

Syllabus
The Sociology of Higher Education:
The Political Economy of the University

SOC 350
The Illinois State University
Spring 2016

Class Meets: Wednesday 5:30-8:20 pm SCH 104

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Objectives

One of the cornerstone principles of the American meritocracy is the idea that education provides everyone equal opportunity to achieve their full potential. Education is seen as the great equalizer in a society that is, by most measures, far from equal. Over the last generation the role of higher education has become more important and as such is under increasing scrutiny. Policy makers are asking questions about what is happening at American universities and whether the money spent is worth it. Many have decided that it is not, and have systematically cut funding for higher education. At the same time these policy makers are telling us of the increasing importance of higher education in the competitive global marketplace. Against this political economic backdrop, universities have struggled to deliver the education that students and the public is demanding while remaining true to their traditional mission of educating tomorrow's leaders. These are interesting times in higher education.

In this seminar our primary focus will be to engage with the current debates, issues and problems associated with higher education. Among the questions we will explore are: What is the role of higher education in American democracy? What is the mission of higher education and how has it changed? How has the logic of neo-liberalism impacted the university?

Format and Evaluation:

The course will be conducted as a seminar, which means it will consist of in-depth discussions of the week's reading. As such, the value of the course is directly proportional to how well students are prepared for each meeting and how actively engaged they are in the discussion. Students should not expect regular lectures from the instructor. I reserve the right to adopt weekly quizzes or writing assignments if it appears students are not coming to class prepared having done the reading. Course grades will be determined by three factors: 1) Attendance and Participation 2) Briefs, and 3) A team research project. It probably does not need to be mentioned, but attendance every week is expected. Missing class will significantly affect your grade (and the quality of the course for everyone).

Grades

Briefs (50%)

You will be required to write six two-page briefs, one for each of the assigned books. Briefs are two page summaries of the central arguments the author makes. They will be due at the beginning of class – completed briefs will be your ticket to join the class. **Late Briefs will not be accepted.**

Research Project (30%)

There will be a group research project and presentation at the end of the semester. Details to follow.

Attendance and Participation (20%)

Woody Allen said “90% of success is showing up.” I believe this true particularly in a class such as this. Your attendance each week is expected. My policy is to allow everyone one (1) absence for the semester. Beyond that your grade will be reduced one full letter grade for each additional missed class. **Missing four or more classes will result in failing the course.** Your active participation in class discussions is also expected and will be assessed based on the *quality* of your contribution to in-class and on-line discussions. If you are uncomfortable speaking publicly you should meet with me early in the semester. Keep in mind that *quantity* is not the same as *quality* when it comes to participation. Quality will be rewarded.

Graduate Students

If you are taking this course for graduate credit, you will be required to submit one additional written project in addition to doing the regular assignments. These papers shall be no less than 13 and no more than 14 pages in length. Papers are to be double spaced, with 1 inch margins on all sides and be printed using 12 point Times New Roman font. Substantively, papers are to address the tension between bureaucratic requirements imposed by administrators in a university setting and ideal of academic freedom that is a core value of faculty members. The project may be supported by either primary or secondary data, may rely on case studies or participant observation. If students prefer to do a different project please consult with me by mid semester.

Required Book List

- Armstrong, Elizabeth A. and Laura T. Hamilton. 2013. *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Arum, Richard and Josipa Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mettler, Suzanne. 2014. *Degrees of Inequality: How the Politics of Higher Education Sabotaged the American Dream*. New York: Basic Books.
- Newfield, Christopher. 2008. *Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Sperber, Murray A. *Beer and Circus: How Big-Time College Sports Is Crippling Undergraduate Education*. 1st ed. New York: H. Holt, 2000.
- Tuchman, Gaye. 2009. *Wannabe U: Inside the Corporate University*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- [Optional] Clawson, Dan and Max Page. 2011. *The Future of Higher Education*. New York: Routledge.

Schedule (subject to change)

Meeting	Agenda
Part I: Introduction to Higher Education	
Week 1	<p><u>Welcome</u> Introduction and Syllabus Week Clawson, Dan and Max Page. 2011. <i>The Future of Higher Education</i>. New York: Routledge. Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 2: The Lay of the Land (pdf) Film: Ivory Tower</p>
Week 2	<p><u>The Contested Mission(s) of the University</u> Roth, Michael S. 2014. <i>Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press. [Excerpts Introduction and Chap. 3 "Controversies and Critics"] Delbanco, Andrew. 2012. <i>College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be</i>. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, [Excerpt Introduction and Chap. 1 "What is College For?"] Bennett, William J. and David Wilezol. 2013. <i>Is College Worth It?: A Former United States Secretary of Education and a Liberal Arts Graduate Expose the Broken Promise of Higher Education</i>. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Introduction, Ch. 3,4 [RN Excerpt]</p>
Part II: Political Economy of the University	
Week 3	<p><u>Education and Social Reproduction</u> Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 1976. <i>Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life</i>. New York: Basic Books. Chapters 1 and 4 [RN] [Chapter 8 optional] Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-258 in <i>Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education</i>, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood. [RN] Bourdieu, Pierre and Jean Claude Passeron. 1977. "The Ideological Function of the Education System." Pp. 194-219 in <i>Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture</i> Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. [RN]</p> <p>Further Reading: Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 2002. "Schooling in Capitalist America Revisited." <i>Sociology of Education</i>. 75:1-18. [RN] Bourdieu, Pierre. 1973. "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction." in <i>Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education</i>, edited by R. K. Brown.</p>

Meeting	Agenda
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Social Reproduction and Inequality</u></p> <p>Mettler, Suzanne. 2014. <i>Degrees of Inequality: How the Politics of Higher Education Sabotaged the American Dream</i>. New York: Basic Books.</p>
<p>Week 5</p>	<p><u>Neo-Liberalism and Higher Education</u></p> <p>Deresiewicz, William. 2015. "Neoliberal Arts: How College Sold Its Soul to the Market." <i>Harpers</i>, September.[RN]</p> <p>Davies, Bronwyn and Eva Bendix Petersen. 2005. "Neo-Liberal Discourse in the Academy: The Forestalling of (Collective) Resistance." <i>Learning and Teaching in the Social Sciences</i> 2:77-98.[RN]</p> <p>Film: College Inc.</p> <p>Further Reading: Giroux, Henry A. 2014. <i>Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education</i>. Chicago: Haymarket.</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Neo-Liberalism, the Culture Wars and Higher Education</u></p> <p>Newfield, Christopher. 2008. <i>Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class</i>. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.</p>
<p>Week 7</p>	<p><u>Open Week</u></p> <p>Group Project Work</p> <p>Agenda and Reading TBA</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Corporatizing the University</u></p> <p>Tuchman, Gaye. 2009. <i>Wannabe U: Inside the Corporate University</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p>

Meeting	Agenda
<p>Week 9</p>	<p><u>Who's In Charge of the University? The Rise of Administration</u></p> <p>Clawson, Dan and Max Page. 2011. <i>The Future of Higher Education</i>. New York: Routledge. [RN Chapter 3: "Who Governs" (pdf)]</p> <p>Gerber, Larry G. 2014. <i>The Rise and Decline of Faculty Governance: Professionalization and the Modern American University</i>. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.[Chapter 4 and/or chapter 5]</p> <p>Ginsberg, Benjamin. 2011. <i>The Fall of the Faculty: The Rise of the All-Administrative University and Why It Matters</i>. New York: Oxford University Press. [pp. 1-39]</p>
<p>Week 10</p>	<p><u>Who Does the Work of the University? Labor</u></p> <p>Bousquet, Marc. 2008. <i>How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation</i>. New York: New York University Press. [RN Ch. 1 excerpt]</p> <p>Clawson, Dan and Max Page. 2011. <i>The Future of Higher Education</i>. New York: Routledge. [Chapter 6 "Who Works"]</p> <p>Professor X. 2008. "In the Basement of the Ivory Tower." <i>Atlantic</i>. [RN PDF]</p> <p>Further Reading: Hacker, Andrew and Claudia Dreifus. 2010. <i>Higher Education?: How Colleges Are Wasting Our Money and Failing Our Kids--and What We Can Do About It</i>. New York: Henry Holt and Co. [Chapters 1-3] Professors, Administrators and Contingent Faculty</p>
<p>Part III: What's Going on Here?: Life Inside the University</p>	
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Academics</u></p> <p>Arum, Richard and Josipa Roksa. 2011. <i>Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>Film: Declining by Degree</p> <p>Further Reading: Attwell and Lavin – "Mass Education and Its Critics" [RN excerpt] Keeling, Richard P. and Richard H. Hersh. 2011. <i>We're Losing Our Minds: Rethinking American Higher Education</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.</p>

Meeting	Agenda
<p>Week 12</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Social Life</u></p> <p>Armstrong, Elizabeth A. and Laura T. Hamilton. 2013. <i>Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.</p> <p>Further Reading: Nathan, Rebekah. 2005. <i>My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student</i>. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Flanagan, Caitlyn. 2014. "The Dark Power of Fraternities." <i>The Atlantic</i>, March. "Confessions of an Ivy League Frat Boy: Inside Dartmouth's Hazing Abuses" http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/confessions-of-an-ivy-league-frat-boy-inside-dartmouths-hazing-abuses-20120328#ixzz3xtlpWT4w</p>
<p>Week 13</p> <p>Briefs Due</p>	<p><u>Sports</u></p> <p>Sperber, Murray A. 2000. <i>Beer and Circus: How Big-Time College Sports Is Crippling Undergraduate Education</i>. New York: H. Holt.</p> <p>Further Reading: Bok, Derek Curtis. 2003. <i>Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education</i>. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. [Ch. 7] Hacker, Andrew and Claudia Dreifus. 2010. <i>Higher Education?: How Colleges Are Wasting Our Money and Failing Our Kids--and What We Can Do About It</i>. New York: Times Books [Chapter 9]</p>
<p>Week 14</p>	<p><u>BS About the BA</u> - Reading TBA</p>
<p>Week 15</p>	<p><u>Research Presentations</u></p>