

UMBC UGC New Course Request: AMST 378

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Proposed Effective Date: Spring 2018

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	AMST 378
Formal Title	Poverty in American Culture
Transcript Title (≤30c)	Poverty in American Culture
Recommended Course Preparation	One lower-level social sciences or humanities course focused on American society or culture.
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	
# of Credits Must adhere to the UMBC Credit Hour Policy	3
Repeatable for additional credit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
Grading Method(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (Approximately 75 words in length. Please use full sentences.):

This interdisciplinary course examines the history, cultural contexts, discourses and politics of poverty in American life. The course surveys the history and contexts of American ideologies and policies regarding poverty, and analyzes the ways key cultural constructs about poverty have been deployed in academic, professional, and political discourses to shape public policy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE: This course addresses the cultural understandings of poverty which shape and influence public policy debates about inequality and social welfare that are central to a number of current public policy debates. It provides an additional option for one of the core themes in our curriculum, U.S. Social Structures and, since it can be taught by multiple faculty members, enhances scheduling flexibility. The course will be taught every third to fourth semester, and will serve both majors and non-majors at the upper-level. It is taught at the upper level because it requires advanced critical analysis of primary sources. The recommended course preparation is conformed to the departmental requirements for all upper-level courses, and regular grading will be employed as it will be used to fulfill major requirements.

ATTACH COURSE SYLLABUS (mandatory):

**AMST378
Poverty in American Culture**

In this course we will examine the history, cultural contexts, discourses and politics of poverty in American life. The course begins by examining the history and contexts of American ideologies and policies regarding poverty, and then turns to analyzing the way key cultural constructs about poverty have been deployed in academic, professional, and political discourses, and how those discourses in turn have shaped public policy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Learning Outcomes. In this course, students are expected to:

- * learn selected concepts and theories related to poverty knowledge in the U.S.
- * acquire an understanding of the history of U.S. poverty knowledge and policy
- * analyze the deployment of these concepts, theories, and histories in academic, professional, and popular discourses.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class relies on a combination of reading, writing, and analysis with a high level of intellectual exchange in the classroom. In American Studies, we are often more interested in the process of raising and struggling with interesting questions than in determining “answers.” You will be expected to interrogate as well as understand and synthesize the texts and lectures. To do well in the course, you must do the following:

Reading. Read all the books, articles, and handouts carefully and actively (that is: take notes, underline important phrases, jot down questions or ideas raised by the reading as you go). You will be held responsible for completing all the required readings; students who do additional reading will have more fuel for the intellectual fire and typically do better in the course.

Class Participation. Actively participate in class discussions and activities. The class participation grade is based on your performance in exercises (in-class and homework), quizzes, and contributions to class discussion and the electronic discussion list. Class participation also includes meeting basic administrative responsibilities, such as maintaining an up-to-date class schedule, completing readings and assignments on time, and taking the initiative for making up missed material and work.

Assignments. Complete all assignments on time. There will be two short papers on key concepts and policies, and two synthesis/analysis essays. Instructions for each paper will be handed out in class. Exercises, homework, group work or quizzes may be assigned and are included in the class participation grade.

GRADING

Your grades in this course will be determined as follows:

Briefs (2)	30% (15% each)
Synthesis essay	25%
Analysis essay	25%
Class Participation:	20%

All papers will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Readability: Presents material in a creative, compelling way that enhances reader interest.

Analysis/Interpretation: Constructs an original, intellectually sophisticated, and persuasive argument or interpretation. A key component of this criterion is presenting a coherent narrative or argument that supports all assertions with evidence.

Synthesis: Creates a focused narrative/description of material from a variety of sources. A key component of this criterion is demonstrating mastery of course content by selecting from course materials and original research the concepts, contexts, narratives and discourses essential to the analysis.

Description: Conveys accurately and fairly the concepts, contexts, narratives and discourses used in the paper. A key component of this criterion is demonstrating understanding of related course content.

Clarity: Expresses ideas clearly and concisely.

Technical adequacy: Meets professional standards of grammar, usage, syntax, and documentation.

POLICIES

Academic Freedom. Please see the academic freedom resources from the AAUP, particularly the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom, on the Blackboard site for this class.

Attendance/Absences. Regular and punctual attendance is required; absences and significantly late arrivals will be recorded and, if excessive, will lower your class participation grade. You are responsible for contacting other class members or Dr. Bryan to catch up on missed classes. Occasionally, changes in the reading and discussion schedule will be announced in class; you are responsible for keeping up with those changes even if absent when announced.

Late Papers. Arrangements should be made in advance if you will be unable to hand in an assignment on time. If advance arrangements have not been made, late papers will be accepted at my discretion, depending upon the circumstances.

Revisions. Revision of papers after the grade is determined is typically not permitted. Exceptions will be made in rare cases, at my discretion. Revision prior to submitting the paper is encouraged, and you may submit early drafts for review and comment up to 48 hours before the assignment is due.

Documentation. Proper documentation is required, both by university policy and by professional standards, which mandate that all research results, texts, and distinctive ideas be documented in a way that identifies their producers and enables other scholars to locate them. Failure to use proper documentation constitutes serious academic misconduct. Any finding, opinion, phrasing, or idea which is not your own should be cited, either in the text or in an endnote. This is true whether you quote or paraphrase. Direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks or placed in block format as well as documented.

Academic Integrity. Any instances of cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty in this course will be dealt with according to the policies and procedures spelled out in the Academic Conduct Code. Any violation of these policies and procedures may be grounds for the assignment of a grade of "F" for the course.

UMBC STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook.

REQUIRED READINGS

Books

Katz, Michael B. The Undeserving Poor: America's Enduring Confrontation with Poverty. 2nd. Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. 2013.

Desmond, Matthew. Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City. New York: Crown Publishers. 2016.

Other Reading and Viewing

America's War on Poverty. Henry Hampton, Dir. PBS. 1996.

Harrington, Michael. The Other America (1962).

http://web.mit.edu/21h.102/www/Primary%20source%20collections/Civil%20Rights/Other_America.htm

Moynihan, Daniel P. "Preface" in Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action in the War on Poverty. New York: Free Press. 1969.

"The Moynihan Report: An Annotated Edition," The Atlantic. May 9, 2015.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/the-moynihan-report-an-annotated-edition/404632/>

Wilson, William Julius. "Another Look at the Truly Disadvantaged," Political Science Quarterly 106: 4 (Winter 1992-1992): 639-656.

Wilson, William Julius. "A Broader Vision: Social Policy Options in Cross-National Perspective" Chapter 8 in When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor. New York: Vintage Press. 1996.

Wright, Nathan, Jr. "The Creative Use of Black Power," Chapter 3 in Black Power and Urban Unrest New York: Hawthorn Books. 1967.

Supplementary Readings and Materials

Additional materials will be available on the Blackboard site for the course. These materials include resources for class work and essays, as well as optional readings that provide deeper context on particular

topics.

SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTS

Aug 31-Sep 2 Readings distributed in class/on Blackboard
Sep 7-9 Katz, Preface

Sep 12-Oct 28 **Concept Briefs Due**

CULTURAL CONSTRUCTS OF POVERTY

Sep 12-16 Katz, Chapter 1
Sep 19-23 *America's War on Poverty*, Episode 1
Harrington, The Other America (excerpt)
Sep 26-30 Katz, Chapter 2
Oct 3-7 Katz, Chapter 3
Oct 10-14 *America's War on Poverty, selected episodes*
Moynihan, "Preface" from Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding
Wright, "Creative Uses of Black Power"
Oct 17-21 Katz, Chapter 4
Oct 24-28 Katz, Chapter 5
Wilson, "Another Look at the Truly Disadvantaged"
Wilson, "A Broader Vision"

CONTEMPORARY POLICIES AND DISCOURSES

Oct 31-Nov 4 **Case Study: The Moynihan Report**
"The Moynihan Report: An Annotated Edition"
Additional resources Blackboard

Nov 7 **Historical synthesis essay due**

Nov 7-11 **Case Study: Housing**
Desmond, Part One
Nov 14-18 Desmond, Part Two
Nov 21-23 Desmond, part Three

Nov 28 **Policy Briefs Due**

Nov 28-Dec 9 **Workshop: Discourse Analysis**
Work in progress reports and responses due in class

Dec 12 **CONCLUSION**

Dec 19 **Discourse Analysis paper due**