

Research Professor Lisa Dodson
Courses taught at BC from 2002 to present

Graduate

SC798 Research Practicum

In this apprenticeship-style course, students will do substantive reading, contribute to research design/instrumentation, conduct fieldwork and collaborate in data analysis and writing. With a focus on research about inequality, the professor will work closely with students as they learn about undertaking complicated social inquiry and working on a collaborative research team.

SC735 Research at the Margins

This course combines theory and field research for graduate students interested in economic and social marginalization in the US. We will critically examine traditional studies of "the poor" (teen mothers, children in urban schools, homeless people, immigrants, etc.). Students will then conduct individual field projects, sharing ethical and practical dilemmas throughout the term. Collaborative learning is integral to this course. Each graduate student will design and field test a research question toward "shifting the center" in studying marginalized people.

Mixed Grad and Undergrad

SC588 Acts of Fieldwork

This course is accessible to advanced undergraduates who are interested in exploring field-based research, particularly in the context of economic and social inequality. The course combines theoretical and methodological readings and examines studies- generally from research that inquires into life in low-income and marginalized communities. Practical approaches to social research include: getting located, gathering data and representing the findings to influence public knowledge/policy. Class collaboration and participation will be emphasized.

SC590 Carework and Inequality

What is carework? Is it work? Is it a private or a public "good"? As a society, who do we believe should do carework and what -- if anything-- should they be paid? In this course we will trace carework as unpaid labor primarily provided by women (in the wealthiest families, by slaves and servants) to the current "commodification" of care as a market product that increasingly employs an immigrant workforce. Throughout, we will probe the complex intersections of race, gender, class and globalization as critical forces in this expanding workforce.

SC591 From Poor Laws to Working Poor: Low-Income America and Public Policy

From warning off paupers to getting welfare mothers to work this course provides an overview of social attitudes, national debates and public policies toward low-income families and their communities. Readings examine relationships between poverty and race, gender, families with children and the low-wage job market. We will consider images and language describing the poor and how these may influence public opinion and social investment. Student research will explore and compare contemporary costs of living, wage levels, and family care needs in middle-class and low-income families. The course will encourage students to examine their own assumptions about who is poor, why they are, and to consider alternative approaches to reducing economic disparity in the US.

SC592 Work and Family in Low-Income America (last offered in 2004 Spring)