**Colloquium in Community Development:**

**Poverty Alleviation Strategies**

Fall 2015

Course #56-834-606-01

Thursdays 6:00pm-8:40pm

Armitage Room 109

Rutgers University-Camden

Dr. Maureen M. Donaghy

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**Overview:**

In this course we will evaluate various strategies for poverty alleviation at the community level in the US and developing countries. We will begin by assessing the fundamental causes of poverty and the tools the poor possess for survival. We will then address a number of income generating strategies, from encouraging entrepreneurship (microfinance, skills training) to participation in the global economy through manufacturing work. In addition, we will review the role of the state in poverty alleviation, particularly through cash transfer programs (welfare), and the role of education and health care in improving the living standards of individuals. Throughout the course we will focus on case studies to inform our analysis and provide a snapshot of current trends in community development.

As a colloquium, this course is meant to be an interactive learning experience. As such, there will be few formal lectures. During class sessions we will have several guest speakers from local organizations, corresponding to the topic for the week. Though the reading for this course is extensive, the course is meant to generate discussion rather than provide an exhaustive review of literature on poverty alleviation worldwide. In class we will engage with the readings and rely on everyone to come prepared with questions to kick-start our discussions. In the second half of the course, students will be assigned roles as discussion leaders. Students will then submit a research paper on a community of their choosing.

**Required Readings:**

Shipler, David K. 2005. *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. New York: Vintage.

Iceland, John. 2013. *Poverty in America: A Handbook*. Third Edition. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Karlan, Dean and Jacob Appel. 2011. *More Than Good Intentions: How a New Economics is Helping to Solve Global Poverty*. New York: Dutton.

Ferguson, James. 2015. *Give a Man a Fish: Reflections on the New Politics of Distribution*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Articles are posted on Sakai or are available online.

**Policies**

**Department Student Learning Policy**: This course is designed to contribute to the implementation of the Department’s Student Learning Policy. Among the MPA program’s competencies, in this course students will learn to:

1. Conduct research relevant to public policy and administration.
2. Write clearly and persuasively on public policy and management issues.
3. Present information and ideas effectively orally.
4. Show experience in working on public policy and administration.
5. Apply knowledge and skills in a rewarding position.
6. Identify fundamental values guiding public management policies and practices, and use examples to illustrate value trade-offs.
7. Participate in and contribute to the policy process.
8. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions.
9. Articulate and apply a public service perspective.
10. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

The full policy is available on the Department of Public Policy and Administration website.

**Disability Policy**: Please advise me as soon as possible of any disability that may affect your performance in this course. I will make all necessary accommodations so that your learning, writing, and testing needs may be appropriately met. You are required by the University to provide documentation of the disability to the Student Life Office, Rutgers Learning Center, or Graduate School Dean.

**Late Paper Policy**: Late papers will be marked down one grade for every day they are tardy. Extensions will be granted only in extreme cases.

**Attendance Policy**: Attendance in this course is mandatory. If you must miss class, you should contact me ahead of time.

**Academic Integrity:** All students of Rutgers-Camden are required to adhere to the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. Violations of the Policy include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Should you have any questions regarding behavior that may be defined as a violation of the University’s Policy, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me. Please see the following link for further information: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>.

**Course Requirements and Grade Apportionment**

1. Reading all assigned materials

2. Discussion Leading……………..…………………………………………………………..10%

3. Research and Writing Project 1: Background and Evidence…………………………………………………………………………………….………25%

4. Research and Writing Project 2: Argumentation and Recommendations………………………………………………………………..……………30%

5. Active contributions to class discussions…………………………………………25%

6. Presentations of Research Paper…………………………………………………….10% (5% each)

**Research and Writing Project:**

For this assignment you will consider one strategy for alleviating poverty in a specific community. The choice and definition of “community” is entirely up to you. You may begin with a specific community in mind or your interest in a particular poverty alleviation strategy may direct you to a community in which the strategy has been implemented. Before beginning this assignment, you should consult directly with me to make sure you are on the right track.

In part one of the paper, you will assess the following questions: 1) How can you describe existing poverty in your chosen community? 2) What are the causes behind poverty in the community? 3) How are people in this community currently surviving/coping? And, 4) What current programs or assistance are available to this community? I expect that Part 1 of the paper will be approximately 10-pages in length with appropriate citations. The first part of the paper will be due to me through the Sakai dropbox by **5pm on** **October 22, 2015**.

In part two of the paper, you will submit your recommendations for specific poverty alleviation strategies in your community. You will need to assess what is or is not currently working and provide an argument for what would work to improve the lives of people in the community. Be direct in assigning specific recommendations to government, non-profit, or private sector actors. You will submit the complete paper to me through the Sakai dropbox by email by **5pm on December 17, 2015**. I expect that the full paper will be approximately 15-20-pages in length, including appropriate citations. You will also present the ideas from your paper to the class on **December 17th.**

**Participation in Class Discussions:**

This course will be conducted as a seminar. Your participation grade depends on your active contribution and preparation for class discussions. In the first few classes this will include bringing a list of discussion questions for the class to consider. After the first few meetings individual students will be assigned as discussion leaders. Leaders will be responsible for summarizing the readings and putting forward questions for discussion.

**Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

**September 3 - Week 1 – NO CLASS, PLEASE COMPLETE ASSIGNMENT BELOW DURING CLASS TIME**

Karlan and Appel: Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 2: To Work Against Poverty

**Nelson Mandela Speech in Trafalgar Square:** <http://www.one.org/us/2013/12/06/video-mandelas-speech-on-poverty-which-inspired-a-generation/>

**Ravallion, Martin, 2013, “The Idea of Antipoverty Policy,” National Bureau of Economic Research. (SAKAI)**

**September 10 - Week 2 – Introduction, Review of the Syllabus**

**What do we mean by “poverty alleviation”?**

**How is poverty defined in the US and around the world?**

Iceland: Introduction, Chapters 1-4

Sen, Amartya. 1999. “Poverty as Capability Deprivation.” Chapter 4 in *Development as Freedom*. New York: Anchor Books. (SAKAI)

Fox, Liana et al. 2015. “Waging War on Poverty: Poverty Trends Using a Historical Supplemental Poverty Measure.” Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (SAKAI)

SKIM Ravallion, Martin, 2010 “Poverty Lines around the World.” (SAKAI)

Charles Kenny for Bloomberg Business, “The Meaningless of Ending Extreme Poverty. (SAKAI)

**September 17 - Week 3 – What are the causes behind poverty? Behavior,**

**Structure, and Culture Examined**

Iceland: Chapter 5: Causes of Poverty and Chapter 6: The Great Recession

Krishna, Anirudh. Chapter 3: The Rising-Falling Tide and Chapter 4: Reasons for Descent: The Health Poverty Trap in *One Illness Away: Why People Become Poor and How They Escape Poverty* (New York: Oxford, 2010) (SAKAI)

Haughton, Jonathan and Shahidur R. Khandker. Chapter 8: Understanding the Determinants of Poverty” in the *Handbook on Poverty and Inequality* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2002) (SAKAI)

Wilson, William Julius. 2010. “Why Both Social Structure and Culture Matter in a Holistic Analysis of Inner-City Poverty,” The Annals of the American Political Science Society. (SAKAI)

**September 24 - Week 4 – How do the poor survive in the US? – NO CLASS DUE TO POPE’S VISIT – SIMPLY DO THE READING AND WE WILL DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING WEEK**

Iceland: Chapter 7: Poverty and Policy and Conclusion

Shipler: Introduction: At the Edge of Poverty, Chapter 1: Money and Its Opposite, and Chapter 2: Work Doesn’t Work

**October 1 - Week 5 – How do the poor survive in developing countries? ONLINE**

Collins et al. “Chapter 1: The Portfolios of the Poor” and “Chapter 2: The Daily Grind”, in *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World’s Poor Live on $2 a Day*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009). (SAKAI)

Fields, Gary S. Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 in *Working Hard, Working Poor: A Global Journey*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). (SAKAI)

**October 8 - Week 6 –What role do social safety nets play in poverty alleviation?**

Fu, Cancian, and Meyer, “Standing Still or Moving Up? Evidence from Wisconsin on the Long-Term Employment and Earnings of TANF Participants” (SAKAI)

Cancian and Meyer, “Alternative Measures of Economic Success among TANF Participants: Avoiding Poverty, Hardship, and Dependence on Public Assistance” (SAKAI)

Van Parjis, “Basic Income: A Simple and Powerful Idea for the Twenty-First Century” (SAKAI)

Soares, Ribas and Osório, “Evaluating the Impact of Brazil’s Bolsa Família: Cash Transfer Programs in Comparative Perspective” (SAKAI)

**October 15 - Week 7 –What role do social safety nets play in poverty alleviation? (Continued)**

Ferguson, *Give a Man a Fish*

**October 22 - Week 8 – Presentation of First Papers**

**October 29 - Week 9 - Ending poverty through formal sector employment and participation in the global economy**

Shipler: Chapter 3: Importing the Third World, Chapter 4: Harvest of Shame, and Chapter 5: The Daunting Workplace

Krishna, Anirudh, Chapter 6: Connecting Capability with Opportunity: Investing in Information in *One Illness Away: Why People Become Poor and How They Escape Poverty* (New York: Oxford, 2010) (SAKAI)

Ehrenreich, Barbara. “Chapter 1: Serving in Florida” in *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001). (SAKAI)

Yunus, Muhammad. Chapter 9 Information Technology, Globalization, and a Transformed World in Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism (New York: Public Affairs, 2007). (SAKAI)

**November 5 - Week 10 – Housing, Land reform and upgrading informal settlements**

Perlman, Janice. “Reflections on Public Policy.” Chapter 10 in *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). (SAKAI)

Cisneros, Henry G. and Lora Engdahl, eds. Chapters 5, 11 and 15 in *From Despair to Hope Hope VI and the New Promise of Public Housing in America’s Cities*. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009). (SAKAI)

Freedman, Matthew and Tamara McGavock. 2015. “Low-Income Housing Development, Poverty Concentration, and Neighborhood Inequality.” Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (SAKAI)

**November 12 - Week 11 - How can health policy and education reduce poverty?**

**Roundtable with leaders in education from Camden**

Reading on urban education TBD

Karlan and Appel: Chapter 9: To Learn and Chapter 10: To Stay Healthy

Elmore, Richard F. “School Improvement and the Reduction of Poverty.” Chapter 6 in *Poverty and Poverty Alleviation Strategies in North America*, edited by Mary Jo Bane and Rene Zenteno. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). (SAKAI)

**November 19 - Week 12 – Encouraging entrepreneurship and programs to provide financial services**

**Guest Speaker on microfinance and child saving accounts.**

Karlan and Appel: Chapter 4: To Borrow, Chapter 5: To Pursue Happiness, Chapter 6: To Cooperate in Groups, and Chapter 7: To Save

Yunus: Chapter 1: A New Kind of Business, Chapter 2: Social Business: What It Is and What It Is Not, and Chapter 7: One Cup of Yogurt at a Time (SAKAI)

Banerjee, Abhijit, Dean Karlan, and Jonathan Zinman, 2015. “Six Randomized Evaluations of Microcredit: Introduction and Further Steps.” American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 7(1): 1-21. \*\*Please note that this is a summary of six studies also presented in this journal volume. The full volume can be accessed online through <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles.php?doi=10.1257/app.7.1>

(SAKAI)

**November 26 – Thanksgiving Holiday**

**December 3 - Week 13 –Can Farming and Agricultural Work Pay Off? Plus, a holistic approach.**

Karlan and Appel: Chapter 8: To Farm

Watch “Land Rush”, part of the PBS series Why Poverty? <http://video.pbs.org/video/2296680847/>

Banerjee et al. “A Multifaceted Program Causes Lasting Progress for the Very Poor: Evidence from Six Countries.” *Science Magazine*, 2015 (SAKAI)

**December 10 - Week 14 – Visit to Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers**

**December 17 – Meet to present Final Papers, 6pm, Final Papers Due by 5pm via Sakai dropbox.**