

PSCI 4016

# INEQUALITY AND PUBLIC POLICY IN THE U.S. AND EUROPE



SPRING 2023

**Professor SHIN**

**Time and Location:** MW 3:35 PM – 4:50 PM, **Hellems Arts & Sciences 199**

**Contact:** [adrian.shin@colorado.edu](mailto:adrian.shin@colorado.edu)

**Professor Shin's Office Hours:** MW 2:00 - 3:00 PM, **Ketchum Arts & Sciences 135**

If you cannot make it to my regular office hours, feel free to book an appointment via <https://professorshin.youcanbook.me> and meet Professor Shin via Zoom at your appointment time: <https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/95576669815>.

## Course Objective

This course is an advanced undergraduate course for students interested in the political economy of inequality and relevant public policies. The income gap between the most rich in the top one percent of the population and the rest, is the highest it has been since the financial crisis of 2008. The level of inequality is increasing not only in income flows, but also in the value of Americans' financial and social assets. This includes housing, educational attainment, and health outcomes. There is a debate on whether this is merely a natural result of the free market under capitalism, or if it represents the growth of an American oligarchy. Nonetheless, it is the most fundamental shift in the United States since the end of World War II. Comparatively, some European countries—England and Ireland, for example—have also seen large increases in inequality. Yet others, like Sweden and Germany, are exceptions to this growth in income and value gaps. While the United States is becoming more similar to some European countries in a number of aspects, it is also growing apart from others. Additionally, the growth of China and India as new economic powers in the international system has shifted global distributions of income and wealth, suggesting new welfare implications for different groups of Americans and Europeans.

This course will provide an in-depth understanding of factors that change the level of inequality in the US and in Europe, and its economic, political, and social consequences across these states over time. As such, this course is comparative in nature. We will discuss America and the European states by comparing and contrasting them. The goal of this

comparative study is to understand why they are different, and why these differences may be crucial in understanding public policy outcomes. We will begin the course by discussing what inequality means, where it comes from, and what it looks like empirically. This brings us to focus on inequality in contemporary America. We will learn about the U.S. distributions of income and resources, and understand how the growth of inequality we see today came to be. We will focus on the causes of inequality, and what its consequences are for the U.S. economy, society, and politics. In addition, we will consider economic inequality through the lens of historical gender and racial inequalities in America, and how their legacies and persistence today affect the gaps we observe.

The course then shifts the focus to Europe. We will first consider Europe in light of our discussion of America in the first half of the course. Why is inequality in Europe broadly lower than it is in America? Will Europe eventually reach American levels of inequality? What could be done if policymakers were to prevent this? We will then look at differences in inequality between European countries and explore their causes and consequences. We will also consider Europe's particular experiences with immigration. In the last section, we will finally conclude the course by looking to the developing world, particularly China and India, and how their rise to international economic power is affecting global inequality.

## Textbooks

- Larry Bartels, *Unequal Democracy* **2nd Edition** (2016)
- Alberto Alesina and Edward L. Glaeser, *Fighting Poverty in the USA and Europe*
- Branko Milanovic, *The Haves and the Have-Nots*

## Evaluation

For a total possible score of **100,000 points**, your grade is made up of the following 3 components: 25 daily quizzes (1,000 per quiz; 25,000 total); two exams (25,000 per exam; 50,000 total); and final evaluation (25,000). The grade breakdown of these components, along with their respective dates, is shown below.

*You will automatically **fail the entire course** for plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access, resubmission, aiding academic dishonesty, and other behaviors I find unacceptable according to the University's Honor Code. Additionally, I will report all Honor Code violations to the Honor Council, the Department, and the Dean of Students.*

- I. **25 Daily Quizzes (25,000 points):** At the end of each class, you will be given a quiz based on the reading assignments and class discussion. The quizzes will appear on Canvas at 4:35 PM. You only need 5 minutes to complete each quiz, but you will have 15 minutes to submit the answers. If you miss a quiz, **there is no make-up quiz**. Instead, you may want to complete side quests to earn some extra points.

II. You will have Exam 1, Exam 2, and Final Evaluation in this course. On each exam, you will be given two questions, but you only need to answer one. All exams are open book; you are allowed to use any notes or books.

(a) Exam 1 (25,000 points)

- Choose Exam 1A or 1B. If you end up completing both, your grade for Exam 1 will be averaged.
- Exam 1A (Multiple Choice Questions and Short Answers)
  - **3:35 PM to 4:25 PM on Wednesday, 3/1 via Canvas**
  - Exam 1A study guide is available on Canvas.
- Exam 1B (Take-Home Essay Exam)
  - **Due at 3:35 PM on Wednesday, 3/8 via Canvas.**
  - Two questions are available on Canvas. You will choose one question to answer.
  - Formatting Requirements:
    - \* 4 to 6 pages
    - \* 1 inch margins for all
    - \* Double-spaced
    - \* Times New Roman, 12-point
    - \* References: **The Chicago Manual of Style**
  - *Non-compliant exams will lose 1,000 points per formatting violation.*
  - You must use quotation marks and provide proper citations when you use exact words of another author. You also need to cite an author whose argument you summarize or paraphrase in your papers. Your take-home exams must provide citations and a list of references for the sources of facts you use in them. Appropriate sources for papers will be discussed in class.
  - **Late exams will not be accepted.**

(b) Exam 2 (25,000 points)

- Choose Exam 2A or 2B. If you end up completing both, your grade for Exam 2 will be averaged.
- Exam 2A (Multiple Choice Questions and Short Answers)
  - **3:35 PM to 4:25 PM on Monday, 4/17 via Canvas**
  - Exam 2A study guide is available on Canvas.
- Exam 2B (Take-Home Essay Exam)
  - **Due at 3:35 PM on Monday, 4/24 via Canvas.**
  - Two questions are available on Canvas. You will choose one question to answer.
  - Formatting Requirements:
    - \* 4 to 6 pages

- \* 1 inch margins for all
- \* Double-spaced
- \* Times New Roman, 12-point
- \* References: *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- *Non-compliant exams will lose 1,000 points per formatting violation.*
- You must use quotation marks and provide proper citations when you use exact words of another author. You also need to cite an author whose argument you summarize or paraphrase in your papers. Your take-home exams must provide citations and a list of references for the sources of facts you use in them. Appropriate sources for papers will be discussed in class.
- **Late exams will not be accepted.**

### III. Final Evaluation (25,000 points) – Monday, 5/8 (due via Canvas at 10:00 pm)

- [OPTION 1] You will choose two countries in Western Europe to compare and contrast their levels of inequality and relevant public policies. Be sure to mention which type of inequality constitutes the focus of your paper and demonstrate the theoretical and empirical link between the type of inequality and the public policies you have chosen. Are the levels of inequality and public policies different or similar across the two countries? Explain why they are similar or different using primary and secondary sources. What *normative* implications do your findings suggest?
- [OPTION 2] Write a paper on a topic of your choice. *To select this option, you must talk to me by Monday, April 24th to get my approval.*
  - You are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss the topic of your choice via Zoom.
- Late papers will lose 2,500 points per calendar day. **Papers turned in after 10:00 pm on Monday, 5/8 are considered late. Late papers turned in after 10:00 PM on Wednesday, 5/10 will not be accepted.**
- [OPTION 3] Multiple-Choice Canvas Exam (7:30 pm–10:00 pm on Monday, 5/8)
- Formatting Requirements for **OPTIONS 1 AND 2**:
  - 4 to 6 pages (not including bibliography)
  - 1 inch margins for all
  - Double-spaced
  - Times New Roman, 12-point
  - References: *The Chicago Manual of Style*
  - *Non-compliant papers will lose 1,000 points per formatting violation.*
  - You must use quotation marks and provide proper citations when you use exact words of another author. You also need to cite an author whose argument you summarize or paraphrase in your papers. Your papers must provide citations and a list of references for the sources of facts you use in them. Appropriate sources for papers will be discussed in class.

IV. Side Quests (Various Points): Throughout the semester, you will have a variety of opportunities to increase your points by completing extra assignments. The maximum possible reward for completing each quest will not exceed 1,000 points. Note that side quests have due dates. You will not be able to complete a side quest after its due date.

V. Attendance: There is no attendance penalty.

## GradeCraft™

We will be using **GradeCraft™** to keep track of your course progress. I will design side quests and make them available through the learning management system. More information about how to register for and use GradeCraft will follow on Thursday, 1/28.

## Points to Letter Grade Conversion

*I will **not** be rounding up any points at the end of the semester. An excellent way to score more points is to complete the side quests on time.*

A:  $\geq 94,000$

A-:  $\geq 90,000$

B+:  $\geq 87,000$

B:  $\geq 84,000$

B-:  $\geq 80,000$

C+:  $\geq 77,000$

C:  $\geq 74,000$

C-:  $\geq 70,000$

D+:  $\geq 67,000$

D:  $\geq 64,000$

F:  $< 64,000$

## Regrading Policy

If you have a grade complaint, please follow the steps below:

- You must wait at least 48 hours before contacting me.
- After 48 hours, you may contact me to ask questions or clarify comments. If there is an honest mistake (i.e. your total grade is miscalculated), you may contact me as soon as possible.

- After communicating with me, if you decide to submit a grade grievance anyway, email me within a week of receiving the graded exam. This formal grade grievance must confirm that you have met with me to talk about the exam and address why you believe you were unfairly graded, with specific details and supporting evidence along with the original graded exam. Once you file a formal grade grievance, I will regrade the exam myself.
- **You must take the new grade even if the new grade is lower than the one you received initially.**

## Email Etiquette

Please do not address me by my first name or Mr. Shin. Other unacceptable salutations include informal greetings like "hey." The only acceptable forms are simple and the following: Professor Shin or Dr. Shin.

To help you write professional emails, I have posted some [useful resources on Canvas](#) about how to write emails to professors. This is a valuable skill to have as you navigate through college and prepare for your career. Please include a subject. I prefer something like "[PSCI 4106]" followed by something indicative about the purpose of your email. For instance, if you want to discuss classroom accommodation due to your disability, the subject of your email can be "[PSCI 4106] Disability Accommodation and Extra Exam Time."

Do not email us for the following reasons:

1. You missed a class session and want notes from us.
  - Instead, consult your classmates.
2. You are going to miss a class session and want to let us know.
  - Letting us know does not make a difference.
3. You want to schedule an appointment with Professor Shin.
  - Instead of sending Professor Shin emails, book an appointment via <https://professorshin.youcanbook.me> and meet Professor Shin via Zoom at your appointment time: <https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/95576669815>.

## Course Outline

Students are required to complete the reading assignments **by** the associated date. (R) indicates the reading assignment has been made available via Canvas. (T) means it is from

one of the textbooks. For a reading assignment with (W), you can click on its title to access the web sources.

## Part A: What is Inequality?

- **Introduction**

- Wednesday, 1/18
  - \* Read the syllabus.

- **Concepts and Background**

- Monday, 1/23
  - \* (W) Peck, Don. "[Can the Middle Class be Saved?](#)" *Atlantic Monthly*, Sep 2011.
  - \* (W) Freeland, Chrystia. "[The Rise of the New Global Elite.](#)" *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan/Feb 2011
- Wednesday, 1/25
  - \* (R) Noah, Timothy. Series in *Slate* on Inequality "The Great Divergence"
  - \* (T) Milanovic, Branko. Chapter 1 and Vignettes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.10

- **The Rich and the Poor since 10,000 BC**

- Monday, 1/30
  - \* (R) Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. Prologue & Chapters 1, 4, 5, 13, and 14
- Wednesday, 2/1
  - \* (R) Clark, Gregory. Farewell to Alms, Chapter 1
  - \* (R) Boix, Carles and Frances Rosenbluth "Bones of Contention: The Political Economy of Height Inequality."

- **Historical and Empirical Trends**

- Monday, 2/6
  - \* (R) Piketty, Thomas. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Introduction and Part 1
- Wednesday, 2/8
  - \* (R) Atkinson, Anthony B., Thomas Piketty, and Emmanuel Saez. "Top Incomes in the Long Run of History."
  - \* (R) Albertus, Michael and Victor Menaldo. "Capital in the Twenty-First Century—in the Rest of the World"

- **Democracy, Inequality, and Public Policy**

- Monday, 2/13
  - \* (R) Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. “The Conscription of Wealth: Mass Warfare and the Demand for Progressive Taxation.”
  - \* (R) Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. “Democracy, War, and Wealth: Lessons from Two Countries of Inheritance Taxation.”
- Wednesday, 2/15
  - \* (R) Dorr, Dalton and Adrian J. Shin. “War, Inequality, and Taxation.”
  - \* (R) Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. “Wealth Inequality and Democracy.”

## Part B: Inequality in America

### • Income and Wealth Inequality in America

- Monday, 2/20
  - \* (T) Bartels, Larry. *Unequal Democracy*, Chapter 1
  - \* (W) Scott, Janny and David Leonhardt “**Class Matters: Shadowy Lines that Still Divide**”, *New York Times*
- Wednesday, 2/22
  - \* (R) Piketty, Thomas and Emmanuel Saez. “Income Inequality in the United States, 1913–1998.”
  - \* (R) Saez, Emmanuel “Striking it Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States”

### • Review and Exam 1A

- Monday, 2/27
  - \* Review for Exam 1A
- Wednesday, 3/1
  - \* **Exam 1A (Multiple Choice and Short Answers) via Canvas from 3:35 PM to 4:25 PM**
    - If you choose to do Exam 1B (take-home) instead, you do not have to take Exam 1A.
    - If you miss Exam 1A for any reason, there is no make-up exam for Exam 1A. Instead, you should plan on submitting Exam 1B (take-home).
    - If you complete both Exams 1A and 1B, your grade will be the average of the two exam scores.

### • Politics of Inequality in America

- Monday, 3/6



- \* (T) Bartels, Larry. *Unequal Democracy*. Chapters 2, 3, and 8
- Wednesday, 3/8
  - \* **Exam 1B due at 3:35 PM via Canvas**
    - If you missed Exam 1A for any reason, you should complete Exam 1B (take-home).
  - \* (T) Bartels, Larry. *Unequal Democracy*. Chapters 9 and 10
- Monday, 3/13
  - \* (R) Gilens, Martin and Benjamin I. Page. “Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens.”
  - \* (R) Winters, Jeffrey A. and Benjamin I. Page. “Oligarchy in the United States?”
  - \* (R) Connell, Brendan J., Dalton C. Dorr, and Adrian J. Shin. “Inequality and the Partisan Political Economy.”
- **What do Americans think about Inequality?**
  - Wednesday, 3/15
    - \* (T) Bartels, Larry. *Unequal Democracy*. Chapters 4 and 5
  - Monday, 3/20
    - \* (T) Bartels, Larry. *Unequal Democracy*. Chapters 6 and 7
- **Race, Gender and American Inequality**
  - Wednesday, 3/22
    - \* (T) Alesina, Alberto and Edward L. Glaeser, Pages 133–166
    - \* (R) Gilens, Martin. “How the Poor Became Black”
    - \* (R) Blau, Francine and Lawrence Kahn “The Gender Pay Gap”
  - Monday, 3/27
    - \* Spring Break (No Class)
  - Wednesday, 3/29
    - \* Spring Break (No Class)

## Part C: Inequality in Europe

- **Why is Europe different from America? What are the differences in Europe?**
  - Monday, 4/3
    - \* (T) Alesina, Alberto and Edward L. Glaeser, Chapters 1, 2, and 3
  - Wednesday, 4/5
    - \* (T) Milanovic, Branko. Vignette 3.3

- \* (R) Gosta Esping-Andersen, *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Chapters 1 and 2
- \* (R) Reid, T. R. *United States of Europe* Chapter 6

- **Politics of Inequality in Europe**

- Monday, 4/10
  - \* (T) Alesina, Alberto and Edward L. Glaeser, Chapters 4 and 5
  - \* (R) Rueda, David. “Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Economies.”

- **Review and Exam 2A**

- Wednesday, 4/12
  - \* Review for Exam 2A
- Monday, 4/17
  - \* **Exam 2A (Multiple Choice and Short Answers) via Canvas from 3:35 PM to 4:25 PM**
    - If you choose to do Exam 2B (take-home) instead, you do not have to take Exam 2A.
    - If you miss Exam 2A for any reason, there is no make-up exam for Exam 2A. Instead, you should plan on submitting Exam 2B (take-home).
    - If you complete both Exams 2A and 2B, your grade will be the average of the two exam scores.

- **What do Europeans Think of Inequality?**

- Wednesday, 4/19
  - \* (T) Alesina, Alberto and Edward L. Glaeser, Chapter 7
- Monday, 4/24
  - \* **Exam 2B due at 3:35 PM via Canvas**
    - If you missed Exam 2A for any reason, you should complete Exam 2B (take-home).
  - \* (R) Kaltenthaler, Karl, Stephen Ceccoli, and Ronald Gelleny. “Attitudes toward Eliminating Income Inequality in Europe.”
  - \* (R) Cavallé, Charlotte and Kris-Stella Trump. “The Two Facets of Social Policy Preferences.”

- **Race, Inequality, and Migration in Comparative Perspective**

- Wednesday, 4/26
  - \* (T) Alesina, Alberto and Edward L. Glaeser, Pages 166–181
  - \* (R) Lieberman, Robert. “Race and the Limits of Solidarity.”
  - \* (R) Luttmer, Erzo F. P. “Group Loyalty and the Taste for Redistribution.”

– Monday, 5/1

- \* (R) Timmer, Ashley and Jeffrey G. Williams. “Immigration Policy Prior to the 1930s: Labor Markets, Policy Interactions, and Globalization Backlash.”
- \* (W) Portes, Jonathan. “[The Economic Impacts of Immigration to the UK.](#)”

## Part D: Global Inequality and Justice

### • Week Sixteen: Which inequality should we care most about?

– Wednesday, 5/3

- \* (R) Pritchett, Lant. “Divergence Big Time”
- \* (T) Milanovic, Branko. Vignette 1.9, Chapters 2 (pp. 95–108) and 3 (pp. 149–164).
- \* (W) Posner, Eric A. and Glen Weyl. “[A Radical Solution to Global Income Inequality: Make the U.S. More Like Qatar.](#)”
- \* (W) Iqbal, Farrukh. “[Migration as a Way to Reduce Global Inequality.](#)”

## University Policies

### Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. 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. For more information, see the [classroom behavior](#) policy, the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

### Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. CU Boulder currently requires COVID-19 vaccination and boosters for all faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff must upload proof of vaccination and boosters or file for an exemption based on medical, ethical or moral grounds through the MyCUHealth portal.

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask-optional. However, if public health conditions change and masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student

Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the Accommodation for Disabilities statement on this syllabus.

If you feel ill and think you might have COVID-19, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)). If you are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay home; rather, you should self-monitor for symptoms and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)). Faculty: insert your procedure here for students to alert you about absence due to illness or quarantine. Because of FERPA student privacy laws, do not require students to state the nature of their illness when alerting you. Do not require "doctor's notes" for classes missed due to illness; campus health services no longer provide "doctor's notes" or appointment verifications.

## 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 [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

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 . Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

## 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.

## 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 Honor Code may include, but

are not limited to: 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 Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the **Honor Code** will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found on the **Honor Code website**.

## **Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation**

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about university policies, **reporting options**, and support resources can be found on the **OIEC website**.

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit **Dont Ignore It**.

## **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. **In this class, you are required to let me know of any schedule conflict at least two weeks in advance.** See the **campus policy regarding religious observances** for full details.