PS401: Political Inequality—Measures, Causes, Effects and Remedies
Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Fall 2015

Class time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2:15pm in Humanities 1217
Professor: Rikhil R. Bhavnani
Office hours: Thursdays, 2:30-4:30pm in 312 North Hall. To ensure that I can see everyone, please sign up in advance at https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/DxXsyvez.html.
Email: bhavnani@wisc.edu

Course overview: Political equality is a normative ideal, and is thought to have positive consequences on people’s socio-economic outcomes such as income, health and education. As a result, many societies have sought to correct political inequality through various remedies, including electoral quotas. In this course, we will review what political inequality is, and examine how scholars have measured it, and studied its causes, effects and remedies. The course will focus on inequalities in political participation and representation.

Assignments and grading: The final class grade will be based on:
• Class attendance and participation, for 15% of the class grade. Questions and discussion are encouraged. Exams will draw heavily on materials covered in lecture.
• A presentation of a “political inequality audit” of a randomly assigned country, for 15% of the grade. Audits will be conducted by groups of 3-5 students, and must reflect the concerted effort of all group members. Presentations should, in 20 minutes, provide an overview of glaring political inequalities in the assigned country, and an assessment of the causes and effects, and remedies for, one particularly acute inequality.
• An in-class midterm, for 35 % of the class grade.
• A final exam, for 35% of the class grade.

Disabilities: Students needing special accommodations to enable full participation in this course should contact me during the first week of class. All information will remain confidential. You may, in addition to contacting me, contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (www.mcburney.wisc.edu) at 1305 Linden Drive and 608.263.2741 regarding questions about campus policies and services.

Class plan (subject to modification):

Class 1 (9/8): Introductions, course logistics, what is political inequality?, 1
Class 2 (9/10): What is political inequality?, 2

Class 3 (9/15): Measures of political inequality

The Causes of Political Inequality

Class 4 (9/17): Regime type

Class 5 (9/22): Movie—Suffragettes
- Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. 1848. "Declaration of Sentiments."

Class 6 (9/24): Disenfranchisement

Class 7 (9/29): The electoral system

Class 8 (10/1): Malapportionment

Class 9 (10/6): Differential participation

Class 10 (10/8): Prejudice
- Also watch
  www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders.html
Class 11 (10/13): Economic inequality

Class 12 (10/15): Review

Class 13 (10/20): Midterm

*The Effects of Political Inequality*

Class 14 (10/22): Of regime type

Class 15 (10/27): Of gender inequality

Class 16 (10/29): Case study—Taxation

Class 17 (11/3): Case study—The welfare state

Class 18 (11/5): Case study—The financial crisis

Class 19 (11/10): Political inequality audits, 1

Class 20 (11/12): Political inequality audits, 2

Class 21 (11/17): Political inequality audits, 3

Class 22 (11/19): Political inequality audits, 4

*Remedies for Political Inequality*
Class 23 (11/24): War

Class 24 (12/1): Foreign aid

Class 25 (12/3): Non-partisan redistricting

Class 26 (12/8): Movie—Gerrymandering
- Play the game at http://www.redistrictinggame.org/index.php?pg=game

Class 27 (12/10): Quotas

Class 28 (12/15): Conclusions and review

Final (12/17), 10:05-12:05pm