This course reviews classical and contemporary approaches to understanding the differential distribution of valued goods and the social processes by which such inequality comes to be seen as legitimate, natural, or desirable. Although egalitarian values are a fundamental feature of postmodernity, these values exist in tension not only with massive departures from perfect equality but also with historic and unprecedented increases, at least in some domains, in the extent of these departures. Moreover, the processes that generate and maintain inequality appear to be changing, as are the consequences of inequality for lifestyles, consumption practices, and life chances. The foregoing changes invite fresh study of the structure of social inequality and how it varies by time and place. We will be discussing questions and issues of the following kind:

(a) What are the major forms of stratification in human history? Is inequality an inevitable feature of human life?
(b) How many social classes are there? What are the principal “fault lines” or social cleavages that define the class structure? Are these cleavages strengthening or weakening with the transition to advanced industrialism?
(c) How frequently do individuals cross occupational or class boundaries? Are educational degrees, social contacts, or “individual luck” increasingly important forces in matching individuals to jobs and class positions?
(d) How are the lifestyles, attitudes, and personalities of individuals shaped by their class locations? Are there identifiable “class cultures” in past and present societies?
(e) What types of social processes and state policies serve to maintain or alter racial, ethnic, and sex discrimination in labor markets? Have these forms of discrimination weakened or strengthened with the transition to advanced industrialism?
(f) Will stratification systems take on new and distinctive forms in the future? Are the stratification systems of modern societies gradually shedding their distinctive features and converging towards some generic post-industrial or postmodern regime?

The twofold objective of this course is to review contemporary theorizing and research on these issues and to identify areas in which new theories, hypotheses, and research agendas might be fruitfully developed. In our class meetings, we will therefore lead off by reviewing the existing literature in the field, but then turn to discussions of how that literature might be advanced.
through new research projects.

Exams: Each of the four main units of the course will conclude with a take-home and open-book exam. The completed exams (approx. 4 double-spaced pages) will be due on Friday (no later than 5pm) following the last Tuesday of each unit. (However, because the fourth unit of the course concludes immediately before Thanksgiving break, the fourth exam will not be due until the following Tuesday.) A comprehensive exam (approx. 12 double-spaced pages), which satisfies the sociology department’s requirements for an A-exam in social stratification, will be distributed on the last day of the course (Tuesday, December 3), and will be due on Monday, December 16 (no later than 5pm).

Grades: The course grades will be based on three components: (a) exams for each unit (15% each), (b) the end-of-term exam (30%), and (c) active participation in seminar discussion and debate (10%).

Public Lectures: The Center for the Study of Inequality will be hosting lectures throughout the semester that may be of interest to seminar participants. The dates and locations of these lectures will be announced in class and on the Center’s website (www.inequality.com).

The course readings will be drawn from five sources:

5. A supplementary course reader.

The first four books are available at the Cornell Campus Store and all other usual outlets. The course reader is available for purchase at KC Copy Center (118 Dryden Road in collegetown).
Week 1: Introductory Comments
Tuesday, September 3, 2002 – Grusky and Morgan

PART I – Foundations of Inequality, Class Analysis, and Social Mobility

Week 2: Forms and Sources of Stratification
Tuesday, September 10, 2002 – Grusky

David B. Grusky, “The Past, Present, and Future of Social Inequality” (NOTE: It will suffice to skim this article to gain some sense of the field.)
Gøsta Esping-Andersen, “Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies”
Kingsley Davis & Wilbert E. Moore, “Some Principles of Stratification”
Claude S. Fischer, Michael Hout, Martín Sánchez Jankowski, Samuel R. Lucas, Ann Swidler, & Kim Voss, “Inequality by Design”
Gerhard Lenski, “New Light on Old Issues: The Relevance of ‘Really Existing Socialist Societies’ for Stratification Theory”

Week 3: Social Class
Tuesday, September 17, 2002 – Grusky

Karl Marx, “Alienation and Social Classes,” “Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism,”
“Ideology and Class,” “Value and Surplus Value”
Ralf Dahrendorf, “Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society”
Jan Pakulski & Malcolm Waters, “The Death of Class”
Anthony Giddens, “The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies”
Frank Parkin, “Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique”
David B. Grusky & Jesper B. Sørensen, “Are There Big Social Classes?”
Gaetano Mosca, “The Ruling Class”
C. Wright Mills, “The Power Elite”
Anthony Giddens, “Elites and Power”
Peter M. Blau & Otis Dudley Duncan (with the collaboration of Andrea Tyree), “Measuring the Status of Occupations”
Donald J. Treiman, “Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective”
John H. Goldthorpe & Keith Hope, “Occupational Grading and Occupational Prestige”
David L. Featherman & Robert M. Hauser, “Prestige or Socioeconomic Scales in the Study of Occupational Achievement?”
Robert W. Hodge, “The Measurement of Occupational Status”
Aage B. Sørensen, “The Basic Concepts of Stratification Research: Class, Status, and Power”

Additional readings:
Emile Durkheim, “The Division of Labor in Society”
Immanuel Wallerstein, “Class Conflict in the Capitalist World Economy”
Edward A. Shils, The Political Class in the Age of Mass Society: Collectivistic Liberalism and Social Democracy”
Michael Useem, “The Inner Circle”
Gil Eyal, Iván Szelényi, & Eleanor Townsley, “Post-Communist Managerialism”
W. Lloyd Warner, with Marchia Meeker & Kenneth Eells, “Social Class in America”
Edward Shils, “Deference”

**Week 4: Social Mobility**
Tuesday, September 24, 2002 – Grusky
Exam #1 Distributed: Due 5pm, Friday, September 27

Ralph H. Turner, “Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System”
David L. Featherman & Robert M. Hauser, “A Refined Model of Occupational Mobility”
David B. Grusky & Robert M. Hauser, “Comparative Social Mobility Revisited: Models of Convergence and Divergence in 16 Countries”
Robert Erikson & John H. Goldthorpe, “Trends in Class Mobility: The Post-War European Experience”
Peter Gottschalk, “Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts”
Peter Gottschalk, Sara McLanahan, & Gary D. Sandefur, “The Dynamics and Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty and Welfare Participation”
Robert D. Mare, “Observations on the Study of Social Mobility and Inequality”

Additional readings:
Pitirim A. Sorokin, “Social and Cultural Mobility”
Seymour Martin Lipset, Reinhard Bendix, & Hans L. Zetterberg, “Social Mobility in Industrial Society”
John Allen Logan, “Rational Choice and the TSL Model of Occupational Opportunity”
PART II – Education, Changes in Labor Market Inequality, and Meritocracy

Week 5: Sociological Models of Educational Attainment
Tuesday, October 1, 2002 – Morgan


Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan (with the collaboration of Andrea Tyree), “The Process of Stratification”


Richard Breen and John H. Goldthorpe, “Explaining Educational Differentials: Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory” (reread)

Additional reading:


**Week 6 : Human Capital Theory and Elementary Labor Economics**  
Tuesday, October 8, 2002 – Morgan


Polacheck, Solomon. W. and W. Stanley. Siebert. 1993. *The Economics of Earnings.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 1 through 4, pages 1-95) (In course reader) (NOTE: Seminar participants without any background in economics may find Chapters 2, 8, 9 of the Ehrenberg and Smith textbook, which is listed below in the additional readings and which is on reserve in many Cornell libraries, to be a useful preliminary treatment of the same basic topics.)

Additional reading:


**Fall Break**  
No class on Tuesday, October 15

**Week 7: Changes in Inequality (and the Rise of a Meritocracy?)**  
Tuesday, October 22, 2002 – Morgan  
Exam #2 Distributed: Due 5pm, Friday, October 25

Martina Morris and Bruce Western, “Inequality in Earnings: Trends and Implications”  


Additional reading:


**PART III – Gender Inequality**

**Week 8: Occupational Sex Segregation**

Tuesday, October 29, 2002 – Grusky

David B. Grusky & Maria Charles, “Is There a Worldwide Sex Segregation Regime?”

William T. Bielby, “The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation”

Jerry A. Jacobs, “Revolving Doors: Sex Segregation and Women’s Careers”

Barbara F. Reskin, “Labor Markets as Queues: A Structural Approach to Changing Occupational Sex Composition”

Additional reading:

Shulamith Firestone, “The Dialectic of Sex”

Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union”

Week 9: The Gender Gap in Wages
Tuesday, November 5, 2002 – Grusky
Exam #3 Distributed: Due 5pm, Friday, November 8

Trond Petersen & Laurie A. Morgan, “The Within-Job Gender Wage Gap”
Margaret Mooney Marini & Pi-Ling Fan, “The Gender Gap in Earnings at Career Entry”
Barbara Stanek Kilbourne, Paula England, George Farkas, Kurt Beron, & Dorothea Weir
   “Returns to Skill, Compensating Differentials, and Gender Bias: Effects of Occupational
   Characteristics on the Wages of White Women and Men”
Tony Tam, “Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less?”
Stanley Lieberson, “Understanding Ascriptive Stratification: Some Issues and Principles”

PART IV – Racial Inequality

Week 10: Classic Perspectives on Racial Inequality
Tuesday, November 12, 2002 – Morgan

Stanley Lieberson, “A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and White Immigrants Since 1880”

Additional reading:
Michael J. Piore, “The Dual Labor Market: Theory and Implications”
Aage B. Sørensen and Arne L. Kalleberg, “An Outline of a Theory of the Matching of Persons to Jobs”
Week 11: Racial Inequality from the 1970s to the 1990s
Tuesday, November 19, 2002 – Morgan


Wilson, William Julius. 1987. The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1 and 2, pages 3-62) (In course reader)


Additional reading:


Week 12: New Perspectives on Race and Inequality
Tuesday, November 26, 2002 – Morgan

Exam #4 Distributed: Due 5pm, Tuesday, December 3


Mary C. Waters, “Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities”


William Julius Wilson, “Jobless Poverty: A New Form of Social Dislocation”


Additional readings:

PART V – The Future of Stratification

Week 13: The Future of Stratification
Tuesday, December 3, 2002 – Grusky
Final Exam Distributed: Due 5pm, Monday, December 16

Clark Kerr, John T. Dunlop, Frederick H. Harbison, & Charles A. Myers, “Industrialism and Industrial Man”
Daniel Bell, “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society”
Alvin W. Gouldner, “The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class”
Gøsta Esping-Andersen, “Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies” (reread)
Victor Nee, “Postsocialist Stratification”
Gil Eyal, Iván Szelenyi, & Eleanor Townsley, “Making Capitalism without Capitalists”
Stuart Hall, “The Meaning of New Times”
Jan Pakulski & Malcolm Waters, “The Death of Class” (reread)
Martina Morris & Bruce Western, “Inequality in Earnings: Trends and Implications” (reread)