



COURSE: Special Topics in Development: Seminar – Children and Poverty - Rashmita Mistry

Course Overview:

In this course we will examine applications of developmental science – theory and research to contemporary social issues that impact the healthy development and well-being of children and families. Specifically, the course examines the determinants and pathways by which poverty influences family and child functioning. Poverty is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. In this course, we will explore what it means to be poor in the U.S., and how poverty affects child development. Topics vary from year to year but include parenting and other dimensions of family functioning (e.g., adult relations, parents' mental health), the context of low wage work, early childcare & education, neighbor and community characteristics, immigration, public attitudes and perception of the poor, intervention efforts, and social policies.

Assigned Reading:

A majority of the course readings are available online (through the UCLA library). Copies of nononline readings (i.e., book chapters) will be posted on the course website (<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/17W-EDUC256B-1>). In addition, the following books are required reading for this class and are available at the UCLA bookstore and on Amazon.

- Duncan, G. J., Huston, A. C., & Weisner, T.S. (2007). *Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children*. NY, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Lareau, A. (2011). *Class, Race, and Family Life, With an Update a Decade Later*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Tough, P. (2009). *Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Question to Change Harlem and America*. Publisher: Mariner Books.

Assignments:

All assignments must be completed to pass the class. Grading will be based on class participation, writing, and oral presentations. Both understanding and critical analysis of the course material are expected.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (40%)

This class is a seminar. Students are expected to participate in discussion. Informed analysis, dialogue and debate will form the foundation for learning of the course material. Please note the readings for this course are substantial—child poverty is a broad topic and challenging to cover in one quarter! Students are expected to read all of the assigned readings and come prepared to discuss them in class. Please plan accordingly. Attendance will be tracked; if you are unable to attend class, you need to notify me ahead of time. Unexcused absences will affect your final grade.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (60%)

Weekly Commentaries (25%) – 5 total: To facilitate discussion, students will submit weekly commentaries. The commentary should be up to 1 page MAX., and focus on synthesizing issues across the set of readings (include citations in text). Commentaries should not be used to ask clarification

questions, either substantive or methodological, which you are encouraged to raise in class. However, you are encouraged to constructively critique the assumptions, design, methods, and conclusions drawn in a particular study. The readings reflect multiple disciplinary perspectives, but are oriented toward a developmental science perspective and quantitative methods. We will discuss the implications of this in class.

Commentaries are due Friday at 12pm (noon) preceding the class. Commentaries should be written in Microsoft Word and included as attachments to an email to be sent to the instructor. Late submissions will not be read or distributed.

Students will be asked to submit at least one commentary every three weeks (Weeks 2-4; 5-7; 8-10). Sign-ups will be determined on the first day of class.

Research Paper (35%): The major paper assignment is a literature review of a topic focused on some aspect of low-income children's well-being. This assignment is designed to increase your knowledge about an aspect of child poverty and to use this information to evaluate the adequacy of existing policies and programs designed to redress the problem. It involves two components:

1. A critical analysis of existing research on a topic. You can choose to expand upon one of the topics discussed in class, or select another topic related to child poverty. Be sure to include a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the existing research, the major theoretical perspective taken, methodological considerations, and directions for future research.
2. A critical discussion of the relevant social policies, programs, and practices addressing your topic and assessment of the policies, programs, and practices' effectiveness. Be sure to include empirical evidence of the efficacy of policies and programs (i.e., if they have been evaluated) for improving family functioning and child outcomes.
3. Papers are to be written according to APA publications guidelines and should be a maximum of 15 pages in length (doubled spaced, 1" margins, minimum 12-point font), excluding references.

Timeline for paper completion & submission

- A PAPER COPY one-page description of your paper topic is due January 23 (Week 3).
- A PAPER COPY outline of your paper is due February 6th (Week 5).
- Round 1: A PAPER COPY Draft of your paper is due February 27th (Week 8). *
- Round 2: A PAPER COPY Draft of your paper is due March 6th (Week 9).*

*students will sign up to submit on one of these two days.

A PAPER COPY FINAL PAPER is due Thursday March 23rd by 3:00pm (Finals Week). Electronic copies will not be accepted.

SYLLABUS WK 1: JANUARY 9TH INTRODUCTION & ORIENTATION

Stiglitz (2012). America's 1 percent problem. The Price of Inequality. How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future (pp. 1-27). NY, NY: Norton & Co. [will be posted on website]

Stiglitz (2012). The way forward: Another world is possible. The Price of Inequality. How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future (pp. 265-290). NY, NY: Norton & Co. [will be posted on website]

Norton, M. I., & Ariely, D. (2011). Building a better America—One wealth quintile at a time. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6, 9-12.

UNICEF (June 2016). The State of the World's Children 2016: A fair chance for every child.

READ: Children and poverty: Breaking the vicious cycle (pp. 68-97).

https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_SOWC_2016.pdf

Aber, L., Morris, P., & Raver, C. (2012). Children, families and poverty: Definitions, trends, emerging science and implications for policy. *Social Policy Report*. 26(3). Society for Research in Child Development. [will be posted on website]

Weiland, C. and Yoshikawa, H. (2012), The effects of large-scale economic change and policies on children's developmental contexts and developmental outcomes. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6, 342–350.

WK 2: JANUARY 15TH NO CLASS – MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

WK 3: JANUARY 23RD INCOME POVERTY & CHILD DEVELOPMENT *****ONE-PAGE TOPIC STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE*****

Guest: Prof. Randall Akee (Public Policy)

Foster E.M. (2002). How economists think about family resources and child development. *Child Development*, 73, 1904– 1914.

Duncan, G. J., Ziol-Guest, K. M., & Kalil, A. (2010). Early childhood poverty and adult attainment, behavior and health, *Child Development*, 81, 306–325.

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Duncan, G., Morris, P., & Rodrigues, C. (2011). Does money really matter? Estimating impacts of family income on children's achievement with data from social policy experiments. *Developmental Psychology*, 47, 1263–1279.

Akee, K. Q., Copeland, W., Keeler, G., Angold, A., & Costello, J. (2010). Parents' incomes and children's outcomes: A quasi-experiment. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2, 86-115.

WK 4: JANUARY 30TH EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Guest: Prof. Jennie Grammer (Education – Human Development & Psychology)

Hackman, D. A., & Farah, M. J. (2009). Socioeconomic status and the developing brain. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 13, 65-73.

Thompson, R. A. (2014, Spring). Stress and child development. *The Future of Children*, 24, 4159.

Turkheimer, E., Haley, A., Waldron, M., D'Onofrio, B., & Gottesman, I. I. (2003). Socioeconomic status modifies heritability of IQ in young children. *Psychological Science*, 10, 623-628.

Noble K. G., et al. 2015. Family income, parental education and brain structure in children and adolescents. *Nature Neuroscience*. 18, 773–78.

Obradović, J., Portilla, X. A., & Ballard, P. J. (2016). Biological sensitivity to family income: Differential effects on early executive functioning. *Child development*, 87, 374–384.

Shonkoff, J. P., & Levitt, P. (2010). Neuroscience and the future of early childhood policy: Moving from why to what and how. *Neuron*, 67, 689-691.

Blair, C., & Raver, C. C. (2014). Closing the achievement gap through modification of neurocognitive and neuroendocrine function: Results from a cluster randomized controlled trial of an innovative approach to the education of children in kindergarten. *PloS one*, 9(11), e112393.

WK 5: FEBRUARY 6TH SOCIAL CLASS PERSPECTIVES *****OUTLINE OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE*****

Lareau, Annette (2011). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*, With an Update a Decade Later. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Cheadle, J. E., & Amato, P. R. (2011). A quantitative assessment of Lareau's qualitative conclusions about class, race, and parenting. *Journal of Family Issues*, 32, 679-706.

WK 6: FEBRUARY 13TH FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS PERSPECTIVES

McLoyd, V. C., Mistry, R. S., & Hardaway, C. (2014). Poverty and children's development: Familial processes as mediating influences. In Gershoff, Mistry, & Crosby (Co-Eds.), *Societal Contexts of Child Development: Pathways of Influence and Implication for Practice and Policy*. Oxford University Press. [will be posted on website]

Gershoff, E. T., Aber, J. L. Raver, C. C., & Lennon, M. C. (2007). Income is not enough: Incorporating material hardship into models of income association with parenting and child development. *Child Development*, 78, 70-95.

Chien, N. C. and Mistry, R. S. (2013), Geographic variations in cost of living: Associations with family and child well-being. *Child Development*, 84, 209–225.

Evans, G. W. and Kim, P. (2013), Childhood poverty, chronic stress, self-regulation, and coping. *Child Development Perspectives*, 7, 43–48.

Ellen, I., & Glied, S. (2015). Housing, neighborhoods, and children's health. *The Future of Children*, 25, 135-153.

Wadsworth, M.E., Santiago, C.D., Einhorn, L., Etter, E., Rienks, S., & Markman, H. J. (2011). Preliminary efficacy of an intervention to reduce psychosocial stress and improve coping in low-income families. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 48, 257-271.

WK 7: FEBRUARY 20TH NO CLASS – PRESIDENT'S DAY

WK 8: FEBRUARY 27TH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & INTERVENTION ***** ROUND 1: DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE*****

Shonkoff, J. P. (2011). Protecting brains, not simply stimulating minds. *Science*, 333, 982–983.

Campbell, F. A., Pungello, E. P., Miller-Johnson, S., Burchinal, M., & Ramey, C. T. (2001). The development of cognitive and academic abilities: Growth curves from an early childhood educational experiment. *Developmental Psychology*, 37, 231-242.

Ludwig, J., & Phillips, D. (2008). Long-term effects of Head Start on low-income children. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1136, 257–268.

Raver, C. C., Jones, S. M., Li-Grining, C. P., Zhai, F., Bub, K., & Pressler, E. (2011). CSRP's impact on low-income preschoolers' pre-academic skills: Self-regulation as a mediating mechanism. *Child Development*, 82, 362–378.

Raver, C. C., McCoy, D. C., Lowenstein, A. E., & Pess, R. A. (2013). Predicting individual differences in low-income children's executive control from early to middle childhood. *Developmental Science*, 16, 394-408.

Phillips, D., Austin, L. J. E., & Whitebook, M. (2016). The early care and education workforce. *The Future of Children*, 26, 139-158.

WK 9: MARCH 6TH EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY ***** ROUND 2: DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE*****

Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D.R., & Olson, L. S. (2001). Schools, achievement, and inequality: A seasonal perspective. *Educational Evaluation & Policy Analysis*, 23, 171-191.

Reardon, S. F. (2011). The widening academic achievement gap between the rich and the poor: New evidence and possible explanations. In R. Murnane & G. Duncan (Eds.), *Whither opportunity? Rising inequality and the uncertain life chances of low-income children* (pp. 91– 115). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation. [will be posted on website]

WK 10: MARCH 13TH STIGMA, STEREOTYPES, & ATTRIBUTIONS

Williams, W. R. (2009). Struggling with poverty: Implications for theory and policy of increasing research on social class-based stigma. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 9, 37–56.

Shutts, K, Brey, E. L., Dornbusch, L.A., Slywotzky, N., Olson, K.R. (2016). Children use wealth cues to evaluate others. *PLoS ONE* 11, 1-21.

Odgers C. L. (2015). Income inequality and the developing child: Is it all relative? *American Psychologist*, 70, 722–31.

Mistry, R. S., Brown, C. S., White, E. S., Chow, K. A. and Gillen-O'Neel, C. (2015). Elementary school children's reasoning about social class: A mixed-methods study. *Child Development*, 86, 1653–1671.

Croizet J. C, Claire T. (1998). Extending the concept of stereotype threat to social class: The intellectual underperformance of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin* 24, 588–94.

Godfrey, E. B. (2013). System justification, mental health, and behavior among disadvantaged mothers and their children. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 35, 382-395.

WK 11 (FINALS WEEK): MARCH 20TH CONNECTING SCIENCE TO POLICY & PRACTICE

*CHOOSE ONE:

*Duncan, G. J., Huston, A .C., & Weisner, T.S. (2007). *Higher Ground: New Hope for the Working Poor and Their Children*.

Gassman-Pines, A. & Hill, Z. (2013). How social safety net programs affect family economic well-being, family functioning, and children's development. *Child Development Perspectives*, 7, 172–181.

*Tough, P. (2009; paperback). *Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Question to Change Harlem and America*. Publisher: Mariner Books.