This course will explore contemporary sociological approaches in the study of social inequality. The enduring structure and reproduction of inequalities along axes of class, race and gender are core problems of sociology. This seminar will examine these issues by first considering various theoretical issues utilized by scholars in the field. We will then examine how different thinkers have implemented these theories and concepts in a variety of innovative case studies.

Required Readings:

- Sherman, Rachel, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels*
- Katznelson, Ira, *When Affirmative Action Was White: The Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America*
- Kimmel, Michael, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*

Course Requirements:

1. Come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and offer constructive/critical comments on the course materials. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will count against your final grade.
2. There will be one long research paper (20-23 pages). The instructor must approve the topic. The paper will make up 60 percent of your final grade.
3. You are required to bring a one-page response essay to the readings to class each week. You will be graded on your in-class participation and your comprehension of the course materials. Your in-class participation will make up 40 percent of your final grade.

Week 1) Introduction
Feb 7: Basic Concepts

Week 2) Understanding Class
Week 3) Stratification and the New Social Order  
Feb 21: B. Western, “Mass Imprisonment and Economic Inequality” in Social Research (on blackboard)  

Week 4) The Winner Takes All Society  
Feb 28: J. Hacker & P. Pierson, Winner-Take-All Politics, chapters 1-8  

Week 5) Class, Inequality and the Workplace  
March 7: R. Sherman, Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels, whole book  

Week 6) What is Race?  
March 14: S. Cornell and D. Hartmann, “A Constructionist Approach to Ethnicity and Race” (blackboard)  
H. Blumer, “Race Prejudice as Sense of Group Position” (blackboard)  
H. Gans “Race as Class” (blackboard)  

Week 7) Ascriptive Hierarchies  
March 21: A. Gross, What Blood Won’t Tell, chapters 1-4 & 7-8  

March 28: Spring Break  

Week 8) Race and Public Policy  
April 4: I. Katznelson, When Affirmative Action Was White: The Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America, whole book  

Week 9) Post-Racial America?  
April 11: J. Lee and F. Bean “Beyond Black and White” (blackboard)  
R. Smith and D. King “Barack Obama and the Future of American Racial Politics” (blackboard)  

Week 10) The Social Construction of Gender  
April 18: M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, The Gendered Society, parts 1 (ps. 9-48) & 4 (ps. 165-236)  

Week 11) Gendered Institutions  
April 25: M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, The Gendered Society, parts 5, 8, 9 (ps. 237-296, 387-500)  

Week 12) Making and Remaking Masculinity  
May 2: M. Kimmel, Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men, whole book  

Week 13) Reproducing Gender Hierarchies  
May 9: A. Lareau, “Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black and White Families” (blackboard)  
M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, The Gendered Society Reader, part 12 (ps. 605-639)  

May 16: Final Paper: Due Date TBA
**Honor Code:** This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html).