

Class in the United States

Fall Quarter, 2009 and Winter Quarter 2010

8 Quarter Hours Credit per quarter

Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Seminar II A1105

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What are we talking about when we talk about "class"? Are there identifiable social classes in the US? Or were there in the past? How fixed or how fluid is our society in terms of who has wealth or power? Are we a middle class society? What relationships exist among class, race and gender? How do you look at numbers that describe wealth and population groups and decide what kind of story the statistics tell?

This program will use the tools of sociology and statistics to look at these and other questions. We'll study theories that attempt to define or explain the phenomenon of social class and read works by authors who study a particular class or class-related phenomenon.

Students will gain a working knowledge of basic statistical methods and learn to apply them to demographic and economic statistics, in order to critique an argument, test a thesis, or advocate a position. In the fall, we'll work with existing economic and demographic data sets. Later, students will design and administer a survey with questions of value to the college. Class time will usually include two hours of hands-on computer work using Excel, as well as book seminars, films, lectures and workshops. Credit will be awarded in sociology, research methods, and statistics. Important note: This program is designed as a two-quarter program. Students are strongly encouraged to attend both quarters. Students registered for Fall only will get 4 credits in sociology, 2 in research methods, and 2 in statistics. Students who complete both Fall and Winter quarters successfully will get 8 credits in sociology and 8 in statistics.

Fall books:

Class Matters (The New York Times series on social class from 2004-5), Times Books, 2005

Class: A Guide Through the American Status System, by Paul Fussell, Touchstone Books, 1992

The Power Elite, by C. Wright Mills, 1956, Oxford University Press edition, 2000

Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class, by Barbara Ehrenreich, HarperCollins, 1990

The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret, by Michael Zweig, Cornell, 2000

How to Conduct Surveys; A Step by Step Guide, by Arlene Fink, Sage Press, 2008

Statistics for Dummies, by Deborah Rumsey, 2003.

Fall Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Reading completed</u>	<u>What's due?</u>
Week One: October 3	Workshop: Class: knowledge and belief. Introduction to statistics. Draft articles of class constitution and introduction to class Moodle site.		A current Evergreen ID/library card. Get one today, if you don't have it.
Week Two: October 10	Ratify constitution. Film: <i>People Like Us</i> . Seminar on <u>Class</u> . Lecture: Introduction to stratification. Lecture/workshop on survey/statistics basics.	<u>Class</u> , Fussell Surveys, Ch. 1 Stats, Intro, Ch.1	Make sure you own or can borrow a scientific calculator. A draft of your paper on <u>Class</u> .*
Week Three: October 17	Seminar on <u>Class Matters</u> . Lecture/workshop on specifics of surveys and statistics. Excel Lab 1 on data entry and formatting.	<u>Class Matters</u> through Chapter 8 Surveys, Ch. 2 Stats, Ch. 3, 16	Second draft of your paper, incorporating <u>Class Matters</u> . (don't turn in).
Week Four: October 24	Seminar on <u>Class Matters</u> . Lecture/workshop on visual representations of quantitative information. Staff panel on class at Evergreen and data that would be helpful. Survey questions and issues.	<u>Class Matters</u> (finish) Surveys, Ch. 3 Stats, Ch. 4, 17, 20	Paper on <u>Class</u> and <u>Class Matters</u> . Excel Lab 1
Week Five: October 31	Seminar on first part of <u>The Power Elite</u> . Lecture/workshop on measures of center/variation and sampling. Excel Lab 2 on charting. Library workshop: How a book is built.	<u>The Power Elite</u> through Chapter 7. Surveys, Ch. 4 Stats, Ch. 5	Typed notes on the Power Elite.
Week Six: November 7	Seminar on <u>The Power Elite</u> . Lecture/workshop on probability. Work on survey questions.	<u>The Power Elite</u> (finish) Stats, Ch. 6	Essay including <u>The Power Elite</u> . Excel Lab 2
Week Seven: November 14	Seminar on <u>Fear of Falling</u> . Lecture/workshop on probability distributions. Excel Lab 3 on charting/histograms and functions. Test and refine survey questions	<u>Fear of Falling</u> through Chapter 3 Stats, Ch. 7	Typed notes on Fear of Falling.
Week Eight: November 21	Seminar on <u>Fear of Falling</u> . Lecture/workshop on the normal distribution. More work on survey questions.	Finish <u>Fear of Falling</u> Stats, Ch. 8, 9	Essay including <u>Fear of Falling</u> . Excel Lab 3
November 28	NO CLASS CLASS! THANKSGIVING BREAK	Start reading <u>The Working Class</u>	

		<u>Majority.</u>	
Week Nine: December 5	Seminar on <u>The Working Class Majority</u> . Lecture/workshop on confidence intervals. Excel Lab 4 on normal analysis. Lecture on the poverty line, poverty measures, and the minimum wage. Film: <i>Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class</i> .	<u>The Working Class Majority</u> . Stats, Ch. 10 - 12	Typed notes on The Working Class Majority.
Week Ten: December 12	Continue working with confidence intervals. Plans and projects for next quarter. Final survey preparation for next quarter.	Stats, Ch. 13	Final paper including <u>The Working Class Majority</u> ; Portfolios and draft self evaluation Excel Lab 4
Evaluation Week	Student/faculty evaluations by appointment		Faculty evaluation, Final draft of self evaluation.

Winter Books:

Black Wealth, White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality, by Melvin L. Oliver, Thomas M. Shapiro, Routledge, 10th Anniversary edition, 2006

Inequality: Classic Readings in Race, Class, and Gender, edited by Grusky and Szelenyi, Westview, 2006

What's the Matter With Kansas? By Thomas Frank, Holt, 2004

How to Conduct Surveys; A Step by Step Guide, by Arlene Fink, Sage Press, 2008

Statistics for Dummies, by Deborah Rumsey, 2003.

Winter Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Reading completed</u>	<u>What's due?</u>
Week One: January 9	Workshop: the class structure in the U.S. Review class constitution and introduction to class Moodle site. Taking the survey and plans for administering the survey.	Zweig, The Working Class Majority, Chapter 1 and stats and survey reading (above) for new students	A current Evergreen ID/library card. Get one today, if you don't have it.
Week Two: January 16	Film: <i>Race: the Power of an Illusion, part III</i> . Seminar on <u>Black Wealth/White Wealth</u> , through Chapter 4. Survey administration.	<u>Black Wealth/White Wealth</u> , through Chapter 4. Stats, Chapter 8	Typed/handwritten notes on Black Wealth/White Wealth
Week Three: January 23	Seminar on <u>Black Wealth/White Wealth</u> . Statistics Lab on data entry and formatting. Film: The	<u>Black Wealth/White Wealth</u> , finish. Stats, Chapter 10	Paper on Black Wealth/White Wealth

	First Measured Century, part I		
Week Four: January 30	Seminar on theories of inequality and how they apply to what we know so far. Statistics Lab in CAL.	<u>Inequality</u> : articles by Davis/Moore, Tumin, Massey/Denton, Bonacich, and Wilson Surveys, Chapter 6 Stats, Chapter 12	Typed notes on Inequality readings.
Week Five: February 6	Seminar on <u>Inequality</u> articles. Survey data entry. Film: The First Measured Century, part II	<u>Inequality</u> : articles by Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Parsons, and Mills. Stats, Chapter 13	Seminar paper. Apply one of the theories of class in the Inequality book to facts from BlackWealth/WW.
Week Six: February 13	No regular class meeting. Presidents' Day weekend.	Start on next week's readings.	Special event: Film at the Capitol Theater, sponsored by our program: <i>The Philosopher Kings</i> .
Week Seven: February 20	Seminar on <u>Inequality</u> . Data entry and analysis on survey. Film: The First Measured Century, part III.	<u>Inequality</u> : articles by Portes/Manning, Hartmann, and Bordieu (both). Stats, Chapters 14, 15	Typed notes on Inequality readings.
Week Eight: February 27.	Seminar on <u>What's the Matter With Kansas?</u> Survey analysis	<u>What's the Matter With Kansas</u> , through Chapter 5. Stats, Chapter 18, Surveys, chapter 7.	
Week Nine: March 6	Seminar on <u>What's the Matter With Kansas?</u> Survey data analysis. Excel Lab 4 on normal analysis.	<u>What's the Matter With Kansas</u> , finish.	Seminar paper. What would one of the theorists in <u>Inequality</u> have to say about Frank's work?
Week Ten: March 13	Presenting our survey results and potluck		Portfolios and draft self evaluation
Evaluation Week	Student/faculty evaluations by appointment		Faculty evaluation, Final draft of self evaluation.

If you are enrolled in *Academic Writing: Exploring Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approaches* or *Class and Education: Reading, Writing, and Rising Up*, you may work on the same piece of writing for both this class and our program, but you must include arguments and evidence from the texts from both classes.

Important note about the survey: On at least two Saturdays, we will get out of class early, to make up for some time that each student will spend going to other Evergreen classes and administering the survey. Everyone should plan to administer the survey at least once during evening/weekend classes or during day classes. It is your responsibility to keep the appointments for the survey; faculty will not be there as backup.

Assignment for Survey Analysis Groups:

You will choose a broad category of survey questions to analyze, based on your own interests. For instance, you might choose “How race, gender, or sexual orientation relate to class” or “veterans at Evergreen,” or another broad question. Then, you’ll decide which questions best inform your understanding of that issue and analyze those questions. Your product will be a presentation, and a written report, which includes:

1. Your calculations of at least one confidence interval on a question, at least one hypothesis test (See Lab 1 and the hypothesis test handouts).
2. At least one graph of your data, preferably more.
3. A narrative of a minimum of three pages about your topic. This will include a clear description of the general topic as it relates to social class. It must include references, correctly cited, to at least two of the texts that we’ve studied over the last two quarters. Your narrative must verbally explain what your data say. It should be printed in 8 1/2 x 11” format.

Your group will present your report, with every member participating, at the final class and teach the rest of the class about your topic. At that time, you may choose to use powerpoint for your graphs or charts.

You will put your group’s report in your individual portfolio. Also, in the portfolio, you will include a minimum one sentence description *and* evaluation of each of the group’s members’ contributions to the project, including your own.

Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate:

- Articulate and assume responsibility for your own work.
- Participate collaboratively and responsibly in our diverse society.
- Communicate creatively and effectively.
- Demonstrate integrative, independent, critical thinking.
- Apply qualitative, quantitative and creative modes of inquiry appropriately to practical and theoretical problems across disciplines.
- As a culmination of your education, demonstrate depth, breadth and synthesis of learning and the ability to reflect on the personal and social significance of that learning.