Objective of the course:

This six week course will open with discussion about the use of the term inequality in the Economics discipline and the problems and ways to measure it. We will also discuss measures of poverty and mobility. We will compare the evolution of those measures across OECD countries. The following weeks are organized around big themes: education, labor markets and wage inequality, family. We will look at the impact of different policies across the OECD in relation to those themes. Finally we will focus on the consequences (and may be causes) of inequality and its relationship to growth and development in a broad context (e.g. credit market access, institutions and growth).

Course Requirements:

Each week students will read the required readings ahead of each lecture. Required readings and some of the background readings are available on the blackboard. Other background readings are also available in the main University Catalog (many through JSTOR). The background readings are for those interested in furthering a particular topic and constitute some of the material I use to prepare my class in addition to the required readings.

Each student is required to prepare three reflection papers of either type A or type B (at least one of each type) at the week of their choosing. The papers need to be posted on blackboard by noon on Monday (previous to the class).

Type A: A critical analytical review of one of the assigned papers (e.g. main ideas in the paper, how they address the topic under discussion, provide some comments as if you were writing a referee report) (max 4 pages double spaced)

Type B: An overview of the weekly papers (e.g. common themes, conflicting arguments, issues you find missing and strengths of the discussions) (max 4 pages double spaced)
LECTURE OUTLINE

Lecture 1 (September 22) – Concepts and Tools for Measuring Income Inequality, and Poverty

Required Readings:


A Brandolini, TM Smeeding ,Inequality patterns in western democracies: cross-country differences and time changes– mimeo 2007 (can be found on the web)


Related background readings:


Websites with papers on inequality issues:
Effects of Inequality on Economic Performance: Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley
http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/macarthur/inequality/papers/

The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) is a cross-national Data Archive and a Research Institute located in Luxembourg. The LIS archive contains two primary databases. The LIS Database includes income microdata from a large number of countries at multiple points in time. The newer LWS Database includes wealth microdata from a smaller
selection of countries. The website also contains working papers on inequality. [http://www.lisproject.org/]


**Lecture 2 (September 29) — Childhood and Family**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Background Readings**


Patrick Heuveline, Jeffrey M. Timberlake and Frank F. Furstenberg “Shifting childrearing to Single mothers: results from 17 Western Countries”, *Population and Development Review* 29 (1): 47-71


**Lecture 3 (October 6) – Education**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Background Readings**


Lecture 4 (October 13) – Labor Market and Wages

Required Readings:


Recommended Background Readings


Chapter 2: Employment protection regulation and labour market performance


Chapter 4: Improving skills for more and better jobs: does training make a difference?

Lecture 5 (October 20) - Intergenerational Mobility, and Market Failures
Required Readings:


John Ermisch, Marco Francesconi, Thomas Siedler.2006 “Intergenerational Economic Mobility and Assortative Mating” Economic Journal, 116 (513), 659-679 (Skim results, a bit too technical)

Recommended Readings


Anders Bjorklund and Jantti, Markus, Intergenerational Income Mobility and the Role of Family Background (Chapter 20) In Wiemer Salverda, Brian Nolan, Timothy M. Smeeding (editors, 2009): The Oxford Handbook of Economic Inequality. Oxford University Press.
Lecture 6 (October 27) - Inequality, growth and Development

Required Readings:


Boix, Carles (2009) The Conditional Relationship between Inequality and Development, Political Studies, October. (Still in press, I have a copy)


Recommended Background Readings


