

Academic models

The following are reported income-, education-, and occupation-based terms for specific classes commonly used by sociologists.

Academic Class Models

Dennis Gilbert, 2002 William Thompson & Joseph Hickey, 2005
Leonard Beeghley, 2004

Class	Typical characteristics	Class	Typical characteristics	Class
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Capitalist class (1%)	Top-level executives, high-rung politicians, heirs. Ivy League education common. income of \$500,000+ common.	Upper class 1%	Top-level executives, celebrities, heirs; Ivy league education common.	The super-rich (0.9%)	Multi-millionaires whose incomes commonly exceed \$350,000; includes celebrities and powerful executives/politicians. Ivy League education common.
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The Rich (5%)	Households with net worth of \$1 million or more; largely in the form of home equity. Generally have college degrees.
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Upper middle class[1] (15%)	Highly educated (often with graduate degrees), most commonly salaried, professionals and middle management with large work autonomy	Upper middle class[1] (15%)	Highly educated (often with graduate degrees) professionals & managers with household incomes varying from the high 5-figure range to commonly above \$100,000
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Middle class (plurality/

majority?; ca. 46%) College educated workers with incomes considerably above-average incomes and compensation; a man making \$57,000 and a woman making \$40,000 may be typical.

Lower middle class (30%)

Semi-professionals and craftsmen with a roughly average standard of living. Most have some college education and are white collar.

Lower middle class (32%) Semi-professionals and craftsman with some work autonomy; household incomes commonly range from \$35,000 to \$75,000. Typically, some college education.

Working class (30%) Clerical and most blue collar workers whose work is highly routinized. Standard of living varies depending on number of income earners, but is commonly just adequate. High school education.

Working class (32%) Clerical, pink and blue collar workers with often low job security; common household incomes range from \$16,000 to \$30,000. High school education. Working class

(ca. 40% - 45%) Blue collar workers and those whose jobs are highly routinized with low economic security; a man making \$40,000 and a woman making \$26,000 may be typical. High school education.

Working poor (13%) Service, low-rung clerical and some blue collar workers. High economic insecurity and risk of poverty. Some high school education.

Lower class (ca. 14% - 20%) Those who occupy poorly-paid positions or rely on government transfers. Some high school education.

Underclass (12%) Those with limited or no participation in the labor force. Reliant on government transfers. Some high school education. The poor (ca. 12%) Those living below the poverty line with limited to no participation in the labor force; a household income of \$18,000 may be typical. Some high school education.

References: Gilbert, D. (2002) *The American Class Structure: In An Age of Growing Inequality*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth; Thompson, W. & Hickey, J. (2005). *Society in Focus*. Boston, MA: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon; Beeghly, L. (2004). *The Structure of Social Stratification in the United States*. Boston, MA: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon.

1 The upper middle class may also be referred to as "Professional class" Ehrenreich, B. (1989). *The Inner Life of the Middle Class*. NY, NY: Harper-Colins.