Research Seminar on Stratification in the Modern World Economy: 1600-2014

Course: 240.460.02
Instructor: Dr. Sahan Savas Karatasli (skaratasli@jhu.edu)
Time: TH 1-3 pm
Where: 258 Mergenthaler
Limit: 15
Area: S (social science) and Q (quantitative)
Prerequisites: None
Office Hours: Sahan Savas Karatasli /T 10:00 am-12.00 noon/ Mergenthaler 258
Valentina Dallona /W 2-3pm/ Mergenthaler 258

Description:

This course examines stratification in the modern world economy from the 16th century to today, covering classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives as well as recent empirical studies on the hierarchical structure of the capitalist world economy (including Baranko Milanovic, Thomas Piketty, Andre Gunder Frank, Giovanni Arrighi, Christopher Chase-Dunn, P. Korzeniewicz and T. Moran, W. W. Rostow). The course will address key questions on the contemporary and historical conditions of world inequality such as has world income inequality been increasing or decreasing over time? Do we see stability or change in the hierarchical structure of the capitalist world economy? What are the consequences for contemporary rise of China and recent global financial meltdown for world income inequality? What might stratification in the world economy look like in the 21st century? Students will engage in a discussion of theories of global inequality and development, as well as learn how to recreate and extend some of these empirical studies as a part of their class activities. In doing so, this course will also discuss how methodological choices, research designs, choice of indicators and inequality measures affect the outcomes and conclusions of this research.

Grading

Class Participation: 25%
Collective Research Activities: 25%
Individual Research Activities: 25%
Final Report and Presentation: 25%

Attendance:

You are expected to attend every class. It is 5% of your grade. Moreover, after four absences, for each time you miss a class—for whatever reason—your final grade will be reduced by 0.2 (on a scale of 4). For example, if you miss more than four classes and you have a 3.6 (A-) average for your final grade, your final grade will drop to 3.4 (B+). Perfect attendance will be rewarded by increasing your grade by 0.2.
By week V, each student will choose a research paper topic based on the substantive theme of the seminar (e.g. global inequality in world history). Students will be presenting their papers as a presentation from Week 11 to Week 14. Final papers will be due the date of the final exams announced by the Registrar’s Office.

- Course Schedule -

**Module 1: Current Theoretical, Methodological Debates About Global Income Inequality**

**Week 1 (TH 1/29)**


**Week 2 (TH 2/5)**

Milanovic, Branko. 2005. Worlds Apart: Measuring International and Global Inequality. Princeton: Princeton University Press Ch.1-2 (pp7-19), Ch.4 (pp.31-44), Ch.8 (pp.85-100), Ch.11 (pp. 139-148) [55 pages]


**Week 3 (TH 2/12)**


Korzeniewicz and Moran. 2009. Unveiling Inequality. Ch.4, pp60-88 [29 pages]


Recommended:


In Class Research Activity:

- Learning How to Calculate Global Gini using Maddison GDP and population estimates from 1600 to present.
- Comparison of the Changes in World Gini from 1600 to present weighted by population and unweighted by population.
- Comparison of the Changes in World Gini from 1600 to present including and excluding China

Week 4 (TH 2/19)


In Class Research Activity:

- Learning How to Calculate Global Inequality using Theil's T (entropy index) using Maddison GDP and population estimates from 1600 to present.
- Comparison of the Changes in Global Inequality using Theil's T (entropy index) from 1600 to present weighted by population and unweighted by population.
- Comparison of the Changes in Global Inequality using Theil’s T (entropy index) from 1600 to present including and excluding China
Module 2: Perspectives on Trimodal Distribution of World Income Hierarchy

**Week 5 (TH 2/26)**


**Recommended:**


**In Class Research Activity:**
- Replication of Arrighi/Drangel method using their own data.

**Week 6 (TH 3/5)**


**In Class Research Activity:**
- Extension of Arrighi/Drangel method using Maddison data and the most current estimates by World Bank.

**Week 7 (3/12)**


**In Class Research Activity:**
- Using polynomial regression analysis to estimate zones of world economy

**Week 8: Spring Break**
**TH 3/19** NO CLASS

**Week 9 (TH 3/26)**


**In Class Research Activity:**
- Learning Multiple-Network Analysis and Blockmodeling

**Week 10 (TH 4/2)**


Module 3: Modernization, Dependency and World-Systems: Revisiting the Debates

Week 11 (TH 4/9)


In Class Research Activity:
• Student presentations and discussion

Week 12 (TH 4/16)


In Class Research Activity:
• Student presentations and discussion

Week 13 (TH 4/23)


**In Class Research Activity:**
- Student presentations and discussion

**Week 14 (TH 4/30)**


Final Discussion