

Syllabus – Summer 2025

Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Politics of Inequality

Credits: 3

Format: Online

Prerequisites: Open only to juniors or higher.

Professor: Thomas Hayes

Email: thomas.hayes@uconn.edu (preferred contact)

Availability: I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours.

Course Materials

Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.

Texts are available through a local or online bookstore of your choice. The [UConn Bookstore](#) carries the required text(s), which can be shipped ([fees apply](#)).

Required Materials:

Item 1: Dahl, Robert. 2006. *On Political Equality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Item 2: Saez, Emmanuel and Gabriel Zuckman. 2019. *The Triumph of Injustice*. W.W. Norton.

Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT

Course Description

The goal of this class is to investigate the relationship between democracy and inequality. To this end, the class focuses on the relationship between democratic institutions and distributive outcomes, primarily in the United States. Some of the major themes of the course are: the causes of growing economic inequality, poverty, public opinion, inequalities in political voice and representation, the role of money and politics, and public policy.

Course Objectives

The objectives for this course are: 1) Explain the political determinants of income inequality. 2) Evaluate the nature of American democracy and the political forces that affect the economic system. 3) Assess, with a critical eye, current practices in both political and economic affairs.

Course Outline

Module 1: An Introduction to Economic Inequality in the U.S.

Module 2: (In)Equality in American Political Thought

Module 3: Public Opinion and the Psychology of Inequality

Module 4: Representation and the Role of Money in Politics

Course Requirements and Grading

Summary of Course Grading:

Course Components	Weight
Participation in online discussion boards	25%
Short Writing Assignments	10%
Reading Quizzes	25%
Module Essays	40%

Participation in online discussion boards

Students are expected to participate in online discussion boards on various topics throughout the course. Students are expected to respond to prompts as well as other students. Students are graded on the quality of their comments and their ability to spur a thoughtful and respectful discussion. It is expected that students log-in to HuskyCT at a minimum every other day.

Short Assignments

Students are expected to complete short writing assignments on questions dealing with key issues and themes encountered through course readings. These writing assignments are generally about 1 page single spaced reflections and will be submitted through SafeAssignment on HuskyCT.

Reading Quizzes

Students will be responsible for completing short multiple choice reading and short essay quizzes. Most modules will have multiple quizzes on assigned readings.

Module Essays

Many modules will end with timed essay tests. Students should cite the course readings in these essay responses to demonstrate knowledge and grasp of assigned readings.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Letter Grade
93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
<60	F

Due Dates and Late Policy

All assignments are due by 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). All course due dates are identified on HuskyCT. Deadlines are based on Eastern Standard Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. *The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.* Late Assignments will be heavily

penalized.

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades within 3 days. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
 - Academic Integrity
 - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

All students are expected to act in accordance with the Guidelines for Academic Integrity at the University of Connecticut. If you have questions about academic integrity or intellectual property, you should consult with me or consult UConn's [guidelines for academic integrity](#). Posting course material on student tutoring and course sharing websites (e.g. Chegg, Course Hero) may be a violation of my copyright and intellectual property and a violation of academic integrity. Many of you may also be aware of the recent release of ChatGPT3, a Large Language artificial intelligence (AI) model that has the capacity to quickly produce text on a range of topics. ChatGPT3 aggregates the ideas and insights of many researchers without giving them credit. Submitting ChatGPT-generated text as your own work would be an act of plagiarism insofar as it would involve passing off the work of others as your own. For these reasons, you are not allowed to use this ChatGPT or other similar tools to produce essays or other academic work for this class, unless otherwise explicitly permitted to do so. You should also know that the university has AI detection software that distinguishes between AI generated content and human generated content.

Students with Disabilities

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University's [Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\)](#). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government." (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

Software Requirements

The technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](#), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](#))
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](#), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](#))
- Google Apps ([Google Apps @ UConn Accessibility](#), [Google for Education Privacy Policy](#))
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through uconn.onthehub.com) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](#), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](#))
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).

Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the [Help Center](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.