POLITICAL SCIENCE 4000
POLITICS OF POVERTY
Fall 2008

Dr. Renée L.A. Renegar
POLI 4000, Section 4
TTH 10:40 – 12:00
203 Tureaud

Office Hours:
MW 1:00 – 1:30 or by appointment
114 David Boyd Hall
Telephone: 578-1128
Email: renegl@lsu.edu

Course Description:
The purpose of this course is to introduce poverty as the key to understanding some of the most important problems facing our county. The class will start by giving you the necessary tools to understand academic literature on the subject. We will then move to a discussion of how we define poverty, its causes, and our choice of solutions. Because poverty has been defined as a problem worthy of national government attention since the 1930s, any discourse on poverty is inherently a political one. We will end the semester by discussing possible solutions to poverty for children.

Required Text:
One Percent for the Kids: New Policies, Brighter Futures for America’s Children, edited by Isabel Sawhill.

Readings
Other readings will come from online sources. They are listed in your course schedule.

Student Evaluation and Policies:
Grades for the course are based on a student’s class participation and on performance on two in-term exams and a final exam. Letter grades are determined on the following scale:

A 90% - 100%
B 80% - 89%
C 70% - 79%
D 60% - 69%
F 0 - 59%

Class Participation
Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions. Up to 25 points can be earned for class participation.

Exams
Two exams and one final consisting of 100 points each will be given. The final exam will focus on the last section of material covered; however, material covered earlier in the semester may be drawn upon as well. Please note that any readings not covered in class will still be on the exams. It is the student’s responsibility to complete all readings and be prepared to answer any questions about them on the exams.

On exam dates, please bring a blue book to class. Blue books are available for purchase in the Bookstore.

Makeup exams are only provided for students who can produce a valid excuse (serious illness, family crisis, etc.). For problems that can be anticipated, students must let me know in advance of the problem. For problems that crop up at the last minute, students should contact me as soon as is reasonably possible. Students who do not meet these conditions will earn a 0 on the exam. Note that it is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with me about makeup exams. Makeups are generally scheduled for the Friday following the date of the missed exam.
For students who have special needs or who require accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation. For accommodations involving the exams, please contact me about the necessary arrangements well in advance of the testing date.

The Final Exam schedule is posted on the University Registrar website. Students who have more than two exams scheduled for the same day may request — through their college — that an examination be rescheduled. According to published University Registrar guidelines any such requests must be made prior to 4:30 on Friday, November 7. **Requests made after this date will NOT be considered.**

**Paper**
There is a 8 – 10 page (double spaced, one inch margin, 12 point Times New Roman) paper due on the last day of class. The paper will consist of an examination of a presidential candidate’s platform dealing with **poverty related issues** (poverty, income inequality, social welfare, etc.). You will critique the platform in light of the course’s readings and lectures. The bibliography (not counted in the page total) must consist of at least seven sources. Web based sources are limited to TWO. In addition, THREE of your non-web based sources must be readings from outside the course. The paper is worth 150 points.

**Extra Credit - Voter Registration**
Students may earn two (2) points added to their final, raw score. Proof of registration is due November 4. Register to vote and submit a copy of your voter registration card. (This copy will be returned to protect your privacy.) Students who are already registered to vote need only submit a current copy of their registration card.

**Classroom Policy**
Please be considerate of those around you who are trying to listen and take notes. Keep in mind that class will begin promptly at 10:40. **Please be on time and seated prior to the beginning of class each day and leave early only for emergencies.** Most importantly, **do not talk during class.** Use of cell phones is prohibited during class — turn off all cell phones prior to the beginning of class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave immediately.