

**HDFS 447 FAMILIES AND POVERTY  
WINTER, 2007**

**Instructor:** Dr. Leslie Richards (leslie.richards@oregonstate.edu)  
**Class Meeting Time & Place:** TR 9:30-10:50, Milam 318  
**Instructor's Office Hours:** T 3-5; or by appointment  
**Instructor's Office:** Milam 20C (737-1071)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine families in poverty with attention focused on the causes and consequences of family poverty, including global economic factors, migration patterns, and political/social crises. Included will also be an investigation of policies and programs for poor families, both within the United States and internationally. Over the course of the term, students in this class are required to complete 20 hours of community service at an agency that primarily serves low income individuals or families.

**STUDENT OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this class, students should:

1. understand how characteristics of families (structure, race/ethnicity, SES background), sociohistorical time, and place interact to increase or decrease the likelihood of poverty.
2. understand the causes of poverty, both in the United States and elsewhere in the world.
3. appreciate the influence of context (e.g., income, wealth, communities, policies, programs, paid and unpaid work) for understanding family poverty.
4. understand the consequences of poverty for women, men, and children.
5. appreciate historical and current attitudes about poor individuals and families.
6. understand, through class activities and readings, the barriers faced by families in poverty.
7. experience working with low income individuals or families through volunteer work in a community service organization or educational program.
8. increase awareness of local, national, and international policies and programs designed for poor families.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Kotlowitz, A. (1991). *There Are No Children Here*. New York: Doubleday.

Kerbo, H. (2006). *World Poverty: Global Inequality and the Modern World System*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Readings packet in bookstore.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Read assigned material before the class for which it has been assigned.
2. Participate in class discussions and activities.
3. Keep a dialogue journal. The journal assignment is designed to help you think critically about, and react to, course material and experiences. You are expected to write in your journal at least twice weekly. In addition to responding to questions or issues that will be assigned in class, your journal should be used to explore your reactions to readings, speakers, volunteer activities, and/or class discussions. You can raise questions or issues in your journal, to which the instructor will respond in writing or during class. Journals will be handed in three times over the quarter, and will be graded on the basis of the journal guidelines handed out in class. Journals are due on various dates, depending on the first letter of your last name as indicated on the syllabus.

4. Complete 20 hours of community service work at an agency that targets services to low income individuals or families. You have many choices for the type of agency and volunteer activities. For example, you could volunteer at a homeless shelter, food bank, Habitat for Humanity, or a Title I school. A signed community service agreement, outlining your proposed activities, must be turned in to the instructor. It is possible to do a group project to meet this requirement, where a small group of students works with an agency to design and carry out some sort of project.
5. Do a class presentation summarizing your volunteer activities for the class. The final week of class students will either do a poster presentation (individuals) or a brief oral presentation (groups) to provide information about your agency and the service work completed.
6. Write one paper (5 pages maximum) evaluating your volunteer experiences and providing some background information on the agency where you worked.
7. Take two exams. Exams will be based about half on readings, and half on in-class material. The midterm exam will be a take-home essay exam. The final exam will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions, as well as short-answer essays. The final exam will cover material from the entire quarter. Make-up exams will be allowed only if prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

### **GRADES**

Your grade will be based on:	Class participation, in-class writing	30 points
	Journal	100 points
	Paper	50 points
	Community Service/Presentation	75 points
	Midterm	100 points
	Final	100 points

### **SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of an evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing, the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

### **CLASSROOM CLIMATE**

The key to effective learning hinges on providing an educational climate that is respectful of all persons. It is my hope that all students in this class feel comfortable in participating and having their voices heard. Behavior that creates a hostile learning environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, SES, religion, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation, will not be tolerated. Let's work together collectively to ensure a positive learning experience for all of us.

## COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Readings
<b>January 9, 11</b>	Class Introduction Definitions of Poverty: US	Kotlowitz: 1-76 Readings packet: Seccombe article
<b>January 16, 18</b> <b>Dialogue Journal A-E</b> <b>Volunteer Agreement Due</b>	Poverty Simulation & Debriefing	Kotlowitz: 77-145
<b>January 23, 25</b> <b>Dialogue Journal F-M</b>	Definitions of Poverty: Global Explanations for Poverty	Kotlowitz: 146-225 Readings packet: 1997 UNDP Report
<b>January 30, February 1</b> <b>Dialogue Journal N-Z</b>	Who are the Poor?	Kotlowitz: 226-309
<b>February 6, 8</b> <b>Dialogue Journal A-E</b>	Supporting Poor Families: Historical/Global Perspectives Welfare Reform in the US	Readings packet: 2000 UNDP Report Kerbo: 1-29
<b>February 13, 15</b> <b>Midterm Due</b>	Working, Yet Poor Homelessness	Kerbo: 30-90 Readings packet: Edin & Lein article
<b>February 20, 22</b> <b>Dialogue Journal F-M</b>	Living in Poverty: Consequences for Men, Women, and Children	Kerbo: 91-137 Readings packet: McLoyd article
<b>February 27, March 1</b> <b>Dialogue Journal N-Z</b>	Working with Poor Families: Historical Perspectives, Poverty Programs in other Countries	Kerbo: 138-180 Readings packet: Phipps reading
<b>March 6, 8</b> <b>Class Presentations/Posters</b>	Current Programs: Success Stories Around the Globe & in the Local Area	Kerbo: 181-239
<b>March 13, 15</b> <b>Dialogue Journal A-Z</b> <b>Class Presentations/Posters</b> <b>Papers Due</b>	Current Programs: Success Stories In The Local Area	Kerbo: 240-264
<b>Tuesday, March 20</b> <b>Record of Community</b> <b>Service Hours Due</b>	<b>12:00, Final Exam</b> <b>Milam 318</b>	