

ECONOMICS 399
ECONOMICS OF INEQUALITY
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
SPRING 2017

Instructor: Michael Jerman

Contact Information:

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Office Hours:

TBD TBD
TBD TBD

Course Description: Inequality is one of the most important issues facing today's world. In this class, we will analyze inequality from an economic perspective. We will begin by studying the various ways to measure inequality and the normative properties of various inequality measures. We will next explore the historical evolution of inequality, a topic that has received considerable attention since the publication of Thomas Piketty's famous book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. We will then move beyond income and analyze inequality along other dimensions, such as gender, race, and factors of production. Next, we will consider the real effects of inequality on health, mobility, growth, and other outcomes. Lastly, we will consider the future of inequality and the various policy interventions that have proposed to reduce it. At the end of this course, you will have an extensive understanding of what inequality is, the economic consequences of it, and how we might impact the current trends in inequality.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course. EC201 and EC202 are recommended, but not required.

Canvas: All announcements, assignments, readings, and grades will be will be posted on Canvas (canvas.uoregon.edu). This is the official website for the course, and you will be responsible for any and all information that is posted there. Therefore if you have any difficulties accessing Canvas it is imperative that you resolve them as quickly as possible by contacting the UO Libraries Computer Help Desk at (541) 346-1807.

Readings: There is no textbook for this course. Weekly readings will be posted on Canvas.

Attendance: Your grade will not formally depend on your attendance during the lectures, but you will be responsible for everything that is discussed in class. As a general rule you should NOT expect, slides, notes, or other materials to be made available outside of class.

Homework: TBD

Quizzes: TBD

Exams: TBD

No makeup exams will be given. If the midterm is missed due to a *documented* emergency the weight of the exam will be placed on final. An emergency that causes you to miss the final will result in an incomplete for the course.

Grades: Your grade will be calculated based on the following weights:

TBD

The *minimum* letter grade that you will receive based on your weighted total of points earned is given below:

TBD

Academic Integrity: You are expected to adhere to the university's Student Conduct Code, which is available at the following website:

<https://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode.aspx>

This code defines cheating as “any act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that the student has mastered information on an academic exercise that the student has not mastered.” At a minimum, cheating will result in an grade of “F” for the course.

Disabilities: Please notify me as soon as possible regarding any disability-related barriers to participation. Specific testing accommodations must be arranged at least one week prior to the midterm or final examinations. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at (541) 346-1155 or uoac@uoregon.edu.

Student Athletes: Accommodations based on conflicts with athletic schedules must be arranged at least one week prior to the date of conflict.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1 The theory of inequality.

Week 2 From theory to data. What do we measure, and how do we measure it?

Week 3 & 4 Top incomes and Piketty's *Capital*

Week 5 Beyond income: Capital and labor, gender, and race.

Week 6 & 7 The economic costs and benefits of inequality.

Week 8 Inequality between nations. Why are some countries rich and some countries poor?

Week 9 Inequality policy.

Week 10 Catchup and review.