Semester: Spring 2012
Instructor: Professor Erdal Tekin
Time/Place: 1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, ALC 404
Office: Andrew Young School Building, Suite # 560
Office Phone: (404) 413-0163
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:15 p.m.– 4:15 p.m. or by appointment.
Email: tekin@gsu.edu (Always write “ECON 4350” on the subject line.)
Writing Consultants:
   Eric Napierala (enapierala1@student.gsu.edu)
      Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
   Brandon Williams (bwilliams108@student.gsu.edu)
      Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Prerequisite: ECON 2105 or ECON 2106 (or equivalent to be approved by the instructor)

Course Objective: This course applies basic economic principles to exploring the debate surrounding the concept of poverty in the United States and to a lesser extent elsewhere in the world. Some of the questions that we will study include "How is poverty defined?; How is poverty measured?; Why are some people poor and others are not, and what should we as a nation do about it, if anything?

By the end of this course, the student should be able to (1) describe the extent of poverty in the United States and how it is measured; (2) critically analyze the causes of poverty; and (3) evaluate the actual and potential responses of the private and public/government sectors to the problem. With these goals in mind, some of the topics that will be discussed include poverty and inequality, economics of the family, racial/gender discrimination and segregation, history of welfare, the incentive structure of the current and proposed welfare plans, and welfare reform.

Textbook: The required text is Bradley Schiller, The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination, 10th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall.

Other required readings will be made available through the reserve room at the library or through the instructor.
**uLearn**: Important course information will be posted on uLearn (http://ulearn.gsu.edu). It is the responsibility of each student to check uLearn regularly for announcements, home works, lecture notes, etc. Students should not contact the instructor requesting any material that is already on uLearn.

**Grading**: There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. The midterm will be worth 26% of the overall course grade. The final exam will count toward 36% of the final course grade. Note that the final exam will be cumulative. Quizzes will represent 12% of your grade. The remaining 26% of the overall grade will be determined by a group project.

**Grading Formula**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.99 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Exams can be in any format, short or long answer essay questions, questions requiring mathematical calculations, true/false questions, multiple choice questions, or any combinations of these. Lecture materials of all forms and external reading assignments are fair game for the exams.

**Policies**

1. **Attendance**: Students are responsible for obtaining any missed lecture notes from their classmates or uLearn. The presumption of your registration for this course at this time is that you are able to attend class, arrive on time, and do not depart early.

The following is a formal policy at the Georgia State University: “Effective Fall 2001, instructors must, on a date after the mid-point of the course (to be set by the Provost)

i. give a WF to all those students who are on their rolls but no longer taking the class and

ii. report the last day the student attended or turned in an assignment. Students who are on financial aid should pay particular attention to this new rule as it may affect your financial aid status. To determine whether or not you are “still taking
the class”, Attendance will be determined based on participation in exams and homework assignments.

2. The exams will not be rescheduled for any student under any circumstances. If a student is unable to attend the midterm exam due to an unexpected emergency, and she/he can provide satisfactory written documentation of the emergency, her/his final exam will be weighed more heavily to make up for the missed exam. You cannot miss the final exam.

   i. You are allowed to use a simple calculator during the exam.
   ii. You are not allowed to use any wireless device, including cell phones and personal laptops during the exam or regular lectures. The violation of this rule will be considered as evidence of academic misconduct.
   iii. All exams are closed book. You are not allowed to use any notes or any other written material unless allowed by the instructor.
   iv. In the event that classes are canceled on the day of an exam, the exam will be given on the first class day of following the cancellation.

3. Students are expected to do their work in a manner consistent with the guidelines of GSU policy on Academic Honesty.

4. Upholding the integrity of learning environment is essential. This starts with attending the class. Do not arrive late on a regular basis, do ask questions and make comments related to the course material, but don’t read newspapers or other materials in class, don’t be rude or disruptive. If you arrive late for class, you must sit in the back and be quiet as you enter. Likewise, if you must leave early, do so as quietly as possible. Please do not disturb other students in the class who have made the commitment to be on time and take advantage of the full class. Be respectful to others' opinions and needs, and most importantly turn off your cell phones and pagers in the classroom. You are not allowed to use your cell phone in airplanes and churches/synagogues/mosques/temples, and you are NOT allowed to use them in the classroom. Please refer to the following web site for more information

http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwsen/minutes/2002-2003/disrupt.html

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** Georgia State University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek academic accommodations need to take appropriate documentation to the Office of Disabilities Services located in Suite 230 of the Student Center. Please inform me if you have any disabilities requiring special accommodation.

**Religious holidays:** Any student registered for this course who plans to observe a religious holiday, which conflicts in any way with the course schedule or
requirements, should contact the instructor two weeks prior to indicate the need for an accommodation.

Important Dates:

Midterm: Thursday, February 23rd, 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Final exam: Tuesday, April 24th, 10:45 a.m. – 13:15 p.m.
Deadline for Group Project: Thursday, April 19th.

01/13/2012 - Last Day to Add/Drop classes
02/24/2012- Last day to Withdraw (www.gsu.edu/es/withdrawals.html for details)
02/27/2012 – 03/04/2012 – Thanksgiving Break (University official holiday - no classes)

There are absolutely no exceptions to exam dates.

Course Outline

Poverty Definitions and Measurement of Poverty

Chapter 1 - Views of Inequality and Poverty
Chapter 2 - Inequality
Chapter 3 - Counting the poor
Chapter 4 - Global Poverty and Inequality

Causes of Poverty

Chapter 5 – Labor Force Participation
Chapter 6 – The Working Poor
Chapter10 – Education and Ability
Chapter 11 – Discrimination in Education
Chapter 12 – Discrimination in the Labor Market

Poverty and Related Public Policy

Chapter 13 – Welfare Programs
Chapter 14 – Social Insurance Programs
Chapter 15 – Employment Policies
Chapter 16 – Equal Opportunity Policies
Group Project Guidelines

The group project aims to improve the analytical, writing, organizational, collaborative, and communication skills of the students taking ECON 4350.

Students will work as a group to investigate various aspects of a topic related to the course material during the semester. At the end of the semester, each group will turn in one complete project paper.

Groups will be assigned by the instructor and will contain no more than five students.

Groups are expected to choose their project topic on their own but each topic will have to be approved by the instructor before becoming official.

The instructor will allow group members to meet in class every week for a short period. However, groups are highly encouraged to hold regular meetings outside class time. The instructor will create online discussion boards on uLearn to facilitate communication. The group members could also benefit from exchanging email addresses and phone numbers.

The group paper will not exceed 25 pages, including tables, figures, appendices, and references (using one-inch margins, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 font). Each paper will have a title page followed by an abstract (maximum 250 words). The title page and the abstract pages are not part of the 25 limit on the paper.

Each group member will submit a peer evaluation sheet regarding the group project. The due date for the peer evaluation sheet is the last day of class.

Appropriate references must be read and cited. A list of the sources of information for the group project is provided below.

A project paper would typically contain the following sections

1. Abstract (maximum 250 words) – A summary of what you analyze and your conclusions.
2. Introduction – This section is where you introduce your topic to the reader and motivate your analysis. You are expected to convince the reader why it is important to analyze this topic and why anyone should be interested in.
3. Literature Review (or Background) – This is where you describe other analyses and findings/conclusions on the topic. This is also the place where you describe how your analysis is different and how it improves our understanding above the current state of knowledge.
4. Your findings – Here you describe your own approach to the question and your own critical analysis. This is where you are expected to demonstrate your own contribution and approach to the question in hand.

5. Conclusions – This is where you wrap up and summarize your major findings and what the reader should take away from your analysis. You can also describe any policy implications and avenues for future analysis in this section.

The group project will be worth 26% of your overall grade. The instructor will evaluate both the quality of the overall product as well as the performances of individual group members. The instructor’s own observations inside the class and during office hours, the feedback from the group members through the evaluation sheet, and the conversations with WAC consultants will help the instructor to conduct a thorough, efficient, and fair evaluation.

**Project Specific Deadlines**

Project Topic due date: 1:00 p.m. January 19th, 2012.  
Abstract draft due date: 1:00 p.m. February 23rd, 2012.  
Introduction draft due date: 1:00p.m. March 22nd, 2012.  
A project draft due date: Tuesday, April 12nd, 2012.

Failure to meet each deadline will result in reduction of 4 percentage points from the overall worth (26%) of the group project.

**Progress report**: Each individual is required to meet with a consultant once in every two weeks starting the week of January 23rd. Failure to do this will result in a reduction of 1 percentage point in your overall course grade.
Sources of Information for the Group Project:

The GALILEO database system at Pullen Library would be useful for undertaking literature searches for your project. The reference librarians at Pullen Library can assist you with these searches.

The following data bases can be very helpful:
- GALILEO
- Business and Economics
- EconLit

- NBER working papers.
- NBER books which are mostly edited volumes.

Urban Institute

Mathematica

The following journals may contain articles relevant for the projects.
- American Economic Review
- Journal of Political Economy
- The Quarterly Journal of Economics
- Review of Economics and Statistics
- Journal of Economic Literature
- Journal of Economic Perspectives
- Journal of Public Economics
- Journal of Human Resources
- Journal of Urban Economics
- Journal of Development Economics
- Berkeley Electronic Press Journals
- Economic Inquiry
- Southern Economic Journal
- Journal of Regional Science and Urban Economics
- Regional Science and Urban Economics
- National Tax Journal
- Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
- Economic Journal
- Journal of Population Economics
- Brookings Papers on Economic Activity
- Journal of Labor Economics
- Health Economics
- Journal of Health Economics
- Labour Economics
- Demography