UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER THE ECONOMICS OF INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION ECON 4626 ONLINE SYLLABUS, SUMMER 2020

INSTRUCTOR: PROF. JEFFREY S. ZAX

Email zax@colorado.edu

Mobile

• This is my cell phone number. Call or text anytime between 10am – 8pm MDT. If I don't respond, leave a message indicating times at which it would be convenient for you to receive a reply and I will get in touch.

Office Hours

• Online Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-3:30 pm using Zoom

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Jeffrey S. Zax, PhD, Harvard University, 1984, has been a professor at the University of Colorado Boulder since 1990. He currently teaches upper-level undergraduate electives in inequality and in public policy. His research interests are in labor economics, urban economics, and public economics. He has published papers on the effects of residential segregation on black labor market behavior; the relationship between the structure of the local government hierarchy and the size of the local government sector, the effects of IQ and high school effort on income, microeconomic activity in China, the economic effects of local public sector unions, and the effects of regulation on the rate of unionization. He is currently studying inequality in the United States, inequality and housing in China and the economic implications of names.

TERM START: June 1, 2020 TERM END: July 24, 2020

COURSE WEBSITE

Canvas is our class website:

- Login using your University of Colorado Boulder identikey and password https://canvas.colorado.edu/
- Under Course List, click "ECON 4626-581: Econ/Inequal/Discrimination"
- Note: all email correspondence will be through your CU Boulder email address.
 - Do not use the Canvas email or messages. I do not monitor these facilities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

From General Catalog: Examines the unique insights available through economic analysis regarding the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of inequality and discrimination. Examines the extent of inequality, the varieties and extents of discrimination, and explores the economic models that suggest explanations.

The purpose of this course is to investigate the extent of inequality, its causes and its consequences. This investigation occurs at both the macroeconomic and microeconomic levels. At the macroeconomic level, we discuss the relationship between inequality and growth and the effects of different national institutions on this relationship. At the

microeconomic level, we discuss inequality in multiple dimensions. We analyze the individual choices from which and economic contexts in which it arises. We complete this discussion with an examination of discrimination: inequality that arises when disadvantages are imposed through coercive denial of market opportunities.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Requires prerequisite course of ECON 3070 (Intermediate Microeconomic Theory) (min grade C-)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Interpret measures of inequality including Lorenz curves and Gini coefficients.
- Utilize the intuition that motivates the Kuznets curve to understand the relationship between inequality and economic growth
- Analyze the effects of economic institutions on economic growth and inequality.
- Understand the sources of inequality in income, health and wealth.
- Invoke the normative and positive approaches to evaluating inequality.
- Identify sources of discriminatory behavior and the potential magnitudes of their consequences.
- Apply microeconomic and macroeconomic concepts of distribution to critically analyze economic situations as presented in case studies.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Course Website: <u>https://canvas.colorado.edu/</u> (Canvas) Grades and all readings will be posted on Canvas. Please check Canvas frequently for any relevant notifications/changes that may occur throughout the course. **Required readings** consist of articles from the <u>Journal of Economic Perspectives</u>, available from the University of Colorado Boulder Library. The specific articles required for this have been posted in Canvas, for student convenience.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY AND DELIVERY

This course is delivered via distance education format using the CU Canvas system. This format will use a combination of readings, online discussion, and other web-based resources. You will interact with the instructor and other students using the communication functions provided by Canvas. You will submit assignments in accordance with the course outline using Canvas.

COURSE PRESENTATION AND PROCEDURES

This course will cover five major topic areas over the eight weeks during which we meet. Each week will consist of five days of course content. That content will be comprised of readings, PowerPoint lectures, graded discussion questions, two examinations and two term papers.

- You will be required to participate in activities in the order in which they are presented. You will not be able to skip ahead.
- To provide for flexibility while maintain the course pace,
 - \circ assignments presented on Monday and Tuesday will have a final due date on Wednesday
 - o assignments presented on Wednesday and Thursday will have a final due date on Friday
 - $\circ \quad$ assignments presented on Friday will have a final due date on Sunday.

COURSE OUTLINE

Review the separate weekly class schedule found on Canvas under "Syllabus" link.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

This course is designed to engage you through class discussions on the topics covered in the course materials. It is important that you participate in class discussions for your own performance in the course. In addition, these discussions should enrich the experience of your fellow students and expose all of you to different perspectives on the material in the course. It is therefore necessary to participate throughout the week in the discussion questions, rather than wait until the last minute to post.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Course grades will be determined by the completion of assignments, exams, and discussions, as shown below:

Assignment*	Points per Assignment	Frequency	GRADE POINTS	GRADE PERCENTAGE
Pre-lecture assignments	1	* 28	= 28	9%
Post-lecture assignments	2	* 28	= 56	19%
Discussion postings	8	* 2	= 16	5%
Case Study Paper #1	20	* 1	= 20	7%
Case Study Paper #2	30	* 1	= 30	10%
Proctored Exams	75	* 2	= 150	50%
TOTAL			= 300	100%

*Keep a copy of all work created for the course, including work submitted through Canvas.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

The score attained by each student, evaluated relative to those of other students and to the score that would be attained by an intelligent student of economics at this level, will determine final letter grades.

Numerical grades in this course will probably be lower than typical in other courses. The purpose is to allow students to entertain, and learn from, more difficult problems, without fear that their letter grades will be compromised. The conversion between numerical scores and final letter grades will recognize that the course is deliberately challenging. In a typical year, final grades of "A" will be associated with scores of 250 or above. However, the exact conversion between numerical and letter grades will depend on the difficulty of the assignments and class performance. The median letter grade in this course is typically a little below a B-, but varies from class to class depending on class performance

Pre-lecture assignments (28 POINTS) – There will be 28 1-point pre-lecture assignments. Each of the 28 lectures will be preceded by a discussion question, for which answers will be worth one point. The intent of these questions is to provide you with a preliminary opportunity to introduce yourself to the subject of the lecture. This introduction arises through your own thoughts with regard to the question, and those that your fellow students share. Your responses will be graded for participation.

Post-lecture assignments (56 points) – There will be 28 2-point post-lecture assignments. Each of the lectures will be followed by a discussion question that will be worth two points. The intent of these questions is to provide you with an opportunity to consolidate your understanding of some portion of the lecture. This understanding is based on your own study of the lecture, complemented by the observations that your fellow students share. Your responses will be graded for participation and the quality of your insight.

Case Study Papers (50 POINTS) – There will be two papers. Each will analyze the issues presented in a case from the Harvard Business School, based on discussions in class and material in the readings. Both papers must be type-written, double-spaced, with conventional margins. Papers that exceed the maximum lengths, either in physical length or because of compressed format, will be penalized. These papers must be submitted electronically via Canvas in the

Adobe .pdf format. Be certain to convert your papers to .pdf format before the deadline for submission. Speak with me in advance if you anticipate difficulty with this requirement. Only .pdf files will be accepted.

- The first term paper is a three-page discussion of Angola and the Resource Curse, Harvard Business School Case No. 711016-PDF-ENG. It will be due on Friday, 12 June at 11:59p.m.
- The second paper is a three-page discussion of Inequality and the American Model, Harvard Business School Case No. 703025-PDF-ENG. It will be due on Friday, 10 July at 11:59pm.m. It will be worth 30 points.

Both cases must be purchased at <u>https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/726810</u>. You will need to register at the website in order to obtain access. It will provide you with .pdf copies of the cases which you can save and print. The cases each cost \$4.25.

Discussion posting (16 POINTS) – There will be two 8-point discussion postings, each of which will precede a case study. The case study documents are deliberately dense and confusing. The discussions will be an opportunity for students to collectively form some understanding of what may be important in the case, and how the case relates to the material in our class. Your responses will be graded for the quality of your insight.

Exams (150 POINTS) – There will be two (2) exams. The proctored midterm exam is worth 75 points and the proctored cumulative final exam is worth 75 points. They will consist of short essay questions addressing the material in lectures and readings. They may also include short computational exercises.

This course requires proctored examinations.

The Department of Economics at the University of Colorado Boulder requires students to use the online proctoring tool, Proctorio, for their proctored exams. Proctorio allows students to complete an assessment at a remote location, such as their home, while helping to ensure the integrity of the exam. There is no cost to use this tool.

- Please review <u>Proctorio Minimum System Requirements</u> to ensure you have the correct hardware and software to use this tool.
- Note that you are required to have a computer with a functioning webcam and microphone or have access to a computer with a functioning webcam microphone to complete your exams.

See Canvas for detailed information about proctoring. If you are in a rural area or on a military base, you may need to be approved to use a person as a proctor and information is provided on Canvas for this approval process.

EXPECTATIONS OF INSTRUCTOR

I take my role as your instructor very seriously. I care passionately about the material in this course. Consequently, I very much care about how much you learn +and that you have a satisfying, rewarding experience. To that end, I am committed to respond individually to the work you submit in this class and to return your work in a timely manner. If, however, due to unforeseeable circumstances, the grading of your work takes longer than expected, I will keep you informed of my progress and make every effort to return your work with feedback as soon as I can.

COURSE POLICIES

NETIQUETTE

All students should be aware that their behavior impacts other people, even online. I hope that we will all strive to develop a positive and supportive environment and will be courteous to fellow students and your instructor. Due to the nature of the online environment, here are some things to remember.

1. Always think before you write. In the absence of nonverbal cues, your message can be misinterpreted. So please think twice before you hit submit.

- 2. Keep it relevant. There are places to chat and post for fun everyday stuff. Do not stray from the discussion in the assigned questions.
- 3. Never use all caps. This is the equivalent of yelling in the online world. It is not fun to read. Only use capital letters when appropriate.
- 4. Make sure that you are using appropriate grammar and structure. In other words, I don't want to see anyone writing "R U" instead of "are you". There are people in the class that may not understand this type of abbreviation, not to mention it does nothing to help expand your writing and vocabulary skills. Emoticons are fine as long as they are appropriate. A smile 😇 is welcome, anything offensive is not.
- 5. Treat people the same as you would face-to-face. In other words, it is easy to hide behind the computer. In some cases, it empowers people to treat others in ways they would not in person. Remember there is a person behind the name on your screen. Treat all with dignity and respect and you can expect that in return.
- 6. Respect the time of others. Learn to respect the time of others in your group and your experience will be much better. Always remember that you are not the only person with a busy schedule, be flexible. Do not procrastinate! You may be one that works best with the pressures of the deadline looming on you, but others may not be that way. The same is true for the reverse. The key to a successful group is organization, communication and a willingness to do what it takes to get it done.

Website: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

Compiled by Melissa Landin, Instructor, Dept. of Communication, Inver Hills Community College, mlandin@inverhills.edu

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Computer specifications

- Visit the official <u>Canvas Computer Specifications Page</u> for the latest list of recommended system requirements. Recommended browsers
 - Visit the <u>Supported Browsers Page</u> for the detailed list of internet browsers in Windows, MacOS, iOS and Android.

You are required to have a working webcam and audio on your computer for the proctored examinations.

Skill Requirements

- Students also need to possess basic computer skills, such as:
 - How to use a web browser and word processor
 - How to send and receive email
 - How to locate a file and attach it to an email or upload a file into a course
 - How to copy and paste
 - Must know basic typing skills and keyboard commands
 - Must know basic computer terminology

Technical Support

- Canvas technical support. If you are experiencing issues with Canvas please contact:
 - CU Boulder's Help desk at 303-735-4357 (5-HELP) or <u>help@colorado.edu</u>. 5-Help will answer your call: Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from noon to 6:00 p.m., Closed during <u>University Holidays</u>
 - On your computer, click the "help" (?) icon on the left side of Canvas, once logged in
 - Within the Canvas App, you can search the Canvas support guides, Report a Problem or chat with Canvas Support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

POLICY ON DUE DATES

Each module you will complete a series of critical thinking questions that reflect material from the various delivery formats and required readings. It is your responsibility to turn in each assignment on the required date. Late

assignments are not accepted for problem sets or exams. Excuses for the course assignments will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances. If granted, the excused points will be reallocated to subsequent assignments.

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the <u>Disability Services website</u>. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or <u>dsinfo@colorado.edu</u> for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see <u>Temporary</u> <u>Medical Conditions</u> under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on <u>classroom behavior</u> and the <u>Student Code of Conduct</u>.

HONOR CODE

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the Honor Code Office website.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RELATED RETALIATION

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct intimate partner abuse (including dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, <u>anonymous reporting</u>, and the campus resources can be found on the <u>OIEC website</u>.

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Because of the flexibility of timing of completion of assignments in this class, you must contact the

instructor in at least two weeks in advance if you anticipate a religious holiday may impact your completion of coursework.

For more information on the religious holidays most commonly observed by CU Boulder students consult the <u>online</u> <u>interfaith calendar</u>.

PREFERRED STUDENT NAMES AND PRONOUNS

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Any student who wishes to withdraw from the course must submit a request directly to <u>Continuing Education</u>. For complete information, please visit their website at <u>https://ce.colorado.edu/resources/topics/dates-and-deadlines-general-info/</u>

Additional support Services

A variety of instructional support services, such as writing center, guidance on personal or educational issues, tutoring questions and library resources are available to the students. For more information about their services, visit their websites linked under modules on Canvas.

Week	Day	Date	Lecture #	Section of course	Торіс	Graded Assignments	Due Date (11:59pm MST/MDT)
1	М	6/1	1	Section I. The Measurement of Inequality	Introduction	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	Т	6/2	2		Simple inequality measures	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 6/3
	W	6/3	3		Lorenz curves and Gini coefficients	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	_
	R	6/4	4	Section II. The Macroeconomics of Distribution	The effects of growth on inequality	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Friday, 6/5
	F	6/5	5		The effects of inequality on growth	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Sunday, 6/7
2	М	6/8	6		Institutions and inequality	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	Т	6/9	7		Intertemporal inequality	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 6/10
	W	6/10	8		Inter-country inequality	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	R	6/11			Angola and the Resource Curse	Paper discussion	Friday, 6/12
	F	6/12			Angola and the Resource Curse	Paper	Sunday, 6/14
3	М	6/15	9	Section III. The Microeconomics of Distribution	Investments in human capital: Schooling, training, experience and the value of life	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	_

The Economics of Inequality and Discrimination, ECON 4626, Class Schedule, Summer 2020

	т	6/16	10	Inequality as an incentive Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 6/17
	W	6/17	11	Local externalities, peer effects and Pre-lecture question inequality Post-lecture question	_
	R	6/18	12	Intragenerational mobility Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Friday, 6/19
	F	6/19	13	The inheritance of economic status,Pre-lecture questionintergenerational mobility andPost-lecture questionredistributive policyPost-lecture question	Sunday, 6/21
4	Μ	6/22	14	Wealth inequalityPre-lecture questionPost-lecture question	_
	Т	6/23	15	Health inequality Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 6/24
	W	6/24		Midterm examination review	-
	R	6/25		Midterm examination review	Friday, 6/26
	F	6/26		Proctored Midterm examination Exam	Sunday, 6/28
5	Μ	6/29	16	Income, earnings and wage inequality Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	Т	6/30	17	Equivalence scales Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 7/1
	W	7/1	18	Consumption inequality Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	R	7/2	19	Poverty Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Friday, 7/3
	F	7/3		No class	Sunday, 7/5

6	М	7/6	20		Children's welfare	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	Т	7/7	21		Well-being	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 7/9
	W	7/8	22	Section IV. Evaluating inequality	Social welfare functions and societal choice	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	_
	R	7/9			Inequality and the American Model	Paper discussion	Friday, 7/10
	F	7/10			Inequality and the American Model	Paper	Sunday, 7/12
7	М	7/13	23	-	Preferences for redistribution and feasible redistribution	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	
	т	7/14	24	Section V. Discrimination and anti- discrimination policies	Race, ethnicity and the economics of identity	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Wednesday, 7/15
	W	7/15	25		The discriminatory instinct	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	_
	R	7/16	26		Discrimination in labor markets: Models, measurement and policy	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Friday, 7/17
	F	7/17	27		Housing segregation and its progeny: School busing, Fair Housing and environmental racism	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	Sunday, 7/19
8	М	7/20	28		Discrimination in automobile and other markets	Pre-lecture question Post-lecture question	_
	т	7/21			Review for final examination.		Wednesday, 7/22
	W	7/22			Review for final examination.		
	R	7/23			Review for final examination		Friday, 7/24

F 7/24 Proctored Final Examination	Proctored Final Examination	Sunday, 7/26
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