. The local dimension will focus on policies in the U.S., and more specifically, the St. Louis area. We will begin at the local level, and build to the global level. While the course is organized in this manner, this does not suggest that structural causes differ between the two levels. Instead, this is a question to be examined.

Students will get a first hand view of the structure of poverty as they engage in service learning projects at the well-established, nonprofit organization, Queen of Peace Center (QOPC). The Center serves low-income, homeless, and chemically-dependent women and their children. Students will examine and analyze how the problems faced by clients of QOPC intersect with poverty.

The course will focus on and be organized around the following core questions:

Questions:

- 1.) What is poverty? How to measure poverty?
- 2.) How do we view poverty? Political Ideologies and the Role of Values
- 3.) What are the attributes of poverty? Who is more likely to be poor?
- 4.) What are the structural causes of poverty? Global and Local Perspectives
- 5.) What are the solutions? Global and Local Approaches
- 6.) Why should we care?

Course Requirements

The service learning component of this class will consist of several components – in class-scheduled lectures, interviews outside of class, outside research, an advocacy training session, and a final community-based research project. This might be different than you expected, but your final project is not just an academic exercise, it is also designed to provide important data and information to QOPC to help them serve their clients better. It will be part research paper and part policy analysis. It will focus on poverty alleviation strategies for clients of QOPC, particularly the role of asset-building approaches. The goal of the final project is to help you become advocates working on behalf of the clients of QOPC.

Service Learning Project/Research Paper	30%
Research Project Interviews (3 = 5% each)	15%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	10%
Course Evaluation and Reflection	5%

Due Dates

Client Interview – To be conducted on **Monday, October 5th** or **Thursday, October 8th** from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Philippine Home (Transitional Housing Program of QOPC)

Written assignment due no later than October 13th

Provider Interview – Must be completed no later than **November 3rd**

Stakeholder Interview – Must be completed no later than **November 20th** (please e-mail) (Advocacy organization or local politician)

Research Project – Part I – Resource Manual – **November 12th**

Research Project – Part II – Policy Analysis – **December 3rd**

Course Schedule

I. Introduction and Overview

1.) Tuesday, August 25 – **Introduction and Overview of the Course**

- Focus:
- An interdisciplinary approach to studying poverty
 - Individual vs. Structural explanations
 - Politics & Poverty - Who gets what, the role of values, & power

II. Question #1: What is poverty?

2.) Thursday, August 27 - **Poverty in the US**

Focus: What does it mean to be poor in the US?

- How to define poverty – What is the scope of your study?
- How to measure poverty – Operationalize your variable
- Definitions and Measurements Matter!
- Moving Beyond Economic Measures – the Human Development Index – “Poverty as Deprivation” and “Unfreedoms”

Readings: - Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 1, p. 3-16.

- Iceland, John. *Poverty in America: A Handbook*. Berkely:

- University of California Press, ch. 3, p. 20-37.
- Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Anchor Books, Preface, p. xi-xiv, Intro., p. 3-8, Ch 1, p. 20-24, 33-34.

Assignment: Please take notes on the following

- a.) How do we define poverty in the US? Absolute and Relative measures
- b.) How does Sen define poverty?
- c.) How would you define poverty?

3.) Tuesday, September 1 – *****Orientation at Queen of Peace Center*****

Activity: We will make our first visit to Queen of Peace Center as a class. Please Meet in front of McGannon Hall at 1:50. Orientation will focus on the Services offered by Queen of Peace Center, the population served, how poverty impacts their clientele, overview of the service projects you will undertake, and overview of client interview.

Focus: Discourses on Poverty

- a.) How do “we” view “the poor”? “Us” vs. “Them”
- b.) “the undeserving poor” vs. “the culture of poverty”
- c.) The missing role of politics

Readings: - Katz, Michael. 1989. *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare*. New York: Pantheon Books, Ch. 1, p. 9-35, p.7, Epilogue, p. 236-239.

- Hays, Sharon. 2003. *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 121-128 and ch. 6, p. 136-177.

Written Assignment: **To be handed in**

- 1.) What comes to mind when asked the following questions – please answer this before you do the readings. Be honest! Answer all parts of the question:
 - a.) What images comes to mind when the media talks about poverty in the US? Poverty in a developing country in Africa?
 - b.) What do you think are the causes of poverty? US and Globally?
 - c.) How do you view those who live in poverty?
 - d.) How do you view welfare in the US?
- 2.) Did any of your answers to the above question change after the readings?

4.) Thursday, September 3 – **Global Poverty**

Focus: The Poverty Gap Around the World

- a.) Extreme, Moderate, and Relative Poverty
- b.) The Development Ladder
- c.) The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Readings: - Groody, Daniel. 2008. *Globalization, Spirituality, & Justice*. New York: Orbis Books, p. 1-8
- Sachs, Jeffrey. 2005. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Press, p. 1-25.

Assignment: Please take notes on the following

- a.) How do we measure poverty around the globe?
- b.) What percentage of the world's population lives in extreme poverty?

III. Question #2: How do We View Poverty? – Ideologies and Political Values

5.) Tuesday, September 8 – **Political Ideologies in the US – Poverty & Welfare**

Focus: The US View of Poverty and the Welfare State

- a.) A Typology of Western welfare states and underlying ideologies
- b.) US Views of poverty, inequality, and rights – American exceptionalism – contract vs. charity
- c.) From the New Deal to Great Society
- d.) individual vs. structuralist explanations

Readings: - Fraser, Nancy and Linda Gordon. 1998. "Contract vs. Charity: Why is There No Social Citizenship in the United States?". In *The Citizenship Debates*, edited by Gershon Shafir. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, ch. 7, p. 113-130.
- Wilson, William Julius. 1997. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Vintage Books, p. 155-164.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1988. "The Limits of the New Deal System and the Roots of Contemporary Welfare Dilemmas." In *The Politics of Social Policy in the US*, edited by Margaret Weir, Ann Shola Orloff, and Theda Skocpol. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 293-307.

Assignment: Take notes on the following

- a.) What is civil citizenship? Political citizenship? Social citizenship?
- b.) Explain the “contract” vs. “charity” image of the US welfare state?
- c.) What are individual causes of poverty? Structural?
- d.) How does the New Deal legacy affect US social welfare policy today?

6.) Thursday, September 10 – **“Welfare Reform” or “War on Welfare”:
The Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA)**

- Focus:
- a.) The evolution of social welfare policy in the US
 - b.) Political Values and US Social Welfare Policy
 - c.) The 2008 Presidential election – Candidates’ anti-poverty policies

- Zuckerman, Diana. 2000. “Welfare Reform in America: A Clash of Politics and Research.” *Journal of Social Issues*, Winter, p. 587-599. Also available on line:
<http://www.center4research.org/poverty3.html>
- Hays, Sharon. 2003. *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 9 - 24.

Assignment: The Health Care Reform Debate – What are the major differences on health care reform between the Democratic and Republican Parties? What are their policies and proposals? Do their policies reflect different underlying political philosophies and values?

Visit their websites: <http://www.gop.com/>, www.democrats.org/

7.) Tuesday, September 15 – **Non-Western Views of Justice and Poverty and
Differences within the Christian Tradition**

- Focus:
- a.) How do Western views of justice, social welfare, and poverty Differ from Non-Western views
 - b.) Differing views of justice, social welfare, and poverty within the Christian Tradition

** Special Guest Lecturer, Dr. Tim Lomperis, Dept. of Political Science

- Readings:
- Groody, Daniel. 2008. *Globalization, Spirituality, & Justice*. New York: Orbis Books, p. 96-101 and 110-113
 - Catholic Charities Policy Paper. 2006. *Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good*, p. 1-10.

8.) Thursday, September 17 – Special Lecture - Poverty Alleviation Strategies –

The Role of Microfinance

**** Special Guest Lecture with Sr. Toni Temporiti founder of Micro- Financing Partners in Africa *****

Microfinancing Partners in Africa (MPA) develops sustainable businesses and economically viable communities. They work with community-based organizations to create and support funding systems that furnish small, collateral-free, low-interest business loans. Grants are given to organizations that provide business, health and nutrition classes.

Focus:

- a.) Microfinancial services - Microcredit, microsavings, and microinsurance
- b.) Microlending in the Developing World: Grameen Bank and Jami Bora

Readings: Yunus, Muhammad. 2003. *Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending And the Battle Against World Poverty* New York: Public Affairs, p. 33-42, 45-58, 61-83, 140-146, 149-151, 201-206, 260-262.

Assignment: Check out the following websites for a description of Sr. Toni's organization – Microfinancing Partners in Africa – And the Grameen Bank and Jamii Bora, two very Successful microfinancing programs.

<http://www.Jamiibora.org>
<http://www.GrameenFoundation.org>
<http://www.microfinancingafrica.org>

9.) Tuesday, September 22 – Poverty Alleviation Strategies– Asset-Building Approaches

Focus: **** Special Guest Lecture on Asset-Building Approaches *****

- a.) Asset Development around the globe
- b.) Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and microfinance in the US

Julie Birkenmaier, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Director of Field Education, School of Social Work

Jami Curley, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Social Work

Readings: Sherraden, Michael. 2005. *Inclusion in the American Dream: Assets, Poverty, and Public Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 3-19 and 371-382.

- Sherraden, Michael. 1991. *Assets and the Poor: A New American Welfare Policy*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, p. 294-302.

IV. Question #3: What are the attributes of poverty? Who is more likely to be poor?

10.) Thursday, September 24 – **Demographics and “Axes of Oppression”**

Focus: Who is more likely to be poor?

- a.) Poverty in the US - Demographics and geography
- b.) Who is more vulnerable to falling into poverty?
- c.) Poverty in the Developing World
- d.) Structural violence and axes of oppression

Readings: - Iceland, John. *Poverty in America: A Handbook*. Berkely: University of California Press, ch. 4, p. 38-69.

- Farmer, Paul. 2005. *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 29-50.

Assignment: Think about these questions as you do the readings

- a.) What is the relationship between demographics and causal explanations?
- b.) Why are some societal groups more vulnerable than others to falling into poverty?
- c.) What does Farmer mean by “structural violence”? “Axes of Oppression”?

11.) Tuesday, September 29 – **QOPC Special Panel Discussion – at SLU campus**

Readings: Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 4, p. 85-121.

Assignment: Questions to think about when you do the reading

- a.) Were you surprised by the percentage of people affected by poverty across their lifespan in the US?
- b.) Why as Americans are we reluctant to spend more money on poverty prevention, when we spend so much money dealing with the problems that arise as a result of poverty?

12.) Thursday, October 1 – **Special Lecture – Individual Development Accounts in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area**

**** Special Guest Lecture - Cassandra Kaufman, MSW, Director, Community Investment, United Way of Greater St. Louis ****

Readings: - Sherraden, Michael. 1991. *Assets and the Poor: A New American Welfare Policy*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, chapters 10 & 11, p. 220-293.

** Next week you must sign-up to conduct your client interview on **Monday, October 5th** or **Thursday, October 8th** from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Philippine Home. We will meet outside McGannon on both days at 6:00 p.m. **

V. Question #4: What are the Structural Causes of Poverty?

13.) Tuesday, October 6 – **US Economic Structures – The Market Economy**

Focus: a.) “natural rate of unemployment” – musical chairs
b.) “restructuring” unemployment– sunrise/sunset industries,
c.) cyclical unemployment
d.) low-wage jobs – at or below poverty line/lack of opportunities

Readings: - Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 3, p. 49 – 65
- Wilson, William Julius. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Vintage Books, ch.2, p.25-50.

Assignment: Please take notes on the readings and answer the following questions in your binder.

- a.) Katz and Wilson both develop structural explanations for US poverty attributable to the market system. What are their arguments?
- b.) According to Wilson, US policy and the intersection of race have exacerbated these structural failings. How?
- c.) What is the relationship between globalization and poverty in the US? What are the effects?

14.) Thursday, October 8 – **US Social Structures – Gender**

Focus: a.) How do gender inequalities intersect with and impact poverty Among women?
b.) What is the “feminization of poverty” in the U.S. context?

Readings: - Medeiros, Marcelo and Joana Costa. “What Do We Mean by ‘Feminization of Poverty’?”. International Poverty Centre, July, 2008, Number 58. (One page)

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager58.pdf>

- McLanahan, Sarah and Erin Kelly. 1999. "The Feminization of Poverty: Past and Future". MacArthur Working Paper, p. 1-13. Also available at: <http://www.olin.wustl.edu/macarthur/working%20papers/wp-mclanahan3.htm>
- Catanzarite, Lis and Vilma Ortiz. 2005. "Family Matters, Work Matters?: Poverty Among Women of Color and White Women". In *Great Divides: Readings in Social Inequality in the United States*. New York: McGraw Hill, p. 165-171.

15.) Tuesday, October 13 – **US Social Structures – Race & Ethnicity**

- Focus:
- a.) Measuring poverty – wealth vs. income
 - b.) Racial Inequality and the Wealth Gap
 - c.) Residential segregation and poverty

- Readings:
- Oliver, Melvin and Thomas Shapiro. 1995. *Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality*. New York: Routledge, p. 1-23 and p. 36-52.
 - Massey, Douglas and Nancy Denton. 2007. "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass". In *The Inequality Reader*, edited by David Grusky and Szonja Sxelenyi. Boulder: Westview Press, p. 153-164

- Assignment: Outline the argument of each reading and answer the following questions.
- a.) What are the implications if we use an income-based approach for measuring and addressing poverty vs. an wealth-based approach?
 - b.) What are the policy implications?
 - c.) Do US policies continue to perpetuate racial inequality and the wealth gap?

16.) Thursday, October 15 – **The Structural Vulnerability Explanation**

- Focus:
- a.) human capital, social class, and economic vulnerability
 - b.) structural failings and individual vulnerability – "musical chairs"

- Readings:
- Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 3, p. 65 - 82.
 - Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2005. "Nickel-And-Dimed: On (NOT) Getting by in America". In *Mapping the Social Landscape: Readings in Sociology*, edited by Susan Ferguson, 4th ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, p. 318-331.
 - Kozol, Jonathan. 1992. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York: Harper Collins, p. 7-39.

Assignment: a.) As always, take notes on the readings – think about the Connections between Rank’s argument and the reading Excerpts from Ehrenreich and Kozol

17.) Tuesday, October 20 – NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

18.) Thursday, October 22 – The Global Market Structure & Globalization

Focus: a.) The Poverty Trap & the Developing World – Getting your Foot on the ladder – prerequisites of development
b.) Kicking away the ladder – From Statism to Neoliberalism
c.) Globalization, poverty, and development

Readings: - Sachs, Jeffrey. 2005. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Press, p. 51-73
- Chang, Ha-Joon. 2002. “Kicking Away the Ladder: □How the Economic and Intellectual Histories of Capitalism Have Been Re-Written to Justify Neo-Liberal Capitalism”, *Post-Autistic Economic Review*, 15 (3): 1-4. Also available at: <http://www.paecon.net/PAEtexts/Chang1.htm>
- Rodrik, Dani. 2002. “Globalization for Whom? □: Time to change the rules -- and focus on poor workers”, *Harvard Magazine*, July-August, P. 1-3. Also available at: <http://harvardmagazine.com/2002/07-pdfs/0702-29.pdf>

**** Take-home Mid-term Exam Due in Class****

**19.) Tuesday, October 27 – International Economic Institutions:
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) & World Bank**

Focus: a.) IMF – From Embedded Liberalism to the Washington Consensus
b.) Structural Adjustment Programs and the Poor
c.) World Bank and its Poverty Reduction Mandate

Readings: - Cohn, Theodore H. 2004. *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice*, third edition. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., p. 23-31 and 38-45.
- Stiglitz, Joseph. 2001. “Failure of the fund: Rethinking the IMF response”, *Harvard International Review*: 23, (2), p. 14-18.

**20.) Thursday, October 29 - International Economic Institutions:
The World Trade Organization (WTO)**

- Focus: a.) WTO – Complaints from Developing Countries
b.) WTO, agricultural subsidies, and developing countries

- Readings: - Oatley, Thomas. 2006. *International Political Economy: Interests and Institutions in the Global Economy*, 2nd ed. New York: Pearson Lognman, p. 17-23.
- Oxfam. 2002. *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalization, and the Fight Against Poverty*, Executive Summary, p. 5-19.

21.) Tuesday, November 3 – **Domestic Political Institutions – Bad Governance**

- Focus:
a.) Bad Governance – Poverty, Politics, and Corruption
b.) Democratic vs. Authoritarian regimes
c.) Political Development: Political Decay or Political Institutionalization
d.) US Millennium Challenge Account

- Readings: - Calderisi, Robert. 2006. *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, ch. 1, p. 13-34.
- Easterly, William. 2006. *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*. New York: Penguin Press, ch. 4, p. 112-159.
- Calderisi, Robert. 2006. *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, ch. 12, p. 207-222.

**** Provider Interview assignment due in class ****

22.) Thursday, November 5 – **Policy Advocacy at the State Level**

**** Legislative Reception at QOPC ****

Several local politicians will be conducting a site-visit at QOPC followed by a reception and Q&A session. Please come prepared to ask questions about their legislative agendas and their efforts toward poverty alleviation. Don't be afraid to ask how you can make a difference!

- Readings – TBA

V. What are the Solutions? Global and Local Approaches and Informed Advocacy

23.) Tuesday, November 10 – **US Policy Reforms at the Macro Level**

- Focus: a.) Do we need to re-reform the US welfare state?
b.) What's wrong with current policies?
c.) What poverty-alleviation policies will work in the US?
d.) What is politically feasible?

Reading: - Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 8, p. 193-241.
- Center for American Progress. 2007. *From Poverty to Prosperity: A National Strategy to Cut Poverty in Half*, Executive Summary, p. 1-5.

24.) Thursday, November 12 – **Policy Advocacy at the National Level**

**** Special Lecture – The Rebecca Project ****

- Focus: a.) How can you become an “informed advocate”?
b.) The women of the Rebecca Project and their allies
c.) Preparation for Advocacy Training Seminar

Readings: - Selected pages from the Rebecca Project website. For more information, please visit: <http://www.rebeccaproject.org/>

****Research Project – Part I due in class *****

*****Sunday, November 15 – Advocacy Training Workshop at QOPC****

25.) Tuesday, November 17– **The UN Millennium Development Goals & Foreign Aid**

- Focus: a.) The Millennium Development Goals and International Security
b.) Investments in people and infrastructure – on the ground solutions
c.) The Poverty Trap and the Need for Foreign Aid

Readings: - Sachs, Jeffrey. 2005. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Press, p. 210-225, 226-243, 244-259, and 364-368.

Assignment: If you are interested in the “debate” between Easterly and Sachs, check out the following Washington Post articles.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A25562-2005Mar10.html>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A64541-2005Mar24.html>

26.) Thursday, November 19 – **The Role of Multinationals (MNCs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

Focus: a.) Public-Private partnerships and poverty alleviation
b.) A World Development Corporation

Readings: Lodge, George and Craig Wilson. 2006. *A Corporate Solution to Global Poverty: □ How Multinationals Can Help the Poor and Invigorate Their Own Legitimacy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 117-134 and 155-163.

- International Monetary Fund. 2001. "IMF-NGOs Dialogue: A Search for Development Partners". Views and commentaries, p. 1-3. This can also be found at:
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/vc/2001/090101a.htm>

**** Stakeholder interview due on Nov. 20th – Please e-mail these to me ****

27.) Tuesday, November 24 – **NO CLASS – WORK DAY**

Please work on completing your Queen of Peace Research Projects

28.) Thursday, November 26 – **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

VI. Why Should We Care? What Can We Do?

29.) Tuesday, December 1 – Poverty Alleviation: Active Citizens, Advocacy, and the Role of Civil Society

Readings: - Green, Duncan. 2008. *From Poverty To Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World*. Oxfam International, p. 2-6, 18-33, and 58-63.
- Keck, Margaret, and Kathryn Sikkink. 2007. "Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics." In *The Politics of Globalization*, edited by Mark Kesselman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, p. 368-377.

30.) Thursday, December 3 – A Matter of Justice, A Matter of Citizenship,

A Matter of Security

- Readings: - Pogge, Thomas. 2003. "Priorities of Global Justice". In *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to The Globalization Debate*, edited by David Held and Anthony McGrew. Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 548 - 558.
- Brainard, Lael, Derek Chollet, and Vinca LaFleur. 2007. "The Tangled Web: The Poverty- Insecurity Nexus." In *Too Poor for Peace*, edited by Lael Brainard and Derek Chollet. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, p. 1-30.
 - Rank, Mark Robert. 2005. *One Nation Underprivileged*. New York: Oxford University Press, ch. 6, p. 145-166, ch. 9, p. 246-254.

**** Final Research Paper/Service Learning Project Due****

Take-Home Final Exam – Due no later than Monday, December 11th by 12:00 p.m.