

Northwestern University

Department of Political Science

Political Science 395: *The Unequal Global Political Economy*
Winter 2017

Time: Wednesday 3:30-6:20pm
Venue: University Library 4670

Instructor: Moses Khisa
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Office: Scott Hall 219
Office Hours: Thursday 3-5pm and any other time by appointment
Syllabus also available at www.moseskhisa.com

Course Description

The globe is diverse, varied, and complex. But it is also highly unequal, uneven, and multifaceted – it's highly unequal. Global inequality is arguably one of the most important questions of our time. Scholarly debates have focused mainly on economic inequality much less so on political inequality in the regimes and institutions that govern transnational relations, military capabilities, and the political influences that nation-states and non-state actors wield. In other words, there are significant inequalities in the global distribution of material resources and wealth, but there are equally important and wide disparities in the concentration of particularly influential ideas and political practices between the global North and the South.

In this research and writing seminar, we will take up *inequality* as a critical aspect of the global political economy and interrogate its varied causes, wide-ranging consequences, and multiple responses. We will do this both through critical reading of selected works and by researching and writing about some of the questions that students will find fascinating and worth investigating.

The seminar's class meetings and readings are divided into three parts.

The first part is both theoretical and empirical. It will survey key domains of material and political inequality, starting with key normative issues and empirical concerns along with the broad implications of an unequal globe. This part of the course will provide an overview of the disparities in national and cross-national income and production output, historically but especially over the last few decades. The second part will analyze the politics of global governance and attendant institutions, including supranational organizations and multilateral bodies in the areas of trade, finance, and development.

The third and final part will cover some of the major consequences of, and responses to, global political and economic inequality: poverty and human development, borrowing and indebtedness, health and migration, etc., and attempt to peep into the future of global order in view of present inequality.

As this is a seminar, completing the week's assigned readings and being well-prepared to participate in class is critical. This means that attendance and informed class participation will be a key requirement for the course. Barring unforeseen circumstances like ill health and family emergencies, all students will be expected to attend class consistently and participate constructively.

In the event of missing class, I should be informed beforehand. To compensate for missing class, you will email me a **two-page** (in **Times New Roman, font 12 and single-spaced**) reading summary one hour to the start of class. Students with disabilities and in need of special assistance should inform me at the start, but should also communicate to the university office of disabilities.

In addition to class attendance and participation, there will be four other course requirements and assignments as listed below. Please read them carefully and take note of the respective deadlines for each assignment.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Seminar attendance and participation (20%). For every class meeting, each student will at the start of class **raise at least one discussion-question**.
2. **A two-page (double-spaced Times New Roman)** critique and leading class discussion, once (10%). I will provide a sign-up sheet for this. Students will sign up to write an incisive analysis of the readings for the week and lead initial class-discussion. The two-page critique will be due to me by email on **Wednesday at 2pm** of the week for which one signed up.
3. Research synopsis and peer-critique (10%); a synopsis of **two-three pages (double-spaced Times New Roman)** will include: the topic and research question, the thesis statement, and a summary-critique of the relevant literature. This will be sent to me by email **on Friday February 3 by 6pm**. I will then pair-up students whose topics are related and send an email to the pair (with both synopses). You will in turn send your peer (and copy me) a one-page critique of your peer's synopsis by **6pm On Monday February 6**. Note that it's the peer-critique, and not the research synopsis, that will be graded.
4. A draft research paper (**maximum of ten pages double-spaced Times New Roman**), sent to me by email (and copied to your peer) on **Friday February 24 by 6pm**. You will in turn write a two-page peer-critique of your peer's draft research paper (20%) sent to your peer by email (and copied to me) on **Friday March 3 by 6pm**. It's the critique that will be graded.
5. Final paper (40%), **maximum 20 pages in double-spaced Times New Roman**, sent to me by email on **Friday March 10 by 6pm**.

Summary of Grading

- Class attendance and participation, including one discussion question: 20%
- Critique of readings for one week: 10%
- Peer-critique of research synopsis: 10%
- Peer-critique of draft research paper: 20%

- Final research paper: 40%

Readings and Books for Purchase

The literature on the politics of global inequality is huge and vast; we'll barely scratch its surface in this course. Anthropologists, economists, political scientists, and sociologists of different theoretical stripes and methodological orientations have researched and written about this subject. We will read only a tiny fraction but one that can lead you to more scholarly debates and sources.

There are two required books which every student in the seminar must buy:

- Branko Milanovic, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2016)
- Joseph Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work* (New York: Norton, 2007)

A third book we will use is optional for purchase as I will provide scanned chapters. But if you can, do buy it as well: Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013).

The reading load is fairly substantial (closer to that of a graduate seminar) but is manageable. On average, every week we will read about 120 pages. In addition to the two required books, we will also draw heavily on recent works on the subject by leading economists and political scientists including Thomas Piketty, Dani Rodrick, Peter Singer, Angus Deaton, William Easterly, and Amartya Sen, among others. Selected readings from books by these scholars will be available on Canvas as scanned chapters. We will also read some journal articles and Op-Ed pieces. *Along the way, I may make some adjustments to the reading load or replace some of the readings.*

Academic Integrity

Northwestern University has a very strict policy against any form of academic dishonesty, otherwise called plagiarism. Northwestern University's "Principles Regarding Academic Integrity" defines plagiarism as "submitting material that in part or whole is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source." This being a research and writing seminar, students will be expected to refrain from any form of academic dishonesty and complete their writing assignments independently and genuinely. For more on plagiarism, see:

<http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/handbook/integrity/>

Course Schedule and Readings

Part I: Theoretical and Empirical Arguments

Week One (January 4, 2017): Concepts, Issues, and Measurements of Inequality

Required Readings:

- Branko Milanovic, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (Cambridge, Mass and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2016), Chapter One, pp. 1-45
- Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, Mass and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2014), Introduction, pp. 1-35, on Canvas

- Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), Chapter One, pp. 23-56, on Canvas.

***** Start thinking about your research topic and question(s) *****

Week Two (January 11, 2017): An Unequal Globe: Why should we care?

Required Readings:

- Peter Singer, *One World Now: The Ethics of Globalization* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016), Chapters One and Two, pp. 1-68, on Canvas.
- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, Chapter One, pp.3-24.
- Amartya Sen, *Inequality Reexamined* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992) Chapter One, pp. 1-30, on Canvas.

Week Four (January 25, 2017): Understanding National and Cross-National Inequality

Required Readings:

- Deaton, *The Great Escape*, Chapters Five-Six, pp.167-263, on Canvas.
- Milanovic, *Global Inequality*, Chapters Two and Three, pp. 46-154
- Thomas Sowell, *Wealth, Poverty and Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), Chapters Thirteen-Fifteen, pp. 319-405.

*****Think about your research synopsis: deadline is Friday February 3 by 6pm *****

Part II: Institutions of the Global Political Economy

Week Five (February 1, 2017): The WTO and the Politics of Global Trade

Required Readings

- Peter Singer, *One World Now: The Ethics of Globalization* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016), Chapter Three, pp. 69-121, on Canvas.
- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, Chapter Three (and Chapter Four if time allows), pp. 61-132.
- Rodrik, Dani, *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co), Chapter Three, pp47-66, on Canvas.
- Isabella Ramdoo, Economic Partnership Agreements: What has Africa Gained and What Can It Lose?

<http://www.ictsd.org/bridges-news/bridges-africa/news/economic-partnership-agreements-what-has-africa-gained-and-what-can>

Week Six (February 8, 2017): The Politics of Financial and Development Institutions

Required Readings

- Anthony Payne, *The Global Politics of Unequal Development* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Chapter Five, pp. 103-134, on Canvas.
- Lloyd Grubber, *Ruling the World: Power Politics and the Rise of Supranational Institutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Chapter Five, pp. 81-92, on Canvas.

- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, “Afterword to the Paperback Edition,” pp. 293-306
- Jamil Mustafa, “What is the G20 and How Does It Work?” *The Telegraph*, September 3, 2016
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/0/what-is-the-g20-and-how-does-it-work/>

***** Start thinking about your draft research paper: deadline is next Friday 24th *****

Part II: Consequences and Responses

Week Seven (February 15, 2017): Poverty, Debt, Health, and Migration

Required Readings

- Milanovic, *Global Inequality*, Chapter Four, pp. 155-211.
- Deaton, *The Great Escape*, Chapter Six, pp. 218-263.
- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, Chapter Eight, pp. 211-244

Week Eight (February 22, 2017): The Politics of Unequal Development

Required Readings

- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, Chapter Two, pp. 25-59
- William Easterly, “The Ideology of Development,” *Foreign Policy*, Oct. 13 (2009)
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/13/the-ideology-of-development/>
- Payne, *The Global Politics of Unequal Development*, Chapter Two, pp. 21-46

Week Nine (March 1, 2017): The Politics of “Saving” the World’s Poor

Required Readings

- Deaton, *The Great Escape*, Chapter Six and Postscript, pp. 267-329, on Canvas.
- William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), Chapter One, pp.3-30 and Chapters Ten-Eleven, pp. 324-384, on Canvas.
- Michael Hobbes, “Stop Trying to Save the World,” *New Republic*, Nov. 17(2014).
<https://newrepublic.com/article/120178/problem-international-development-and-plan-fix-it>

***** Peer-critique due March 3rd *****

Week Ten (March 8, 2017): The Present and the Future – Reforms and Directions

Required Readings

- Milanovic, *Global Inequality*, Chapter Five, pp. 212-239.
- Rodrik, Dani, *The Globalization Paradox*, Chapter Ten, pp. 207-232, on Canvas.
- Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, Chapters Nine-Ten, pp. 245-292

***** Final research paper due March 10th *****