



Nanchang University
ECON342: Poverty and Inequality
(Last Updated in Jan. 2025)

Credit: 4

Contact Hours

This course is composed of 24 lecture sessions, 3 tutorial sessions and 9 office contact hours. Each lecture session takes 2 contact hours in length; each tutorial session takes 3 contact hours in length; There will be a Q-A review session (3 contact hours) and Final Exam (3 contact hours) at the end of this term. This course has 72 contact hours in total.

Course Description

This is a course dedicated to an in-depth study of poverty and inequality. It will examine how poverty and inequality are measured, consider the underlying causes of poverty/inequality, consequences of poverty/inequality. It also examines theories of the culture of poverty, social stratification and discrimination, economic and family structure drivers as well as institutional causes of poverty such as education and incarceration. The aim for students is to come away with an understanding of recent historical trends in terms of thinking about poverty and its causes as well as improve research, writing and presentation skills.

Note: This Syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.

Required Textbook

1. *The Haves and Have-Nots: A Brief and Idiosyncratic History of Global Inequality* Basic Books by Branko Milanovic.
2. *Brand Aid: Shopping Well to Save the World* by Lisa Ann Richey & Stefano Ponte.
3. *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty* Public Affairs by Abhijit Banerjee & Esther Duflo.
4. *Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought And Activism Through Seven Lives In India* by Richa Nagar & the Sangtin Writers 2006.

Grading

•Participation	5%
•Paper	15%
•Assignment	20%
•Midterm	25%



A+ 96-100	A 90-95	A- 85-89
B+ 82-84	B 78-81	B- 75-77
C+ 71-74	C 66-70	C- 62-65
D 60-61	F < 60	

Course Schedule

The course has 24 class sessions in total. All sessions are 2 contact hours in length. At the end of this term, there will be a Q-A review session(3 contact hours) and Final Exam (3 contact hours).

Note: the course outline and required readings are subject to change.

Class 1:

Introduction to the course and syllabus

Class 2:

Measuring Poverty

Class 3:

Trends and Characteristics of Poverty, Working Poor, Chronic Poverty

Class 4:

Measuring Inequality

Class 5:

Trends in Inequality (Income and Wealth)

Class 6:

Intergenerational Mobility I

Class 7:

Intergenerational mobility II

Class 8:

Culture of Poverty

Class 9:

Social Stratification: Discrimination I

Class 10:

Social Stratification: Discrimination II



Class 11:
Racial Gap I

Class 12:
Racial Gap II

Class 13:
Midterm Review

Class 14:
Education I

Class 15:
Education II

Class 16:
Family Structure as a Cause of Poverty

Class 17:
Economic Drivers–Work and Wages

Class 18:
Gender Gap I

Class 19:
Gender Gap II

Class 20:
Crime and Incarceration

Class 21:
Incarceration Effects on Employment and Families

Class 22:
Immigration

Class 23:
Paper Presentation

Class 24:
Final Review

Attending Policy

Regular and prompt attendance is required. Under ordinary circumstances, you may miss two



times without penalty. Each absence over this number will lower your course grade by a third of a letter and missing more than five classes may lead to a failing grade in the course. Arriving late and/or leaving before the end of the class period are equivalent to absences.

Policy on “Late Withdrawals”

In accordance with university policy, appeals for late withdrawal will be approved **ONLY** in case of medical emergency and similar crises.

Academic Honesty

Nanchang University expects all students to do their own work. Instructors will fail assignments that show evidence of plagiarism or other forms of cheating, and will also report the student's name to the University administration. A student reported to the University for cheating is placed on disciplinary probation; a student reported twice is suspended or expelled.

General Expectations:

Students are expected to:

- Attend all classes and be responsible for all materials covered in class and otherwise assigned;
- Complete the day's required reading and assignments before class;
- Review the previous day's notes before class and make notes about questions you have about the previous class or the day's reading;
- Participate in class discussions and complete required written work on time;
- Refrain from texting, phoning or engaging in computer activities unrelated to class during the class period;
- While class participation is welcome, even required, you are expected to refrain from private conversations during the class period.

Special Needs or Assistance

Please contact the Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material. Our goal is to help you learn, not to penalize you for issues which mask your learning.