

# Current Topics and Trends in Education SOCI 148

Fall 2025 Section 01 Hybrid 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/06/2025

## Contact Information

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:30-10:15 a.m. DMH 224; by appointment on Zoom @  
<https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/92544100827>

## Course Description and Requisites

Analysis of the current environment of sociology of education from both a macro and micro perspective through sociological, political, philosophical and economic perspectives. Includes the study of qualitative descriptions and quantitative trends of contemporary issues in the field of sociology of education.

Letter Graded

## Classroom Protocols

Classroom AI Policy: It is expected that AI will not be a substitute for doing the expected work in this class including the assigned readings, videos and other course material. It is also expected that you first try assignments on your own, without AI. Finally, it is expected that if you use AI for assignments, that you let me, the instructor, know that it was used, how it was used and the extent to which it was used. You can do that in the assignment submission, discussion post, etc. or in the comment box on Canvas for the assignment submission.

## Program Information

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to think sociologically about the relationship between social structure, interaction, identities, and inequalities.
2. Students will be able to identify and explain major sociological theories and apply them to everyday life.
3. Students will be proficient in qualitative and quantitative research design, data collection and data analysis.
4. Students will be proficient in oral and written communication skills appropriate to the discipline.
5. Students will be able to practice sociology as educated and civically engaged persons.

## Course Goals

This course will examine the institution of education and its historical and current relationship to and with society. The course will draw on sociological, political, philosophical and economic perspectives of current topics within the field of Sociology of Education. The intent of the course is to analyze the current environment of sociology of education from both a macro and micro perspective. To this end, material will be based on both qualitative descriptions and quantitative trends of contemporary issues in the field of Sociology of Education. Part of this process will involve an analysis of the way in which certain issues become the focus of public policy while other issues are absent from this arena. We live in changing times. This course addresses how and why and the field of Education navigates uncertainty. Due to the nature of this course, readings will include classic and published sociological readings along with recent less formal, publications on relevant events.

In the process of examining the current terrain of Sociology of Education, the course will address a number of other relevant topics, including class inequities, privilege, racism, sexism, racial segregation, social movements, education for change, academic freedom, digital redlining, education and technology and schooling and violence.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Institutional Outcomes	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Possible Assessment Methods
Critical Thinking	Define the core terms and the major theoretical approaches discussed within class and apply these concepts to various situations within the contemporary schooling system (Sociology PLO 2).	Class discussion, presentations, open-ended questions on memos
Written and Communication Skills	Identify and explain major sociological theories and apply them to everyday life within the realm of the contemporary schooling system (Sociology PLOs 2 and 4).	Memos and presentations

Evaluate Empirical Sociological Research	Read and evaluate current and empirical sociological research related to the contemporary schooling system (Sociology PLO 3).	Presentations and memos
Acting as Civically Engaged Persons: Valuing Diversity and Having Global Awareness	Understand how identities such as race, class, gender, geography and sexual orientation contribute to a range of social experiences and social perspectives within the contemporary schooling system (Sociology PLO 5).	Class discussion, group work (including possible group assignments), memos and presentations
Self-Awareness	Think sociologically about the relationship between social structure, interaction, identities, and inequalities, particularly as it relates to the field of the contemporary schooling system (Sociology PLO 1).	Class discussion, memos, open-ended questions

## Course Materials

There is not a textbook required for this course. Please see Canvas for the readings and media required for each module. All readings and media will be made available online via Canvas; some may require purchase.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

**Reading.** I expect all of the material to be read with a critical eye. Give yourself adequate time after each reading to reflect on the author's central argument(s) and take notes.

**Media viewing.** I expect all of the media material to be viewed with a critical eye. Give yourself adequate time after each media/movie to reflect on the central argument(s) and take notes.

**Assignments.** There will be at least one assignment due each module throughout the semester.

**Quizzes.** There may be quizzes assigned throughout the semester.

**Dialoguing.** I expect you to show up to the synchronous online Zoom meetings prepared to discuss course material.

**Facilitation.** Please expect to facilitate an informed conversation amongst your peers.

**Participation.** Active participation in class discussion and classroom activities is expected.

## Grading Information

*In-class dialoguing and discussion, participation and activities	40 pts
Module Assignments, activities, discussion boards and/or quizzes	250 pts.
Group Facilitation	25 pts.
Final Project	35 pts.
TOTAL	350 pts.

\*Students must be present during class to receive credit for dialogue participation and in-class activities.

Grades will be based on 350 points throughout the semester and calculated as follows:

331-350+ = A
315 - 330 = A-
303 - 314 = B +
293 - 302 = B
280 - 292 = B -
268 - 279 = C +
258 - 267 = C
245 - 257 = C -

233 - 244 = D +

223 - 232 = D

209 - 222 = D -

000 - 208 = F

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

Subject to change with fair notice.

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
1	Introduction: Sociology of Education  <i>Inside Higher Education</i> : Experts give advice on ChatGPT  "AI Learns from Us. So It Learns Bias." Available at: <a href="https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/deep-learning-racism">https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/deep-learning-racism</a>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
2	<p data-bbox="293 300 1187 331"><b>Sociology of Education, Education Stratification and Vested Interests</b></p> <p data-bbox="293 457 837 489">Lumen: Hot Topics Sociology of Education</p> <p data-bbox="293 531 732 562">Issues and Problems in Education</p> <p data-bbox="293 604 1349 772">Gilliard, Chris. 2016. "Digital Redlining, Access, and Privacy: Filtering content is often done with good intent, but filtering can also create equity and privacy issues." Available at: <a href="https://www.common sense.org/education/privacy/blog/digital-redlining-access-privacy">https://www.common sense.org/education/privacy/blog/digital-redlining-access-privacy</a>.</p>
3	<p data-bbox="293 1014 756 1045"><b>Neo-liberalism and Charter Schools</b></p> <p data-bbox="293 1087 1016 1119">Vox: Everything you need to know about Charter Schools</p> <p data-bbox="293 1161 1276 1192">Neoliberalism and Corporate School Reform Failure and Creative Destruction</p> <p data-bbox="293 1234 1357 1360">Thomas, Paul. 2010. "The corporate takeover of American schools." <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/nov/15/education-schools">https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/nov/15/education-schools</a></p>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
4	<p><b>Students and Mental Health</b></p> <p>Buchanan, Daisy. 2018. "Perfectionism is destroying the mental health of my millennial generation." Available at: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/05/perfectionism-mental-health-millennial-social-media">https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/05/perfectionism-mental-health-millennial-social-media</a></p> <p>Sociology of Mental Health</p> <p>APA: Gen Z and Mental Health</p> <p>A Mental Health Checklist for College Students</p> <p>APA: Student Mental Health Crisis and Campus Response</p> <p>Host a Watch Party: Choose a Video from Canvas</p>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
5	<p>Subtractive Schooling; Learning Violence, Ace Scores, and School Experiences</p> <p>Singal, Jesse. 2017. "How Violence Warps Childhood Friendships in Chicago" <a href="https://www.thecut.com/2017/03/how-violence-warps-childhood-friendships-in-chicago.html">https://www.thecut.com/2017/03/how-violence-warps-childhood-friendships-in-chicago.html</a></p> <p>Subtractive Schooling Chapter 1</p> <p>Laziness Does not Exist Devon Price</p> <p>Listen: La Lucha Sigue</p> <p>Blodgett, Christopher and Jane D. Lanigan. 2018. "The Association between Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and School Success in Elementary School Children." American Psychological Association. Available at: <a href="https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2101/2018/02/ACE-manuscript-final-accepted-by-APA.pdf">https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2101/2018/02/ACE-manuscript-final-accepted-by-APA.pdf</a></p>



**Week/Module**

**Topic, Readings and Content**

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School Gun Violence and Prevention

Lionel Shriver. 2005. "Dying to Be Famous"

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/27/opinion/dying-to-be-famous.html>

Gladwell, Malcolm. 2015. "Thresholds of Violence: How School Shootings Catch On."

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/10/19/thresholds-of-violence>

Errors in Violence Prevention

Review *Rampage*

Bridges, Tristan and Tara Leigh Tober. 2017. "Masculinity Threat: The sociological explanation for why men in America turn to gun violence." Available at: <https://qz.com/1095247/the-sociological-explanation-for-why-men-in-america-turn-to-gun-violence/>

Harel Shapira. 2017. "Guns: Weapons or Tools?" <https://vimeo.com/239536359>

Lee, Jooyoung. 2018. "Jooyoung Lee: On Gun Violence and Teaching Empathy." Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mujkrpl65JY>. *University of Toronto*.

Listen: This is Not a Drill" *This American Life*

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
7	<p data-bbox="293 394 927 428"><b>Sociology, Schooling and the #Metoo movement</b></p> <p data-bbox="293 552 1360 716">Goldstein, Evan. 2018. "The Academy Is Largely Itself Responsible for Its Own Peril: Jill Lepore on writing the story of America, the rise and fall of the fact, and how women's intellectual authority is undermined." Available at: <a href="https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Academy-Is-Largely/245080">https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Academy-Is-Largely/245080</a></p> <p data-bbox="293 837 1341 1001">Coston, Bethany M. 2018. "Reclaiming My Fear: I Will No Longer Stay Silent About Michael Kimmel." Available at: <a href="https://medium.com/@bmcoston/reclaiming-my-fear-i-will-no-longer-stay-silent-about-michael-kimmel-bde8602fee55">https://medium.com/@bmcoston/reclaiming-my-fear-i-will-no-longer-stay-silent-about-michael-kimmel-bde8602fee55</a> (This has since been deleted) Refer to "Article and Database on Kimmel Controversy</p> <p data-bbox="293 1123 779 1157">Medium: We need Restorative Justice</p> <p data-bbox="293 1199 834 1232">Medium: Too Soon for Restorative Justice</p> <p data-bbox="293 1430 1352 1551">Parry, Marc. 2018. "In Sociologists' #MeToo Moment, Does Their Response Heed the Lessons of Social Science?" Available at: <a href="https://www.chronicle.com/article/In-Sociologists-MeToo/244479">https://www.chronicle.com/article/In-Sociologists-MeToo/244479</a></p>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
8	<p data-bbox="293 302 769 331"><b>Intersectional Identities in Academia</b></p> <p data-bbox="293 457 1333 617">Read One Chapter from Gabriella Gutierrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. Gonzalez, and Angela P. Harris, (Eds.) <i>Presumed Incompetent: The Intersection of Race and Class for Women in Academia</i>. Colorado: The University Press of Colorado.</p> <p data-bbox="293 743 1268 819">Vo, Linda T. (2012) "Navigating the Academic Terrain: The Racial and Gender Politics of Elusive Belonging," pp. 93-109</p> <p data-bbox="293 940 1117 970">Kupenda, Angela M. (2012) "Facing Down the Spooks," pp. 20-28</p> <p data-bbox="293 1016 1175 1045">The Glass Escalator, Revisited: Gender Inequality in Neoliberal Times.</p>

**Week/Module**

**Topic, Readings and Content**

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School to Prison Pipeline and CRT

Cole, Nicki Lisa. 2018. "Understanding the School-to-Prison Pipeline."

<https://www.thoughtco.com/school-to-prison-pipeline-4136170>

Heitzeg, Nancy A. 2009. "Education Or Incarceration: Zero Tolerance Policies And The School To Prison Pipeline" Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ870076.pdf>

How racism impacts students of color

Critical Race Theory and the Classroom

What is CRT and what is happening

The Geography of Inequality

Childress, Sarah. 2014. "Michelle Alexander: A System of Racial and Social Control." Available at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/michelle-alexander-a-system-of-racial-and-social-control/>

Erickson, Patricia E. "The Benefits of Teaching Sociology to Prisoners." *Teaching Sociology*

Vol. 29, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), pp. 343-353.

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
10	<p><b>We are Not Dreamers</b></p> <p>Introduction We are Not Dreamers</p> <p>American't: Redefining Citizenship in the U.S. Undocumented Youth Movement</p> <p>"Awakening to a Nightmare" Roberto Gonzales</p> <p>Explore: Immigrant Rights and accessibility by State</p> <p>Laurie Olson: Reparable Harm Policy Report</p> <p>United We Dream Website</p> <p>How Fear of Deportation Puts Stress on Families</p>
11	<p><b>Dynamics Inside the Classroom and Bullying</b></p> <p>Gendered Expectations: Examining how Peers Shape Female students' Intent to Pursue STEM Fields</p> <p>With Friends Like These</p> <p><i>The Sociology of Bullying</i></p> <p><i>Submit: The Documentary</i></p> <p>Review: Bullying</p>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
12	<p><b>Climate Destabilization, Neo-liberations and Environmental Hazards at School</b></p> <p>Lukacs, Martin. 2017. "Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals." <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2017/jul/17/neoliberalism-has-conned-us-into-fighting-climate-change-as-individuals">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2017/jul/17/neoliberalism-has-conned-us-into-fighting-climate-change-as-individuals</a></p> <p>David Hursh, Joseph Henderson and David Greenwood. 2015. "Environmental education in a neoliberal climate." Environmental Education Research, 2015 Vol. 21, No. 3, 299–318, <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2015.1018141">http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2015.1018141</a>.</p> <p>"Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAP) and GPA"</p> <p>"School Disparities in Noise Pollution"</p> <p>Watch: Complaints of health Hazards at Detroit Schools</p>
13	<p><b>What Party?</b></p> <p>Paying for the Party Armstrong and Hamilton</p> <p>Sociologist studies the impact of substance abuse on college graduation</p> <p>Reducing Underage Drinking: A collective Responsibility</p> <p>Clip: Hazing: It Could have been any of us</p> <p>Clip: Hazing: The Tragic Story of Student George Desdunes</p> <p>Remaking America: Recovery High Schools and Teens Facing Addiction</p>

<b>Week/Module</b>	<b>Topic, Readings and Content</b>
14	<p><b>The Teacher Experience</b></p> <p>Teacher Shortage Mississippi</p> <p>NPR: Teachers Want Out</p> <p>NYT: America's Great Teacher Resignation</p> <p>Emotional Labor of Teachers</p> <p>Review: California College Students Pandemic Experiences</p>
15	<p><b>The Fight Over Transgender Students' Rights</b></p> <p>NPR: Court Sides with Student</p> <p>ACLU: My School was Right to let me Choose</p> <p>NYT: Bathroom Bans for Transgender Youths are Poised for Supreme Court Review</p> <p>Listen: "Finn Raises His Hand." <i>This American Life</i></p>
16	Final Project Due