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 and methodological issues in the field. We will then examine how different thinkers have implemented of these theories and concepts through a variety of innovative case studies.

**Required Readings:**

- Martin, Isaac: *Rich People’s Movements: Grassroots Campaigns to Untax the One Percent*
- Armstrong, Elizabeth: *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality*
- Skrentny, John: *After Civil Rights: Racial Realism in the New American Workplace*
- Roithmayr, Daria: *Reproducing Racism: How Everyday Choices Lock in White Advantage*
- Dean, James: *Straights: Heterosexuality in a Post-Closeted Culture*
- Schilt, Kristen: *Just One of the Guys: Transgender Men and the Persistence of Inequality*

**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 (20-25 pages). The instructor must approve the topic. The paper will make up 75 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 25 percent of your final grade.

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**Week 1) Introduction**
Feb 2: Why Inequality Matters

**Week 2) Understanding Social Class**

Week 3) Stratification and the New Social Order
Feb 16: B. Western, “Mass Imprisonment and Economic Inequality,” in *Social Research*, pp. 509-532

Week 4) How the Ruling Class Rules

Week 5) Class, Status, and Culture

Week 6) Racial Formations
R. Baldoz, “Get Rid of All Filipinos or We’ll Burn this Town Down: Racial Revanchism and the Contested Color Line in the Interwar West” in R. Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America*, ps. 113-155

Week 7) Redrawing the Color Line

March 23: **Spring Break**

Week 8) Managing Racial Boundaries

Week 9) Post-Racialism?

Week 10) Gendered Axes of Power
T. Meadow, “A Rose is a Rose: On Producing Legal Gender Classification” *Gender and Society*, 2010, 814-837

Week 11) Gender Frames
N. Fraser, “From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a Post-Socialist Age” in N. Fraser, *Justice Interruptus* ps. 11-40

**Week 12) Making and Remaking Gendered Inequalities**  

**Week 13) The New Gender Order**  
May 4: J Dean, *Straights*, whole book

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).