

Sociology of Higher Education (SOCI 130E)

Classroom: 103 Ridge Walk Academic Complex (RWAC)

Class Hrs: 11:00-12:20 Tuesday and Thursday

Office Hrs: 12:30-02:00 Thursday (In Person) or by appt

Professor: Dr. Richard N. Pitt

497 Social Sciences Bldg

rpitt@ucsd.edu

www.majorsmatter.net/college

“Not a dream, but a mighty reality – a glimpse of the higher life, the broader possibilities of humanity, which is granted to the man who, amid the rush and roar of living, pauses four short years to learn what living means.” W.E.B. DuBois

“You have four years to be irresponsible here, relax. Work is for people with jobs. You’ll never remember class time, but you’ll remember the time you wasted hanging out with your friends. So stay out late. Spend money you don’t have. The work never ends, but college does.” Tom Petty

COURSE DESCRIPTION. This course is designed to introduce students to basic sociological concepts and research methods as they apply to education as a social institution, with a particular focus on colleges and college life. The course focuses on the question of how schools are organized and how variation within and between colleges affects individuals and society. Ultimately, we want to explore a number of questions you might ask about higher education: What's its purpose? Who is it for? Is it capable of living up to its "promises"? What do we teach and how does the way we teach achieve our goals? How do we control access to college? How are schools organized and why? What's next?

TEXTS. There is no assigned textbook for this course. All assigned readings will be articles made available to you in course reserves. You can access them in Canvas (under "Course Reserves"), but will need a VPN (AnyConnect "allthruucsd" group) for library access if you're off-campus. You can also find them by clicking on the book icon on the first page of the course website. You will be responsible for reading each article assigned and write memos (see point B in grading) for two of them each week. Undergraduate students are conventionally expected to complete 2-3 hours of out-of-class coursework for *every hour in class . . . really*. [I know. Stop laughing!] Research on reading speeds shows that undergrads average about 250-300 words per minute for recognition of the material content. The average 20-page article assigned in this course is about 12500 words and should take you about an hour to read carefully and 30 minutes to skim. As you'll see below, you will be required to outline these articles; that will add an additional 30-45 minutes. Therefore, I fully expect that you should be able to read/outline the articles each week. If you find it difficult to manage this level of work, please let me know and we can discuss some techniques for increasing your reading/skimming speed.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING. Other than the quizzes and the final examination, your grade in this class will be based on your completion of assignments, not "mastery" of material. In order to learn the material we will cover in this class, I need you to complete all of the assignments. Each journal and article memo will be marked as "done" or "not done", not "correct" or "incorrect". These assignments are opportunities to explore, engage with, and challenge ideas raised in the class. Complete them. Each of you starts with an "A" (600 points) and you move down from there. The buffer for each letter grade is 60 points (10%). Pluses and minuses are earned in the 20 point margins at the top/bottom of the letter grade range. **You will receive an A- at 564 points.** Once you go below the threshold for any given grade, there is NO way to go up. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be single-spaced, 1" margins, and in Times or Times New Roman font. All assignments must be turned in on Canvas in the correct assignment "mailbox" as WORD (doc. or docx) documents.

A = 565-600 points (94%)	B+ = 520-539 points (87%)	C+ = 460-479 points (77%)	D = 360-419 points
A- = 540-564 points (90%)	B = 500-519 points (83%)	C = 440-459 points (73%)	F = 0-359 points
	B- = 480-499 points (80%)	C- = 420-439 points (70%)	

OTHER IMPORTANT THOUGHTS

Academic Excuses: I recognize that life may create interruptions in your ability to fully participate in the class. If an issue arises for you, please make sure to contact me immediately by email, but also be sure you can get the missed material from another student. Constantly monitoring students' late work is not a productive use of my time. If **you turn something in late**, Canvas will automatically mark it as a "zero". It will remain a zero until noon the Saturday before finals week when I go back and give it (only) 40% of the possible grade. If you know that **you cannot take the quiz** during the 7a-2p window, let me know by 8am that Friday and I'll be happy to extend the window for you.

Academic Integrity. UCSD's Student Honor and Conduct Code governs all work in this course. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the provisions of the Code addressed in UCSD's Catalog and Student Handbook. Uncertainty about the application of the Honor Code does not excuse a violation. Plagiarism/cheating is easily detected and WILL NOT be tolerated. If I suspect that either has taken place, you will receive no credit for the assignment. Materials presented in this class are for the exclusive use of students enrolled in this course. The release of any of this material is strictly prohibited. Releasing this material will be considered an Honor Code violation and may also be a violation of state and federal laws.

A Note About ChatGTP Written By ChatGTP: "I am aware that some students may be using ChatGTP to complete their assignments. However, I will be able to easily spot any instances of this because ChatGTP produces generic answers that do not demonstrate a genuine understanding of the material as taught in this class. ChatGTP is also, notoriously, incapable of correctly answering quiz/exam questions in this class. Using ChatGTP is cheating; depending on it is a mistake. I expect all students to complete their assignments on their own and with honesty and integrity."

Academic Accessibility. The Office for Students With Disabilities (OSD) works with students who have disabilities in order to help us provide reasonable accommodations to enable you to learn the course materials. It is your responsibility to request those accommodations *through that office*. In order to receive consideration for an accommodation, you must register with the OSD as soon as possible. Accommodations cannot be retroactively applied.

Encountering Food Insecurity? If you are skipping and stretching meals, or having difficulties affording or accessing food, you may be eligible for CalFresh, California's supplemental nutrition assistance program, that can provide nearly \$300 a month in free money on a debit card to buy food. Also consider the Triton Food Pantry, where you can pick up 15 points worth of food per week. Both resources can be found at the following website: basicneeds.ucsd.edu/food-security.

Final Thoughts on Respect. People often have strong opinions about the topics discussed in sociology courses, particularly in discussions that also intersect with ideas about race, gender, and sexuality. In our processes of learning what is empirically "true" and what is not, it is possible that members of the class will make comments which are based on misinformation or an interpretation that other members of the class find objectionable. Given this, it is essential that we treat each other with respect, that we do not demean or devalue the comments of class members, and that we stick to the issues rather than engage in personal attacks. If you find that statements in the class—including my own—cause you to feel left out or make it difficult for you to fully participate, please let me know and we'll see what we can do to remedy this. It is also important to be aware of how your choice of language regarding race, gender, and sexuality will be received by your classmates who may stand in different relation to the material than you. One important adjustment we should all make for this class is to tend towards inclusive language when talking about human beings (e.g., "people" instead of "men") except when the analysis we're engaging in requires more specificity (e.g., a discussion on gay men).

Course Schedule

Week Of January 06 Course Introduction

Bostwick, Valerie, Stefanie Fischer, and Matthew Lang. 2022. "Semesters or Quarters? The Effect of the Academic Calendar on Postsecondary Graduation Rates." *American Economic Journal* 14:40-80.

Crede, Marcus, Sylvia Roch, and Urszula Kieszcynka. 2010. "Class Attendance in College: A Meta-Analytic Review of The Relationship of Class Attendance With Grades and Student Characteristics." *Review of Educational Research* 80:272-295.

Week Of January 13 Functionism And Conflict Theories Of Education

Leyva, Luis, Taylor McNeill, Brittany Marshall, and Oscar Guzman. 2021. "It Seems Like They Purposefully Try to Make as Many Kids Drop': An Analysis of Logics and Mechanisms of Racial-Gendered Inequality in Introductory Mathematics Instruction." *The Journal of Higher Education* 92:784-814.

Saunders, Daniel. 2015. "They Do Not Buy It: Exploring the Extent to Which Entering First-Year Students View Themselves as Customers." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 25:5-28.

Week Of January 20 Status Attainment And Social Mobility (QUIZ)

Hamilton, Laura, Josipa Roksa, and Kelly Nielsen. 2018. "Providing a 'Leg Up': Parental Involvement and Opportunity Hoarding in College." *Sociology of Education* 91:111-131.

Pitt, Richard, and Lin Zhu. 2018. "The Relationship between College Major Prestige/Status and Post-Baccalaureate Outcomes." *Sociological Perspectives* 62:325-345.

Week Of January 28 Social And Cultural Capital

Almeida, Daniel, Andrew Byrne, Rachel Smith, and Saul Ruiz. 2021. "How Relevant Is Grit? The Importance of Social Capital in First-Generation College Students' Academic Success." *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice* 23:539-559.

Collier, Peter, and David Morgan. 2008. "'Is That Paper Really Due Today?': Differences in First-Generation and Traditional College Students' Understandings of Faculty Expectations." *Higher Education* 55:425-446.

Martin, Nathan, and Kenneth Spenner. 2009. "Capital Conversion and Accumulation: A Social Portrait of Legacies at an Elite University." *Research in Higher Education* 50:623-648.

Week Of February 03 College Students and College Life (QUIZ)

Lee, Elizabeth, and Jacob Harris. 2020 "Counterspaces, Counterstructures; Low-Income, First Generation, and Working-Class Students' Peer Support at Selective Colleges." *Sociological Forum* 35:1135-1156.

Martin, Georgianna, Gene Parker, Ernest Pascarella, and Sally Blechschmidt. 2015. "Do Fraternities and Sororities Inhibit Intercultural Competence?" *Journal of College Student Development* 56:66-72.

Week Of February 10 Pedagogy and Curriculum

Estefan, Michel. 2023. "Deliberative Interdependence: A Durkheimian Approach to Promoting Collaborative Learning in Diverse Classrooms." *Sociological Focus* DOI: 10.1080/00380237.00382023.02283722.

Pitt, Richard, Whitney Pirtle, and Ashley Metzger. 2017. "Academic Specialization, Double Majoring, and the Threat to Breadth in Academic Knowledge." *Journal of General Education* 66:166-191.

Week Of February 17 College Missions and College Majors (QUIZ)

Gelbgiser, Dafna. 2018. "College for All, Degrees for Few: For-Profit Colleges and Socioeconomic Differences in Degree Attainment." *Social Forces* 96:1785-1824.

Grubbs, Samuel. 2020. "Does Cooling Out Still Apply? Community Colleges and Educational Expectations." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 44:819-834.

Week Of February 24 Bureaucracy/Equity and Inclusion

Evely-Gildersleeve, Ryan, Natasha Croom, and Philip Vasquez. 2011. "'Am I Going Crazy?!': A Critical Race Analysis of Doctoral Education." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 44:93-114.

Longerbeam, Susan, Karen Inkelaar, Dawn Johnson and Zakiya Lee. 2007. "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual College Student Experiences: An Exploratory Study." *Journal of College Student Development* 48:215-230.

Schachle, Jessica, and Jonathan Coley. 2022. "Making Space: Racialized Organizations and Student of Color Groups at U.S. Colleges and Universities." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 8:386-402.

Week Of March 03 Beyond The Baccalaureate (QUIZ)

Roksa, Josipa, and Richard Arum. 2012. "Life after College: The Challenging Transitions of the Academically Adrift Cohort." *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 44:8-14.

Witteveen, Dirk, and Paul Attewell. 2017. "The Earnings Payoff from Attending a Selective College." *Social Science Research* 66:154-169.

Week Of March 10 The Conclusion Of The Whole Matter

No Readings This Week. We Will Engage In A Deep-Dive Review Of Your Favorite Articles.

Museus, Samuel and Diana Maramba. 2011. "The Impact of Culture on Filipino American Students' Sense of Belonging." *The Review of Higher Education*. 34:231-258.

PRIMARY ARGUMENT (one sentence, usually found in the front of the article): The authors argue that Asian-American students' cultural connections, pressure to commit cultural suicide, and the level at which students adjust to their colleges influence students' sense of belonging.

IMPORTANT DEFINED CONCEPTS (2, don't define acronyms/abbreviations):

- Cultural Suicide: The notion that one must cut ties with ones' pre-college culture in order to assimilate into their dominate campus cultures and be successful..
- Asian Model Minority Myth: The stereotype that all Asian Americans comprise a homogenous group that invariably achieves academic and professional success.

PRIMARY FINDINGS (3-4, usually found in "Findings", "Results", or "Discussion"):

1. Contrary to the model minority myth, Asian American students and Filipino students in particular face many challenges throughout college.
2. There is a positive association between cultural connectivity and a greater sense of belonging in college. Second generation students felt the highest levels of pressure to commit cultural suicide, in part because they also felt the lowest levels of connection to their cultural heritage
3. There seems to be an indirect connection between students having difficulty adjusting to college and pressure to commit cultural suicide.
4. The more students maintained connections with their cultures of origin, the greater ease they experienced in adjusting to college. This seems counterintuitive if we believe adjusting to a predominately White environment requires killing off your cultural ties.

KEY QUOTE (1): "Alternatively, the findings provide support for the notion that cultural integrity... is critical in fostering success among those students of color. These findings also suggest a need to generate new and more culturally relevant models of college student development and success for nontraditional [non-white] students in higher education" (250).

QUESTION (1): Does pressure to commit cultural suicide vary among other racially/ethnic marginalized groups of students in college?