

Social Mobility and Social Justice

Luck, Effort, and Opportunity in the US

Winter Quarter 2016

SOC 401, 5 Credits

M/W 8:30am—10:20am

Instructor: Bettina Sonnenberg



SOC 401 "Special Topics"

Social Mobility and Social Justice: Luck, Effort, and Opportunity in the U.S. in a Comparative Perspective.

This course combines a seminar approach with applied data analysis. Based on reviews of theoretical and empirical literature on social inequality, students will utilize multinational representative data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) to investigate the perception of the U.S. as an open society with opportunities for upward mobility or as a closed society that limits the social mobility of its people. Students will explore these perceptions and perceptions on social inequality both before and after the Great Recession and compare opinions of individuals in the U.S. with those in other countries.

Students will:

- Be trained step by step to work with statistical software and apply statistical concepts in order to answer scientifically and politically relevant questions.
- Have the opportunity to conduct student-led research projects and analyze the rich data from the ISSP.

The projects will provide evidence for structural and cultural foundations of people's perspectives on social inequality and consequently their preferences for governmental intervention over time and across countries.

The course is highly collaborative and interactive and is meant to prepare students for future professional work and graduate school studies.

Completion of SOC 221 and SOC 300 recommended but not required.

