Spring 2019
San Jose State University
SOCIOLOGY/SOCIAL SCIENCE 177:
Sociology of Education

Professor: Maria Luisa Alaniz, Ph.D.
Office Location: DMH 220
Telephone: 408. 924.5543
Email: maria.alaniz@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Thursday 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Class Days/Time: Tuesday – Thursday
(1) 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
(2) 1:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Classroom: (1) Clark 234
(2) Clark 234

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 working-class and students of color. We will examine issues related to the academic achievement/opportunity gap, attrition and retention 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. Consistent attendance, punctuality and active participation is expected. 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.

**Participation** is a part of your grade. 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.

Improper use of technology during class time will hurt your grade. Please maintain responsibility for your own learning and respect for that of your colleagues by **keeping your technological devices stowed away during class time** unless we have agreed upon a different arrangement or we are using it for in-class work.

**Assignments and Grading**

**In Class Participation (10 points)**

Attendance and engagement in thoughtful discussion/active listening 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. **Points will be deducted if you are not present and/or late to class.**

**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.

**The Teacher Wars: Chapter Overview and Discussion Facilitation (10 points)**
Starting in the third week of the semester students will present a chapter from “The Teacher Wars.” The ten-minute presentation should be concise and include: a brief overview of the chapter (the major themes), your perspective and a question to facilitate/generate discussion regarding the theme(s) of the chapter.

**Field Work in Public School Setting (K – 12) (40 points)**
You are required to spend a minimum of 25 hours in a public-school classroom (elementary, junior high or high school). The purpose of this assignment is three-fold: 1) observation in a public-school classroom; 2) if requested; provide a service to the teacher (i.e. tutoring, grade papers) and 3) apply the theories, concepts and research we discuss in class to a K-12 public school setting.

**Field Work Assignments**
**I. Mid-term: School Site Descriptive Overview/Contract (due week 10) (15 points)**
In the first half of the semester you will collect demographic data on your fieldwork/school site and surrounding community. Mid-term assignment: 1) a three-page descriptive overview of your school site and surrounding community, 2) school site contract and 3) a 5-minute school-site descriptive overview presentation.

**II. Final: Field Work: Observation, Analysis and Evaluation (due week 16) (25 points)**
You will engage in observation/service at your school site; as you observe the classroom structure and social interaction you will identify manifestations of the theories we discuss in class (i.e. labeling) Final assignment: 1) a 5-page paper using a social theory to analyze and critique your fieldwork/classroom experience, 2) a 10-minute power point presentation/overview of your fieldwork/classroom experience, 3) completed fieldwork evaluation form (filled out and signed by the teacher) and 4) a copy of your thank you note/card/email to the teacher.
## 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/24</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;Introduction to the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/29 - 31</td>
<td><strong>Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education</strong>&lt;br&gt;Reading: Introduction&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/5 - 7</td>
<td>1. <strong>What is Sociology of Education? Theoretical Perspectives</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 1 – 3&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter One&lt;br&gt;*Select a school site; schedule fingerprints and TB test if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/12 - 14</td>
<td>1. <strong>What is Sociology of Education? Theoretical Perspectives</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 4 – 6&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter Two&lt;br&gt;*Assignment: Short Essay 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/19 - 21</td>
<td>2. <strong>Studying Schools: Research Methods in Education</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 7 – 9&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter Three&lt;br&gt;*Short Essay 1 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/26 - 28</td>
<td>3. <strong>Schooling in a Social Context: Educational Environments</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 10 – 13&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/5 - 7</td>
<td>4. <strong>Schools as Organizations: Formal and Informal Education</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 14 – 18&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter Five&lt;br&gt;*Assignment: Short Essay 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/12 - 14</td>
<td>5. <strong>Roles and Responsibilities: Administrators, Teachers and Students</strong>&lt;br&gt;Readings 19 – 23&lt;br&gt;<strong>The Teacher Wars:</strong> Chapter Six&lt;br&gt;*Short Essay 2 Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9    | 3/19 - 21| 6. **What We Can Teach in School: Knowledge for What and for Whom?**}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10   | 3/26 - 28 | Readings 24 – 26  
*Presentations: Mid-term: School Site Description and Contract Due  
*Assignment: Short Essay 3 |
| 11   | 4/2 - 4 | Spring Break |
| 12   | 4/9 - 11 | Readings 27 – 32  
The Teacher Wars: Chapter Eight  
*Short Essay 3 Due |
| 13   | 4/16 - 18 | Readings 33 – 38  
The Teacher Wars: Chapter Nine |
| 14   | 4/23 - 25 | Readings 48 – 51  
The Teacher Wars: Chapter Ten  
*Assignment: Short Essay #4 |
| 15   | 4/30 – 5/2 | Final Fieldwork Presentations  
The Teacher Wars: Chapter Eleven |
| 16   | 12/4 - 6 | Final Fieldwork Presentations  
The Teacher Wars: Epilogue  
The following are due on the last day of class (5/13):  
Fieldwork evaluation form, copy of thank you note to the teacher,  
final field work assignment and *Short Essay 4 |
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](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html) 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/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at [http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/).