Instructor: Prof. Pablo Beramendi (pb45@duke.edu)

Class Time and Location: Monday: 3.05-5.35 pm @ West Duke Building (108-B).

Office Hours: Tuesday 1.00-3.00 pm, 207 Gross Hall.

Teaching Assistant:

- Brett Gall(brett.gall@duke.edu), Office Hours: 1.15-2.45 pm @ SSRI Open Area, Gross Hall or by appointment

Course Description

Attention to inequality has risen in both academic and non-academic circles in recent times. This class focuses on the two-way relationship between inequality and politics, and is divided in three parts. The first one is devoted to address some normative and conceptual issues: under what conditions are inequalities fair? what are the most prominent dimensions of inequality and what are the key strategies to measure and interpret them? what are the core market forces behind the recent rise in income and wealth inequalities across the world? The second part of the class explores the role of politics in determining different types of inequality. We focus specifically on the political economy of wealth inequality, income redistribution, and the distribution of economic opportunities as an engine behind different mobility regimes. Finally, the third part of the seminar explores the political consequences associated with the growing spread of income and wealth inequalities. We pay particular attention to the relationship between economic and political inequality, defined as inequalities in political engagement and political influence; between economic inequality and major political and institutional crises; finally, we close with a look on the connection between inequality, political polarization with an empirical focus on the recent US experience. The material in this course is genuinely inter-disciplinary and combines readings from economics, political science, and history.

Textbook

There is no textbook for this class. We will use most of Branko Milanovic’s Global Inequality, 2016 and Gabriel Zucman’s short book The Hidden Wealth of Nations, so it may be worth acquiring them. Materials will be available electronically either through the library or through Sakai.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

All readings are required unless indicated as recommended and provide the basis for the short response papers. Please focus more on the logic, the key intuitions, and the empirical evidence in the papers, and spend less time on the more technical formulations of the arguments. The other readings are recommended and contain materials that inform the lectures in class. All readings will either be available online through the library or posted in Sakai ahead of time.
1. Foundations

1.1. Why be concerned about (In)equality? Are inequalities ever just?
Discussion of Syllabus and Organization
(January 10th, please note this is a Wednesday to make up for MLK Day session)

John Roemer 2009 “Equality: Nature and Demand” Oxford Handbook of Economic Inequality

1.2. Inequality: Concepts, Dimensions, Patterns (January 22nd, January 29th) FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE on January 29th

Alvaredo F. et al. 2018 World Inequality Report, pdf available in Sakai


Dani Rodrik 2017 “Is Global Inequality the Enemy of National Equality?” working paper-JFK School of Government

(recommended) OECD Reports (for rich countries, available on line with their associated datasets):

- Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising (2011)


1.3. Inequality, Order, and Democracy (FEBRUARY 5th)

C. Boix 2015 Political Order and Inequality, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press (pdfs made available in Sakai)

1.4. Market Forces (February 12th)

Anthony B. Atkinson 2015 Inequality: What can be done? Harvard University Press (chapters 1,2,3 pdfs made available in Sakai)

*** MIDTERM - IN CLASS EXAM (FEBRUARY 19TH) ***
*** SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE ***
2. Political Determinants of Inequality

2.1. Curbing Down Inequality: Wealth (FEBRUARY 26th)

Anthony B. Atkinson 2015 *Inequality: What can be done?* Harvard University Press (chapters 6 and 7, pdfs made available in Sakai)


2.2. Curbing Down Inequality: Income Redistribution (MARCH 5th)


D. Rodrik 2011 *The Globalization Paradox* (selections made available in Sakai)


*** SPRING BREAK (MARCH 12TH) ***

2.3. Curbing Down Inequality: Mobility and Opportunities (MARCH 19TH)  
THIRD RESPONSE PAPER DUE


3. Political Consequences of Inequality

3.1. Inequality and Revolution under Authoritarianism (MARCH 26TH)


3.2. Inequality and Political Polarization (APRIL 2ND)
FOURTH RESPONSE PAPER DUE

John Voorheis, Nolan McCarthy, and Boris Shor 2015 Unequal Incomes, Ideology and Gridlock: How Rising Inequality Increases Political Polarization, WP-Oregon/Princeton/Georgetown (see also the summary discussion at the Washington Post, available in Sakai)

3.3. Inequality and Crises (APRIL 9TH)

Thomas Hauner, Branko Milanovic, Suresh Naidu 2017 “Inequality, Foreign Investment, and Imperialism”


Philipp Rehm 2016 Risk Inequality and the Welfare State, New York, Cambridge University Press (chapter 9, pdf available in Sakai)

3.4. Economic and Political Inequality (APRIL 16th)

Martin Gillens 2014 Affluence and Influence Princeton, Princeton University Press.(selected chapter available in Sakai)


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in this class will reflect a weighted average of the following items:

1. Midterm: FEBRUARY 19TH in class exam, to take place on October 3rd 2016 (25%).

2. Brief response papers (3 pages max) presenting your reactions to the required(*) readings upon reflection on other sources and class discussions. You will write five response papers during the semester. You will focus on the readings of the weeks immediately preceding since the last response paper. Response papers are not meant to be summaries of the readings but analytical reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments they present. The four best grades out the five will be taken into consideration for your final grade. (35%).

3. Final Exam: APRIL 23RD The exam will consist of several essay questions where you will be asked to discuss, relate, and elaborate on several themes/readings in the class. The goal is
to assess your understanding of the material and your ability to use it analytically. For those unhappy with the Midterm exam grade, the final exam will be comprehensive and count for 65% of the final grade. For those who performed well in Midterm, the final exam will only about the materials taught after Fall Break and will count for 40% of the final grade.

Each of these requirements will be graded on a 0-100 scale and weighted according to the criteria above.

**EXTRA CREDIT!** In addition to these graded assignments, students enrolled in POLSCI 224 are strongly encouraged to participate in the political science experimental subject pool. Students will need to participate in up to 3 hours of Political Science Research Pool (PSRP) studies over the course of the semester to receive a maximum of 3% extra credit toward their final grade (1% per hour of participation). More information about this option is available at: [http://www.duke.edu/web/psrp](http://www.duke.edu/web/psrp). If you wish to participate, you can register at: [http://duke-psrp.sona-systems.com](http://duke-psrp.sona-systems.com).

**POLICY**

I will follow Duke University’s procedures to establish whether absences from any event related to this class are justified (e.g. illness, sport events) and merit ad hoc arrangements. Other than in the very restrictive cases contemplated by the university, make up exams are not an option.

I will also follow Duke University’s policy in any event of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Grade complaints: You have the right to dispute a grade if you disagree with it. You must do so in writing, no more than 3 working days after we have returned the exam to you. Upon receiving your appeal, I will re-grade the entire exam. Note that as I re-evaluate the exam, I may realize that while we were too strict with some answers, we were too generous with others. Your overall grade may go up, but it may also go down.

Finally, turning in late assignments (i.e. short response papers to the readings) is not acceptable unless previously agreed with me. Response papers delivered after 9 am the day of class will be downgraded one letter grade. Response papers delivered any time after class will be graded 0.