



## Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty

**Number of Credits:** 3\*

**Course Instructors:** Miriam Woods and Jordan Mix

**Course Description:** As educators, it is our primary goal to provide safe and supportive learning environments for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or identities. As of 2018, 11.8% of the population is living below the poverty line. While great strides and improvements are happening to decrease that percentage, time and attention needs to be spent understanding the effects of poverty on our students, schools, and communities.

The purpose of this course is to provide participants with an understanding of poverty in their schools and communities. Participants will learn what income inequality is, the causes of it, and how it manifests differently in different communities. Participants will learn about the impact on social mobility and how poverty affects overall academic achievement. Considerable attention will be given to the intersections between income inequality and various identities, including race, immigration status, incarceration, LGBTQ identity, surviving a natural disaster, and gender inequality.

Participants will then spend time learning about the overall effects of poverty, including childhood trauma, overall academic achievement, admittance and completion of a postsecondary educational program, and attaining a future career. Participants will then learn about the best practices for assisting economically disadvantaged students, and they will develop an implementation plan to take back to their schools and communities.

**Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define poverty and income inequality
- Describe the causes of poverty in the context of rural, suburban, and urban schools
- Understand the cycles of power and its impact on social mobility
- Describe the intersections between poverty and homelessness, hunger, and joblessness
- Outline the intersections between poverty and race, immigration status, incarceration, LGBTQ identity, natural disasters, and gender inequality.
- Analyze the overall effects of poverty on our students, including achievement, trauma, and educational outcomes
- Determine best practices for assisting economically disadvantaged students reach their postsecondary goals
- Design an implementation plan which contains best practices for assisting economically disadvantaged students in our classrooms and schools

**Resources:** No texts are required to purchase in order to complete this course

- **Hegedus, A. (2018) Evaluating the Relationships Between Poverty and School Performance.**
  - *The purpose of this study is to evaluate the school performance of economically disadvantaged students after shifts in federal education policy and the adoption of the Every Student Succeeds Act. This report highlights the intersections between student achievement and growth vs. school poverty and the important nuances to the data collection and policy implementation which affects students' overall academic achievement.*
- **Jensen, E. (2009). Teaching with Poverty in Mind; What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do About It.**
  - *In this book, a longtime educator and brain expert details what poverty does to children's brains and why students raised in poverty are especially subject to stressors that undermine school behavior and performance. Readers learn best practices for reversing the effects of poverty. This text includes both*

*research and student testimonials to highlight the achievement of economically disadvantaged students in our schools.*

- The mission of Iowa Safe Schools is to provide safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments for all students. Staff of the Iowa Safe Schools are experts in the fields of bullying prevention and intervention, developing positive school climate, and advocating for underrepresented and marginalized populations. LGBTQ students are at greater risk for being economically disadvantaged and living in homelessness. GSAs are shown to be a best practice for increasing awareness of discriminatory school policies, reducing bullying, reducing deaths by suicide, and ensuring students feel safe and support in their schools and communities.

**\*Course Requirements:** To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

#### **Other Course Information:**

#### **Getting Started**

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with login instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

#### **Participation**

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 9 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the "Submit A File" option.
- You may work collaboratively and submit similar responses on all assignments except for quizzes which must be done individually.

#### **INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:**

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

**Check the Iowa Teaching Standards that are addressed in this course:**

X	1. Enhance Student Achievement		5. Monitoring Student Learning
	2. Content Knowledge	X	6. Classroom Management
X	3. Planning and Preparation	X	7. Professional Growth
X	4. Instructional Strategies	X	8. Professional Responsibilities

**Assignment Checklist**

Topic/Activity	In Class Hours	Out of Class Hours
<b>Getting to Know the Class; Additional Readings:</b> Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!		3
<b><u>Week 1</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Definitions of Poverty and Income Inequality</b> – In this lesson, participants will develop a baseline understanding of what poverty and income inequality is and the stereotypes surrounding economically disadvantaged people. In a discussion post, participants will elicit how their preconceptions about poverty compare to the definitions of poverty and income inequality.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: The Causes of Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the systemic structures which cause poverty. Participants will reflect on the ways the economy, neighborhood structures, and other factors affect income levels through a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty in America</b> – Participants will reflect on the ways poverty affects rural, suburban, and urban communities and schools. Through a discussion post, participants will share how they see poverty manifest in their own schools.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 2</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: The Cycles of Poverty</b> - Participants will discuss the issue of poverty and how living paycheck to paycheck for families puts them at risk for homelessness.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Playspent.org Activity</b> - Participants will play on online game that simulates the situation many people face of having to choose where to spend their limited income carefully.	1	2
<b>Discussion: Social Mobility</b> – Participants will learn what social mobility is and the ways people move from socioeconomic categories. In a discussion post, participants will compare the social mobility of people who live and don't live in poverty.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 3</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: The Experience of Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will reflect on the experiences of families and youth living in poverty and how that effects their education and overall livelihood through a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Privilege, Oppression, and Intersectionality</b> – Participants will learn about the difference between privilege and oppression and how the intersection of multiple oppressed identities can increase the likelihood of someone being economically disadvantaged. They will share their reflections in a discussion post.	1.5	3

<b>Discussion: Implicit Bias and Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will understand how their implicit bias toward students living in poverty manifests itself in the school and classroom.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 4</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Hunger</b> – In this lesson, participants will understand the current state of food security in our students, particularly those living in poverty. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Jobs, Joblessness, and Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will understand how unemployment and the current job market influences poverty in America. Through a discussion post, participants will share their insights.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Homelessness</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the ways that poverty fuels homelessness. In a discussion post, participants will reflect on the experiences of students living in poverty.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 5</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Race</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the intersections between race and poverty and its impact on students. Participants will share their insights in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Immigration Status</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the intersections between refugee, asylum-seeking, and immigration status and poverty. Participants will share their critical analysis through a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Incarceration</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about how incarceration can result in poverty. Participants will also learn about the school-to-prison pipeline and how policies and procedures within a school can directly lead students into incarceration and poverty.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 6</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Natural Disasters</b> – Participants will analyze how natural disasters can influence students’ and families’ access to opportunity and jobs. Through a discussion post, participants will outline how these factors could lead to poverty.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Gender Inequality</b> – In this lesson, participants will analyze how gender discrimination in the labor market can lead to poverty. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and the LGBTQ Community</b> – In this lesson, participants will compare the poverty rate of LGBTQ people to heterosexual/cisgender people. People will reflect on the reasons why in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b><u>Week 7</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: The Income Achievement Gap</b> – In this lesson, participants will analyze data highlighting the academic achievement of students based on socioeconomic status. They will share their analysis in a discussion post.	2	3.5
<b>Discussion: The Trauma of Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn how living in poverty can be a traumatic experience for some students. Participants will learn about what Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are, take an ACEs assessment, and share their thoughts in a discussion post.	2	3.5
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Education Outcomes</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn how poverty has an impact on overall student development and postsecondary success. They will share their findings in a discussion post.	2	3.5

<u>Week 8</u>		
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Preparing for College</b> – In this lesson, participants will understand the barriers students in poverty face as they prepare for college and their future careers. Participants will share their analysis in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Poverty and Attending College</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the lived experience of economically disadvantaged college students. In a discussion post, participants will share their reflections.	1.5	3
<b>Discussion: Creating College &amp; Career Readiness Supports</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the best practices and policies which assist economically disadvantaged students. Participants will evaluate the existence of those policies at their own schools, and they will share their findings in a discussion post.	1.5	3
<u>Week 9</u>		
<b>Discussion: Federal Law Protecting Students in Poverty</b> - Participants will review legal requirements of schools including McKinney-Vento Act. They will reflect on these guidelines in a discussion post.	2	3.5
<b>Discussion: Creating Educational Supports for Students in Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the best practices they can start implementing in their classrooms and schools immediately to help support students living in poverty. Participants will share their thoughts in a discussion post.	2	3.5
<b>Discussion: Evaluating Current Supports for Students in Poverty</b> – In this lesson, participants will go to their classrooms and schools and determine which supports are currently being implemented to assist students living in poverty. They will report back in a discussion post.	2	3.5
<b>Final Assignment:</b>	2	4
<b>Total Class Time</b>	<b>45 Hours</b>	<b>90 Hours</b>

**Coursework:** Participants can earn up to 185 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
27 Discussion Posts (5 Points Each)	135
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>

**Grading Scale – Graduate Credit**

100-90% (185 - 167 points)	A
89-80% (166 – 148 points)	B
79-70% (147 - 130 points)	C
69-60% (129 - 111 points)	D
59%-Below (<111 points)	F

**Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit**

100-80% (185 - 148 points)	P
79%-Below (<148 points)	NP

**Student Requirements** Students are required to:

- Participate in **ALL** discussion forums and quizzes
- Complete a final implementation plan

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Statement of Plagiarism:** Academic dishonesty results in failure of this course. Give credit where credit is due. Use the APA Publication Manual to cite references when needed. Not crediting ideas or words of others is unacceptable scholarship as is submitting work that was done for a previous course or that is not your own origin in design or completion. Submit original assignments. Do not submit work for this course that you have done for other courses.

**Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities**

**27 Discussions (135 points possible)** Discussion Forums are asynchronous ways to engage in class discussions. They require you to submit an answer to a question and respond to the posts of other peers. Because they are an integral part of sharing strategies, analyzing research, and sharing ideas, discussion forums in this course comprise a significant percentage of your final grade. It's highly recommended that you read and respond to more than the required two peer postings because greater participation will facilitate a greater depth of understanding. Additionally, it's important to make posts in a timely manner to benefit from peer responses.

<b>Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums</b>		
		<b>Points</b>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and example(s)	1
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
<b>Assignment Specific Criteria</b>	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	1
<b>Participation (Responses to at least 2 peer posts)</b>	Responds to other posts (when available)	1
<b>Total Points Possible</b>		5

**Final Assignment (50 points possible)**

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two-page final assignment. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the final assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

<b>Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan</b>		
		<b>Points</b>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	10
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	10
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	6
	Discusses Overall Implications	4
<b>Assignment Specific Criteria</b>	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	4
<b>Mechanics</b>	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	4
<b>Implementation</b>	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	4

	States resources to be used	4
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	4
<b>Total Points Possible</b>		<b>50</b>