Course Description

This course will provide an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis and critique of the education system in the United States. We will focus on sociology of education theory to assist us in identifying and examining the relationship between society and education. We will explore issues such as the role of schools in socialization, social certification, institutional legitimation, cultural capital, social capital, inequality in educational/occupational outcomes and formation of individual values.

We will also examine issues specific to race/ethnicity, class and gender in the U.S. educational system. In particular, we will look at historical and contemporary factors that positively and negatively affect the educational experience of students of color. We will examine issues related to the academic achievement (opportunity) gap, attrition and retention, sexism in the classroom and the exclusionary curriculum.

Throughout the semester we will explore the effects of micro-level student-teacher interaction, specifically the short and long-term effects of positive reinforcement (praise, recognition) and negative reinforcement (neglect, criticism) on a student's sense of self and subsequent academic achievement. We will also discuss the critical role of the teacher in
creating an inclusive classroom culture conducive to the learning of all students. Finally, we will look at the teacher's role and agency in macro-level educational policy issues.

This course will combine lecture, group work and class discussion. Active participation is expected on a regular basis. In order to apply theory to practice, the course includes a fieldwork component. You will be required to engage in a minimum of twenty-five hours of observation and/or participation in a public-school classroom.

**Required Textbooks**


**Classroom Protocol**

By definition, if you are going to participate and benefit from the class it is necessary that you be fully present. It is essential that you attend each class session and that you come prepared to discuss, question and/or critique the ideas expressed by the authors and the instructor.

Completion of reading assignments prior to the designated class session is critical to your participation. In order to get the full benefit of the class, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assigned for the week.

YOU are responsible for all material presented in class whether or not you are present. Students are responsible for all assignments and announcements presented in class. If you are late or absent, it is your responsibility to contact another student. Assignments are collected in class on the day designated in the course syllabus. I have a no late work policy. I do not accept assignments via email.

Use of cell phones and lap top computers are NOT allowed in class. Full participation requires attentiveness to the discussion and respectful/participatory listening when peers and the professor are speaking.

**Assignments and Grading**

**In Class Oral Participation (10 points)**

Attendance and engagement in thoughtful discussion regarding the readings is essential to the learning process. Since we are all products of the K-12 educational system, we have the relevant experience to participate in a critique of the perspectives presented in class. Your participation and sharing will greatly enhance the understanding and analysis of the course content.
Short Essay Assignments (40 points)
Four times in the semester you will be asked to respond to a set of questions regarding the readings, documentaries, class discussions and fieldwork. The take-home assignment will require that you analyze, contrast and synthesize the course material covered in the previous weeks. This assignment will not require rote memorization but rather critical reflection. I am interested in your perspective and interpretation of the course material. You will have one week to submit the 3-page assignment. Due dates are in the syllabus.

Chapter Presentation (10 points)
Starting in the fourth week of the semester students will present a chapter from “Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education.” The five-minute presentation should be concise and include: a brief overview of the chapter (the major themes), application of the concepts/readings discussed in class, your perspective/critique and two questions to facilitate/generate discussion.

Field Work in Public School Setting (K – 12) (40 points)
The major purpose of this assignment is to apply the theories, concepts and research we discuss in class to a public-school setting. You are required to spend a minimum of 25 hours in a public-school classroom (elementary, junior high or high school). In the first half of the semester you will collect demographic data on your fieldwork/school site. In week 9: you will submit the mid-term assignment: 1) a 3-page descriptive overview of your school and surrounding community and 2) a “school-site contract” to confirm your field placement. As you engage in fieldwork and we discuss social theories in class, you will be expected to observe and identify manifestations of the theories (i.e. labeling) in the classroom, school and surrounding community. The final assignment will consist of 1) a 5-page paper using the theories and concepts discussed in class to analyze and critique your experience in the classroom and 2) a 5-minute power point presentation providing an overview, analysis and critique of your fieldwork experience.
Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. If a change occurs an announcement will be made in class and via campus email.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 1    | 8/21 - 23| Introduction
Introduction to the course
Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education
Reading Introduction |
| 2    | 8/28 - 30| 1. What is Sociology of Education? Theoretical Perspectives
Readings 1 - 3 |
| 3    | 9/4 - 6  | 1. What is Sociology of Education? Theoretical Perspectives
Readings 4 - 6
*Select a school site; schedule fingerprints and TB test if needed |
| 4    | 9/11 - 13| 2. Studying Schools: Research Methods in Education
Readings 7 – 9
*Assignment: Short Essay 1 |
| 5    | 9/18 - 20| 3. Schooling in a Social Context: Educational Environments
Readings 10 – 13
*Short Essay 1 Due |
| 6    | 9/25 - 27| 4. Schools as Organizations: Formal and Informal Education
Readings 14 – 18 |
| 7    | 10/2 - 4 | 5. Roles and Responsibilities: Administrators, Teachers and Students
Readings 19 - 23
*Assignment: Short Essay 2 |
| 8    | 10/9 - 11| 6. What We Can Teach in School: Knowledge for What and for Whom?
Readings 24 – 26
*Short Essay 2 Due |
| 9    | 10/16 - 18| 7. Who Gets Ahead? Race, Class and Gender in Education
Readings 27 – 29
*Mid-term: School Site Description and Contract Due |
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| 10   | 10/23 - 25 | 7. Who Gets Ahead? Race, Class and Gender in Education  
Readings 20 - 32  
*Assignment: Short Essay 3 |
| 11   | 10/30 - 11/1 | 8. Education and Opportunity: Attempts at Equality and Equity in Education  
Readings 33 - 35  
*Short Essay 3 Due |
| 12   | 11/6 - 8   | 8. Education and Opportunity: Attempts at Equality and Equity in Education  
Readings 36 – 38 |
Readings 48 – 51  
*Assignment: Short Essay #4 |
| 14   | 11/20 - 22 | Thanksgiving Holiday |
| 15   | 11/27 - 29 | Final Fieldwork Presentations  
*Short Essay 4 Due |
| 16   | 12/4 - 6   | Final Fieldwork Presentations  
The following are due on the last day of class (12/6):  
Fieldwork evaluation form, copy of thank you note to the teacher,  
final field work assignment |
University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.