

SOCIOLOGY 3900-01

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

SPRING 2024

Course Information

Class Days: MW 1:00-2:15pm

Class Location: Pfau Library 224

Instructor: Ethel Mickey (she/her)

Email: ethel.mickey@csusb.edu

Office: SB 441

Office Hours: Monday's 2:15-3:15 (in person) & Wednesday's 11:30-12:45 (Zoom)

Zoom: <https://csusb.zoom.us/j/8857472787>

Course Description

Why does everyone go to school in the United States? How does the culture of a school shape the learning environment, and why do school cultures vary? Why do some students learn more than others? Do peers matter and how? How do schools perpetuate inequalities along lines of class, gender, and race? How does the "hidden curriculum" shape the educational experiences of students? How does the US school system compare to the education systems of other countries? What makes it so hard to bring about change in schools? Questions like these drive this course. This course is an introduction to the sociology of education, broadly exploring the role of education in American society. The course will cover key sociological perspectives to education, including functionalism, conflict theory, and human, social and cultural capital. Topics will include schools and communities, the role of teachers and students, persistent educational inequalities (including tracking, measures of achievement, and school segregation), school violence, and school reform.

Learning Goals

- 1) To learn key concepts and theories in the sociology of education
- 2) To describe the social determinants of educational outcomes in the US
- 3) To analyze critically the US education system, understanding the social-organizational processes contributing to fundamental educational inequalities
- 4) To develop a sociological understanding of your own educational careers, connecting individual experiences with larger social structures
- 5) To refine skills in active reading, critical thinking, collaboration, and verbal and written communication to prepare for future careers and/or graduate studies

Course Materials

There is no required text for this class. All readings will be posted on Canvas.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation (20 points)

You are expected to attend class, to have completed required readings ahead of time, and to participate in class discussions. I will track attendance, and you are allowed **2 unexcused absences** without negative impact on your participation grade. **This is not a lecture course!** At times, I will provide key course concepts and information during short lectures, but you are expected to be actively engaged in discussions. Failure to participate and contribute to the class discussion will impact your overall grade assessment negatively. Please come and see me right away if you anticipate any concerns with participation. I encourage you to ask questions in class. Please try to remember that if you have questions, other fellow students are likely to have the same question. Thus, no question is too basic! You can also post your questions on the Canvas discussion forum (and I encourage you to do so, as other students can benefit from the question and response).

If you are absent, you are responsible for missed coursework. Slides and handouts will be posted on Canvas, but I will not review course materials outside of class. If you will be missing class for a religious day of observance, please let me know and we will arrange for missed work.

I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable. If you bring your child to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and it is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their needs have been met. Nearest lactation room: Santos Manuel Student Union, Meditation Room (2nd floor near the Fourplex).

2. Weekly Reading and Reading Reflections (16 points). Each week, you will be assigned readings with a corresponding Reading Reflection. The Reading Reflections are short, open-book quizzes designed to assess your understanding of the readings, including reflecting on key concepts and ideas. The reflections will vary each week and might include open-ended discussion or multiple-choice questions. There are 11 Reading Reflections total worth 2 points each. Your lowest three Reading Reflection grades will be dropped. They appear on Canvas under the weekly Modules.

You will be most successful in the course if you participate in **active reading**. As you read, identify the main argument(s) the author is making, key concepts and their definitions, and examples. Avoid highlighting and instead take reading notes that summarize the material in your own words. Making outlines of the chapters and articles is often helpful. Prepare questions you want to raise in advance of class discussions. As our class time will be designed around our readings, it will be evident when students have not done the reading. In-class exercises and tests will contain questions based on material from the readings that I have not necessarily covered in class.

2. Homework Assignments (24 points)

There will be 4 homework assignments for the course that will ask you to reflect on the readings, connecting course materials and discussions to your personal education experiences. I will provide you with further instructions and rubrics in class. Deadlines are listed in the weekly course schedule.

1. Introduction Assignment (4 points)
2. Hidden Curriculum Assignment (10 points)
3. Local School Issues in the News (10 points)

3. Midterm and Final Exams (20 points each)

The exams will cover material discussed in the course reader, other readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exams will include a combination of multiple choice and short essay questions. The best way to prepare for the exams is to complete the readings, take notes, and be an active participant in class.

Midterm. This online exam will cover material discussed in readings, lectures, and class discussions. The test will include a combination of multiple choice and short essay questions. The mid-term will be a timed, open-book, open-note assessment of your understanding of course materials. **Once you begin your exam, the timer continues even if you close the browser window or your internet drops, and your exam is automatically submitted when time is up. For this reason, I strongly recommend that you begin your exam during a time when your internet is most reliable, and interruptions are minimized.** The midterm will be during the week of **March 18th**. More information will be provided in class.

Final. The final exam will also be on Canvas and will ask you to link the foundational theories of education to the readings from the second half of the semester. **The final exam is due on our final exam date, Monday 5/13 at 3:00pm** More information will be provided in class.

Grades

Assignment	Points
Attendance & participation	20
Reading Reflections	16
Homework 1	4
Homework 2	10
Homework 3	10
Midterm	20
Final	20
Total Points	100

Over the course of the semester, you will accumulate 100 points from the assignments, exams, and attendance. I suggest **you** write down or create an excel file to help keep a count of your points. I **don't use Canvas to calculate final grades.**

Grading Scale: A = 93-100, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 76-79, C = 73-75, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, F below 59

Deadlines & Schedule

It is your responsibility to follow the course schedule and keep track of assignment deadlines.

FAQ: Missing Class, Deadlines & Late Work

Q: I can't come to class. What should I do?

You can miss two class sessions without penalty. If you have not used your two “freebie” unexcused absences, then there is **no need to email me**. If you believe your absence qualifies as an excused absence, then you can [fill out this Google Form](#) to log your absence and upload documentation. According to University policy, excused absences include documented illness or injury to the student or a relative, religious observance, university-sanctioned activities, jury duty, or military service. If you anticipate missing **several** classes, then you can and should email me directly so we can discuss options and set up a path for your success in the course.

Q: When are Reading Reflections due?

A: There will be 1 Reading Reflection every week. It must be submitted by the start of our class time every **Monday at 11:59 pm** during the week they are listed on the syllabus schedule. They are late by Tuesday morning. For example, the Week 2 Reading Reflection is listed on the syllabus for Week 2 (2/5-2/7). The Week 2 Reading Reflection is associated with the assigned Gracey reading, which we are covering that week. If I do not have your reflection by 11:59pm on Monday 2/5, it is considered late.

Q: When are Homework's due?

Homework assignments must also be submitted by Monday at 11:59 pm during the week they are listed on the syllabus schedule. They are late as of Tuesday morning.

Q: What if I can't submit my work by Monday by midnight?

A: If Monday's are busy days for you, I encourage you to plan ahead and submit your work over the weekend. In accordance with university and departmental policies, make up assignments or incomplete grades will be given at my discretion in cases of documented illness, injury, or official university business. In general, extensions will be granted for serious, unexpected life events that are outside of your control, including family emergencies. As you are able, please plan ahead and communicate with me via email if you think you will have difficulty meeting a deadline. Otherwise, work submitted late will be deducted one letter grade for each day late (B+→B, and so on), unless it is excused *in advance* via email.

Q: How do I know if I've completed all the work that was due for the week?

A: Use the Syllabus Course Schedule to keep track of assignments on Canvas. Additionally, the Canvas “To Do” list will have deadlines and automatic reminders.

Community Guidelines

Statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom: All students are welcome and belong in this class, with the diversity that students bring a resource and strength. As we come together across differences, I ask that you treat each other with courtesy, care, and respect at all times. The classroom should be a safe learning environment for all of us. This necessitates that we each take responsibility for keeping the classroom free of discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. Debate and disagreements can (and should) occur during the collective learning process, as we often tackle some controversial issues. Critically examining our most basic assumptions about the social world is a key task of sociology but is also an activity that requires courage. I will work to ensure a democratic and respectful environment that supports your taking intellectual risks. I aim to present materials that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, and culture. However, I might have not thought of something. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

COVID-19: The pandemic is ongoing. For this semester, we will follow all [university protocols](#) regarding COVID-19. Additionally, I encourage you all to protect yourselves and our classroom community by staying home if you or someone from your household are exhibiting symptoms.

Laptops and Electronics: Laptops are allowed in the course strictly for notetaking. Please respect your fellow classmates and refrain from browsing the Internet, checking emails, etc. during class as it is distracting to everyone around you. If I notice you are using your laptop for anything not related to the course, your participation grade will be negatively impacted. Please turn your cell phones off or on silent prior to the beginning of class. I understand that there might be times when you need to keep your phone on during class for family or other urgent reasons. Please let me know ahead of time if this applies to you.

Class recordings: To foster an environment of openness where students feel comfortable asking questions and testing out new ideas, no audio or video recordings of class or photographs are permitted without the instructor's permission or a disability-related accommodation.

Lateness and extension policy: In accordance with university and departmental policies, make up assignments or incomplete grades will be given at my discretion in cases of documented illness, injury, or official university business. In general, extensions will be granted for serious, unexpected life events that are outside of your control, including family emergencies. As you are able, please plan ahead and communicate with me if you think you will have difficulty meeting a deadline. Otherwise, work submitted late will be deducted one letter grade for each day late (B+→B, and so on), unless it is excused *in advance* via email.

E-mail etiquette: Emails should be reserved for quick, yes/no questions or to set up a meeting time. If you have more in-depth questions, need to review course material, or missed a class session, I encourage you to come to my office hours. I do my best to answer emails promptly, however, I am not available via email 24/7. If you email me after 6:00pm on weekdays, I will

answer you by the next morning. If you email me on the weekends, I will answer by Monday morning. If it is an urgent matter, put “Urgent” in the subject heading.

Canvas: I will regularly use Canvas to communicate with the class and make announcements. Please make sure to check the Canvas course site often and sign up to receive alerts.

Student Support Services

Academic and Student Support Services

All students are welcome and belong in this class, and various resources are available to support student success and wellbeing both in and outside of the classroom. I encourage you to take advantage of the wealth of student support resources on campus. A complete list of all academic support services is available on the [Academic Success](#) section of the [CSUSB Student Affairs](#) website.

- [The Writing Center](#) offers one-on-one tutoring sessions, workshops, and materials.
- [Technology Support Center](#) or support@csusb.edu for 24/7 tech support, including Canvas.
- [Academic Success](#) support via Student Affairs, including mentoring and tutoring services.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- The [Basic Needs](#) team supports any student with difficulty affording groceries, or lacks a safe and stable place to live.
- [Student Financial Services](#)
- [Undocumented Student Success Center](#). If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested. Making use of these resources will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence.
- The [Office of Tribal Relations](#) provides Indigenous students with scholarships, internships, and other resources.
- The [Veterans Success Center](#) provides support, resources, and information for students with a military background.
- The [Osher Adult Re-Entry Center](#) (OARC) provides resources for adult re-entry students to help make the most of their college experiences
- [The Obershaw Den](#) provides food and personal hygiene items for enrolled students in need. Services are confidential.

Accommodations and Disability Access. All of us learn in different ways and with varying degrees of success. It is my job to help each and every one of you learn. Disabilities will always be accommodated. If you know of any factors that may hinder your ability to complete this course successfully, or if you will need accommodations for a documented disability or other appropriate reason, please let me know as soon as possible. Any student seeking classroom or testing accommodations must contact Services for Students with Disabilities during the first two weeks of class at (909) 537-5238 or ssd@csusb.edu. SSD is located in UH-183.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. All students are expected to abide by the Student Conduct Code and complete their work with academic honesty. No form of plagiarism, lying, cheating, or other academic dishonesty will be tolerated and could result in a failing grade for the assignment or course or further disciplinary sanctions. We will discuss what kinds of actions constitute academic dishonesty in class, including plagiarism. In this course, every element of class assignments must be fully prepared by the student. **The use of generative AI tools for any part of your work will be treated as plagiarism.** To learn more about plagiarism, I encourage you to read the [University's Policy on Academic Dishonesty](#) and the library's [Guide on Citing Sources](#).

Emergency Preparedness. Emergencies can occur at any time with little or no warning. All CSUSB students, faculty, and staff are expected to be familiar with basic emergency protocols outlined by the [Office of Emergency Management and Business Continuity](#), in the event of a disaster on campus, whether small or large.

CSUSB Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that California State University, San Bernardino sits on the territory and ancestral land of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (Yuhaaviatam). We recognize that every member of the California State University, San Bernardino community has benefitted and continues to benefit from the use and occupation of this land since the institution's founding in 1965.

Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold California State University, San Bernardino more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

A Final Note

Please seek me out whenever you need help, by email or in person. ***Please make use of my office hours!*** Office hours are a dedicated time for students to access their instructors in any way that is useful for you. We can arrange meetings by appointment or on Zoom if the regular office hours are not convenient for you. I am eager to help you with course material and to get to know you, but you must take the initiative.

Weekly Course Schedule

Updates to the weekly reading schedule will be announced in advance and posted on Canvas. All readings outside of the textbook are available as PDFs on Canvas. RR = Reading Reflection.

Unit I: How Do Sociologists Study Schools? – Theoretical Perspectives			
Week	Dates	Topic & Reading	Due 11:59pm Monday
1	1/29	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Introduction• What is the role of schools in society?• Functional Theories of Education No readings.	
	1/31		
2	2/5	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict Theories of Education• Achieving Social Mobility Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turner	Homework 1/RR
	2/7		
3	2/12	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applying an Intersectional Lens• School Curricula Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bettie	RR
	2/14		
4	2/19	NO CLASS MONDAY: Presidents' Day Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Curricula continued No readings.	
	2/21		
5	2/26	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Capital• Social Capital Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lareau	Homework 2/RR
	2/28		
Unit II: School Structures and Processes			
6	3/4	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• History of US School Segregation• School Segregation Today	RR
	3/6		

		Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blume	
7	3/11	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Tracking• How is Tracking Racialized?• Teachers & Classrooms• Midterm Review Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ingersoll & Collins	RR
	3/13		
8	3/18	MIDTERM EXAM	
	3/20		
UNIT III: Is Education the “Great Equalizer?”			
9	3/25	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Race, Ethnicity & School Experiences• Latino Experiences in Higher Education• Nationality, Immigration, and Education Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reyes	RR
	3/27		
10	4/1	NO CLASS. Enjoy your break!	
	4/3		
11	4/8	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender & Sexuality in the Classroom• Schools as Gendered Institutions• Masculinity and the Sociology of Bullying Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thorne	RR
	4/10		
12	4/15	Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Class & Economic Diversity in Education Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This American Life podcast, “Three Miles” episode, Acts 1 and 2	News article for Homework 3/RR
	4/17		
13	4/22	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Landscape of Higher Education	RR
	4/24		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Higher Education: Inequalities between Schools Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cottom	
Unit IV: School Reform and Social Change			
14	4/29	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">School Choice and Market-Based SolutionsWhat is School Choice? Who gets to Choose?Alternatives to School Choice Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ravitch	Homework 3/RR
	5/1		
15	5/6	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">School Reform and SolutionsLessons Learned from COVID-19How do we improve our schools? Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">NYTimes The Daily podcast episode on Remote Learning	RR
	5/8		
Take-home Final Exams due Monday 5/13 at 3:00pm uploaded to Canvas.			