This is an advanced level graduate seminar designed to cover the main areas of social stratification. After the course you will be well-versed both in the longer term trajectory of research in this area and in the most recent themes and findings.

Each week, all students are expected to do the required readings (those listed without any asterisks below) and take part in the discussion. Each week, all students are responsible for completing the required readings (those listed without any asterisks below) and coming to class prepared to discuss it. Twelve class sessions will be run by student teams of 2-3 people. Each student will participate in two of these teams during the course of the semester. I will ask you to send me your top five preferences (in rank order) and I will assign groups on that basis. The teams are responsible for preparing discussion questions regarding the assigned readings in advance, providing a short introductory presentation about the readings, and running the discussion. They are expected to complete the optional readings and briefly relate them to the mandatory readings for that week. (Readings listed with two asterisks are additional suggestions, but are required neither of the whole class nor of the presentation groups.)

The final requirement is a writing assignment (roughly 15-20 pages), due at the end of the semester. The writing should reflect your interests in and understanding of social stratification. I propose three different formats, but I am open to alternative suggestions:

1. An original research paper on a topic of interest to you. This might serve as the basis for an MA thesis, a journal submission, or a chapter of your dissertation.

2. A detailed proposal for a research project, including an extensive and critical review of the existing literature on the topic. This might serve as the basis for a grant proposal to support your dissertation research or future work.

3. A thorough analysis of the literature in a broad topic area (gender, racial/ethnic inequality, status attainment research, labor market studies, etc.) including both the readings from the syllabus and additional readings, in which you lay out the key issues, the primary arguments and perspectives, and critically assess the various contributions to the literature. This might serve as excellent preparation for the prelim exam in stratification.

Six required books are available at the University bookstore:

Many article readings are excerpted in the Grusky reader (GR below) or available on the internet. I will prepare electronic versions of remaining readings, which I will post on the course website.
Week 1, 9/4

Introduction

Week 2, 9/11

Classic theories of stratification

Davis, Kingsley and Wilbert E. Moore. “Some Principles of Stratification.” (GR 55-63)
Fischer, Claude et al. “Inequality By Design.” (GR 73-76)
Lenski, Gerhard. “New Light on Old Issues: The Relevance of ‘Really Existing Socialist Societies’ for Stratification Theory.” (GR 77-84)
Marx, Karl and Frederich Engels. Selections. (GR 87-105)
Weber, Max. Selections. (GR 132-152)
Durkheim, Emile. “The Division of Labor in Society.” (GR 178-83)
Mills, C. Wright. “The Power Elite.” (GR 202-211)

Week 3, 9/18

Class and occupation: theory, measures, and issues (Group 1)

Theories of class: critiques of classic theories and responses
Wright, Erik Olin. Selections. (GR 112-128)
Grusky, David and Jesper Sorensen. “Are There Big Social Classes?” (GR 183-194)
*Dahrendorf, Ralf. “Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society.” (GR 105-111)
*Parkin, Frank. “Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique.” (GR 162-77)
*Pakulski, Jan and Malcolm Waters. “The Death of Class.” (GR 866-74)

From Class to Occupational Prestige to Occupational Status
Treiman, Donald J. “Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective.” (GR 260-63)
Featherman, David L. and Robert M. Hauser. “Prestige or Socioeconomic Scales in the Study of Occupational Attainment?” (GR 271-73)
Hodge, Robert W. “The Measurement of Occupational Status.” (GR 273-81)
*Shils, Edward. “Deference.” (GR 247-54)

Week 4, 9/25

Status attainment and mobility: Educational attainment (Group 2)

Educational Stratification: Models and findings


Mechanisms of educational stratification:
**Macleod, Jay. “Ain’t No Makin’ It: Leveled Aspirations in a Low-income Neighborhood.” (GR 421-35)

Week 5, 10/2
Status attainment and mobility: Occupations and poverty (Group 3)
Jencks, Christopher et al. “Inequality.” (GR 403-410)

Week 6, 10/9
Status attainment and mobility: Mobility tables (Group 4)
Sorokin, Pitirim A. “Social and Cultural Mobility.” (GR 303-8)
Grusky, David B. and Robert M. Hauser. “Comparative Social Mobility Revisited: Models of Convergence and Divergence in 16 Countries.” (GR 336-43)
Week 7, 10/16  Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration I (Group 5)

Debates on the “Underclass” and Black Middle Class


Wilson, William Julius. “Jobless Poverty: A New Form of Social Dislocation in the Inner-City Ghetto.” (GR 651-60)


Oliver, Melvin L. and Thomas M. Shapiro. “Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality.” (GR 636-42)


Race, Education, Occupations, and Wages

Royster, Deidre A. 2003. Race and the Invisible Hand


Week 8, 10/23  Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration II (Group 6)

Immigrants, Ethnicity, and the Labor Market


*Waters, Mary C. “Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities.” (GR 608-10)

*Gans, Herbert J. “The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the Twenty First Century United States.” (GR 642-50)

Week 9, 10/30  Gender, Earnings, and Occupations (Group 7)

Grusky, David and Maria Charles. “Is There a Worldwide Sex Segregation Regime?” (GR 689-703)
Bielby, William T. “The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation.” (GR 703-14)
Reskin, Barbara. “Labor Markets as Queues: A Structural Approach to Changing Occupational Sex Composition. (GR 719-33)
Marini, Margaret Mooney and Pi-Ling Fan. “The Gender in Earnings at Career Entry.” (GR 743-60)
Kilbourne, Barbara Stanek et al. “Returns to Skill, Compensating Differentials, and Gender Bias: Effects of Occupational Characteristics on the Wages of Women and Men.” (GR 761-76)
Tam, Tony. “Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less?” (GR 776-80)


Week 10, 11/6  Stratification and family processes (Group 8)

Effects of family size and structure
**Mare, Robert D. 2001. “Observations on the Study of Social Mobility and Inequality.” (GR 477-90.)

*Marriage, Fertility, and Inequality*
Edin, Kathryn and Mary Kefalas. 2005. *Promises I Can Keep*

**Week 11, 11/13 Intra-generational processes: structural approaches (Group 9)**

**Dual Labor Market Theories**
Sørensen, Aage B., and Arne L. Kalleberg. “An Outline of a Theory of the Matching of Persons to Jobs.” (GR 438-446)

**Sector and Firm-level perspectives**

**Week 12, 11/20 Intra-generational processes: job and life cycle transitions (Group 10)**
Social networks and the labor market
Granovetter, Mark S. “The Strength of Weak Ties.” (GR 447-51)
Lin, Nan. “Social Networks and Status Attainment.” (GR 451-53)
Burt, Ronald S. “Structural Holes.” (GR 454-59)

Analyses of Job Mobility and Career Processes

Week 13, 11/27 Comparative perspectives: national institutions, policies (Group II)
**Week 14, 12/4 Comparative perspectives: trends in US inequality (Group 12)**

**Theories of Changing Social Structure**
Gouldner, Alvin W. “The Future of Intellectuals and Rise of the New Class” (GR 817-830)
*Kerr, Clark et al. “Industrialism and Industrial Man.” (GR 793-805)
*Bell, Daniel. “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society.” (GR 805-817)

**Trends in Inequality: Findings and explanations**
Morris, Martina and Bruce Western. “Inequality in Earnings: Trends and Implications.” (GR 875-81)
*Gottschalk, Peter. “Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts.” (GR 373-7)

**Week 15, 12/11 Comparative perspectives: market transition and stratification**