

**Social Policy and Socio-Economic Outcomes in Industrialized Countries:
Lessons from the Luxembourg Income Study**

PROFESSOR JANET GORNICK

Political Science 83502
Sociology 85902

Spring 2013
Wednesday 4:15 – 6:15pm
Room 6494

This course will provide an introduction to cross-national comparative research based on microdata (data at the household and person level) available from LIS. LIS is a data archive and research center located in Luxembourg, and with a satellite office at CUNY.

LIS houses two databases: the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) Database and the Luxembourg Wealth Study (LWS) Database. The LIS Database contains over 200 microdatasets from more than 40 high- and middle-income countries; these datasets include comprehensive measures of income, employment, and household characteristics. The LWS Database – a smaller, companion database – provides microdata on wealth and debt. For the list of countries, see:

<http://www.lisdatacenter.org/our-data/lis-database/documentation/list-of-datasets/> and
<http://www.lisdatacenter.org/our-data/lws-database/documentation/lws-datasets-list/>

Since the mid-1980s, the LIS data have been used by more than 4000 researchers – mostly sociologists, economists, and political scientists – to analyze cross-country and over-time variation in diverse outcomes such as poverty, income inequality, employment status, wage patterns, gender inequality, and family structure. Many researchers have combined LIS' microdata with various macrodatasets to study, for example, the effects of national policies on socioeconomic outcomes, or to link micro-level variation to national-level outcomes such as immigration, child wellbeing, health status, political attitudes, and voting behavior. A newer body of research has used the LWS data to study a multitude of questions related to wealth and debt holdings.

The course has two goals: (1) to review and synthesize 30 years of research results based on the LIS data (and, more recently, the LWS data); and (2) to enable students with programming skills (in SAS, SPSS, or Stata) to carry out and complete an original piece of empirical research. The LIS/LWS data are accessed through an internet-based “remote execution system”. All students are permitted to use the LIS microdata at no cost and without limit.

The course will require a semester-long research project. Students with programming skills (which will not be taught in the course) will be encouraged to complete an empirical analysis, reported in a term paper ultimately intended for publication. Students without programming skills will have the option to write a synthetic research paper.

A minimum requirement is the capacity to read articles that present quantitative research results.

CLASS SCHEDULE / OVERVIEW

Class #1	January 30	Introduction to the Course - 1
Class #2	February 6	Introduction to the Course - 2
Class #3	February 13	Poverty - 1 [‡]
Class #4	February 27	Poverty - 2 [‡] Note that this one class session will end early.
Class #5	March 6	Inequality - 1 [‡]
Class #6	March 13	Inequality - 2 [‡] Summary of proposed paper plan due.
Class #7	March 20	Wealth [‡]
Class #8	April 3	Politics [‡] Selection of first results due.
Class #9	April 10	Student Presentations
Class #10	April 17	Gender, Work, Family – 1 [‡] Draft of literature review due.
Class #11	April 24	Gender, Work, Family- 2 [‡] 6:15-7:30pm – LIS Reception (meet Luxembourg staff).
Class #12	May 1	Student Presentations / Feedback
Class #13	May 8	Student Presentations / Feedback
Class #14	May 15	Student Presentations / Feedback Final paper due

Note:

- February 20 No class – classes follow Monday schedule.
- March 27 No class – Spring Recess.

LOGISTICS

☀ **Professor:**

Janet Gornick
Professor of Political Science and Sociology, The Graduate Center, CUNY
Director, LIS: Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg
Director, Luxembourg Income Study Center (Graduate Center, CUNY)

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Office hours will be held at the Graduate Center and will be by appointment.

☀ **Assignments:**

A research project culminating in a final paper	60%
Four brief summaries of class readings (choose four of eight classes [+])	20%
Attendance and class participation (including <i>sharing</i> one class discussion)	20%

The research project will require a series of brief written “installments”, to be turned in throughout the semester. While the installments will not be individually graded, they are required. On February 6, a handout will be distributed, describing the requirements for the written assignments.

☀ **Required Readings and Other Materials:**

In the first class, the professor will distribute flash drives. These drives include the syllabus, some basic information about LIS, and many of the readings (the ones marked *).

☀ **Study Groups:**

Students are strongly encouraged to form study groups. Groups might include students using the same software; or exploring similar methodological approaches; or sharing common substantive areas of interest/research. *Note that neither programming nor statistical techniques will be taught in class.*

☀ **Course Assistants:**

Two Course Assistants will be available for individual consultations. Each student may draw on each of them for up to *three hours* during the course of the semester (that’s a total of six hours).

Peter Frase PhD candidate, CUNY GC pfrase@gc.cuny.edu

Laurie Maldonado, PhD candidate, UCLA lmaldonado@gc.cuny.edu

REQUIRED READING

- * = reading is on the flash drive
- ** = reading will be distributed electronically, later
- *** = book, to be purchased

CLASS #1

JANUARY 30

Introduction to the Course – 1

Required Reading:

Smeeding, Timothy, Günther Schmaus, and Serge Allegrezza. 1985. “An Introduction to LIS.” LIS Working Paper 1 (scanned copy). *

Atkinson, A.B. 2004. “Luxembourg Income Study (LIS): Past, Present and Future.” Socio-Economic Review 2(2): 165-190. *

Förster, Michael F., and Koen Vleminckx. 2004. “International Comparisons of Income Inequality and Poverty: Findings from the Luxembourg Income Study.” Socio-Economic Review 2(2): 191-212. *

Gornick, Janet C. 2004. “Women’s Economic Outcomes, Gender Inequality, and Public Policy: Findings from the Luxembourg Income Study.” Socio-Economic Review 2(2): 213-238. *

Gornick, Janet C., Berglind Hólm Ragnarsdóttir, and Sarah Kostecki. Forthcoming, March. “LIS: Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg.” In *Understanding Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences*. Switzerland: Swiss Foundation for Research in Social Sciences. (Also forthcoming as LIS Technical Paper #5.)*

CLASS #2

FEBRUARY 6

Introduction to the Course – 2

Introduction to general concepts and methodological challenges – Janet Gornick

Introduction to documentation – Janet Gornick

Introduction to JSI and self-teaching lessons – Peter Frase and Laurie Maldonado

Required Reading:

Read items listed under Class # 1.

Also:

Thoroughly explore the LIS website: www.lisdatacenter.org

Register for access to LISSY.

CLASS #3
FEBRUARY 13
Poverty - 1 [#]

Required Reading:

Kraus, Margit, and Katja Hölsch. 2004. "Poverty Alleviation and the Degree of Centralisation in European Schemes of Social Assistance." Journal of European Social Policy (14)2, May: 143-164. (Originally LIS WP 342, 2004.) * *Read WP.*

Brady, David. 2005. "The Welfare State and Relative Poverty in Rich Western Democracies, 1967-1997." Social Forces 83(3), March: 1329-1364. (Originally LIS WP 390, 2005.) *

Scruggs, Lyle, and James P. Allan. 2006. "The Material Consequences of Welfare States: Benefit Generosity and Absolute Poverty in 16 OECD Countries." Comparative Political Studies 39(7):880-904. (Originally LIS WP 409, 2005.) *

Gornick, Janet C., and Markus Jäntti. 2010. "Women, Poverty, and Social Policy Regimes: A Cross-National Analysis." In Peter Saunders and Roy Sainsbury (eds.), *Social Security, Poverty and Social Exclusion in Rich and Poorer Countries*. International Studies on Social Security - Volume 16, Antwerp: Intersentia, 63-95. (Originally LIS WP 534, 2010.) * *Read WP.*

CLASS #4
FEBRUARY 27
Poverty - 2 [#] ← Note that this one class session will end early.

Required Reading:

Rainwater, Lee, and Timothy M. Smeeding. 2003. *Poor Kids in a Rich Country: America's Children in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press. ***

CLASS #5
MARCH 6
Inequality - 1 [#]

Required Reading:

Jäntti, Markus. 1997. "Inequality in Five Countries in the 1980s: The Role of Demographic Shifts, Markets and Government Policies." Economica 65(255): 415-440. (Originally LIS WP 146, 1996.) *

Voitchovsky, Sarah. 2005. "Does the Profile of Income Inequality Matter for Economic Growth?" Journal of Economic Growth 10 (3): 273-296, September. (Originally LIS WP 354, 2003.) *

Kenworthy, Lane. 2004. "An Equality-Growth Tradeoff?" Chapter 4 in *Egalitarian Capitalism*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation. (Originally LIS WP 362, 2003.) *
Read WP.

Alderson, Arthur S., Jason Beckfield, and François Nielsen. 2005. "Exactly How Has Income Inequality Changed? Patterns of Distributional Change in Core Societies." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 46: 405-423. (Originally LIS WP 422, 2005.) *

CLASS #6
MARCH 13
Inequality - 2 [‡]

Required Reading:

Four chapters from: Gornick, Janet C., and Markus Jäntti (eds). Forthcoming July 2013. *Income Inequality: Economic Disparities and The Middle Class in Affluent Countries*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, Social Inequality Series.

Chapter 2. Atkinson, Anthony, and Andrea Brandolini. "On the Identification of the Middle Class." **

Chapter 3. Kenworthy, Lane. "Has Rising Inequality Reduced Middle-Class Income Growth?" **

Chapter 15. Ólafsson, Stefán, and Armaldur Kristjánsson. "Income Inequality in Boom and Bust – A Tale from Iceland’s Bubble Economy." **

Chapter 16. Vanneman, Reeve, and Amaresh Dubey. "Horizontal and Vertical Inequalities in India." **

CLASS #7
MARCH 20
Wealth [‡]

Required Reading:

Gornick, Janet C., Eva Sierminska and Timothy Smeeding. 2009. "The Income and Wealth Packages of Older Women in Cross-National Perspective." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 64B(3): 402-414. (Originally LWS WP 3, 2006.) *

Plus three chapters from SUP, forthcoming:

Chapter 10. Sierminska, Eva, Timothy Smeeding, Serge Allegrezza. "The Distribution of Assets and Debt." **

Chapter 11. Jäntti, Markus, Eva Sierminska, Philippe Van Kerm. "The Joint Distribution of Income and Wealth." **

Chapter 12. Bradbury, Bruce. "The Fourth Retirement Pillar in Rich Countries." **

Recommended Reading:

Sierminska, Eva, Andrea Brandolini, and Timothy Smeeding. 2006. "Comparing Wealth Distribution across Rich Countries: First Results from the Luxembourg Wealth Study." LWS WP 1. *

Sierminska, Eva, Andrea Brandolini, and Timothy Smeeding. 2006. "Cross-National Comparison of Income and Wealth Status in Retirement: First Results from the Luxembourg Wealth Study (LWS.)" LWS WP 2. *

CLASS #8

APRIL 3

Politics [‡]

Required Reading:

Milanovic, Branko. 2000. "The Median Voter Hypothesis, Income Inequality and Income Redistribution: An Empirical Test with the Required Data." European Journal of Political Economy 16(3): 367-410. (Originally LIS WP 256, 2000.) *

Huber, Evelyne, John Stephens, David Bradley, Stephanie Moller, and Francois Nielsen. 2003. "Distribution and Redistribution in Post-Industrial Democracies." World Politics 55(2), (January): 193-228. (Originally LIS WP 265, 2001.) *

Mahler, Vincent A. 2004. "Economic Globalization, Domestic Politics and Income Inequality in the Developed Countries: A Cross-National Study." Comparative Political Studies 37(9): 1025-1053. (Originally LIS WP 273, 2001.) *

Brady, David and Kevin Leicht. 2008. "Party to Inequality: Right Party Power and Income Inequality in Affluent Western Democracies." Research in Social Stratification and Mobility 26: 77-106. (Originally LIS WP 460, 2007.) *

CLASS #9

APRIL 10

Student presentations: research project designs.

CLASS #10

APRIL 17

Gender, Women, Work, and Family - 1

Required Reading:

Gornick, Janet C., Marcia K. Meyers, and Katherin E. Ross. 1998. "Public Policies and the Employment of Mothers: A Cross-National Study." Social Science Quarterly 79(1): 35-54. (Originally LIS WP 140, 1996.) *

Gornick, Janet C., and Jerry A. Jacobs. 1998. "Gender, The Welfare State, and Public Employment: A Comparative Study of Seven Industrialized Countries." American Sociological Review 63(5): 688-710. (Originally LIS WP 168, 1997.) *

Gornick, Janet C. 1999. "Gender Equality in the Labor Market." In Diane Sainsbury (ed.) *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press: 210-242. (Originally LIS WP 206, 1999.) *

Bardasi, Elena, and Janet C. Gornick. 2008. "Working for Less? Women's Part-Time Wage Penalties Across Countries." Feminist Economics 14(1): 37-72. (Originally LIS WP 467, 2007.) *

CLASS #11

APRIL 24

Gender, Women, Work, and Family - 2

Three chapters from SUP, forthcoming:

Chapter 7. Harkness, Susan. "Women's Employment and Household Income Inequality." **

Chapter 8. Folbre, Nancy, Janet Gornick, Helen Connolly, and Teresa Munzi, "Women's Employment, Unpaid Work, and Economic Inequality." **

Chapter 9. Estévez-Abe, Margarita, and Tanja Hethey, "Women's Work, Family Earnings, and Public Policy." **

CLASS #12

MAY 1

Student Presentations – to be scheduled

CLASS #13

MAY 8

Student Presentations – to be scheduled

CLASS #14

MAY 15

Student Presentations – to be scheduled