Overview

From gene-environment interactions to brain imaging, there has been increasing interest in how biological considerations can be incorporated into social science research. This class will provide an opportunity to think about these issues in the context of social inequality. We will survey the major approaches and topics, highlighting their promise and pitfalls. We will also spend a considerable amount of time discussing how these various ideas can be incorporated into your specific research interests. To that end, the final assignment will be a research proposal that incorporates some of the ideas and measures that we have discussed.

Format and Grading

Each week you will be expected to come to class with (1) a critique and (2) an idea for a research project that draw on the readings. Over the course of the quarter, you will be expected to develop a research proposal incorporating some of the ideas or measures covered in the class into your area of research interests. This means that in addition to the reading for class, you are also expected to be reading in your area of interest (I have kept the reading for class light to facilitate this). You will present your research proposal to the class in week 10, and the written proposal is due at the end of the exam period for the class. This is designed to give you an opportunity to incorporate the feedback that you receive on your presentation into your proposal. Your grade will be based on class participation (50%) and your research proposal (50%).

Readings

All readings are available on the course website.

Week 1. Introduction and overview
Week 2. Discrimination and unconscious bias

Jost, JT, Rudman, L, Blair, IV, Carney, DR, Dasgupta, N, Glaser, J, & Hardin, C. Forthcoming. The existence of implicit bias is beyond reasonable doubt: A refutation of ideological and methodological objections and executive summary of ten studies that no manager should ignore. *Research in Organizational Behavior*.


Week 3. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Week 4. Gender


Week 5. Hormones


Week 6. Race


Week 7. Presidents' Day

Week 8. Genes


Week 9. fMRI


Week 10. Overview and discussion of final research proposal ideas


Exam week. Final proposal due at the end of the exam period.