SOC 190.6
POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

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Office Hours: Thursdays 2-4, Barrows 483
Sign up on BSpace (under Sign-up)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In recent decades, American universities have been undergoing a major transformation. Changes in the substance and uses of knowledge, increasing competitive and financial pressures, and changing organizational structures create many challenges for the individuals who work and study in them. Issues of access, funding and curricula occupy the public agenda. This course will examine these developments and debates from a socio-historical perspective. We begin by reviewing the origins of the university in Europe and the United States. The second part of the course focuses on the relations between the university on the one hand, the society, the state and politics on the other hand. The third part draws on this socio-historical background to investigate some key problems in higher education: access, content, commercialization, funding and governance. Throughout the course, we will read on the University of California system and UC Berkeley, and aim to link broader changes to local developments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This is NOT a lecture course but a research seminar. Accordingly, there are two main requirements: active, informed participation in discussion, and an original research paper. To meet these requirements fully, you will be writing a number of reading and research memos over the course of the semester. Here’s a more detailed breakdown of the requirements and grading:

Reading Memos 20%
In a reading memo, you should briefly summarize the main arguments of the readings assigned for the week and provide some discussion: questions; links to other readings; theoretical or empirical critique; implications for your research paper. You are encouraged to read each others’ memos before each meeting.
A memo should be around 500 words; you are required to write a total of 4 memos.
Upload to Bspace (under Forums, under the week’s topic) by Wednesday noon each week.

Attendance and Participation 30%
Attendance is mandatory (10%). Two or more unexcused absences will severely impact your attendance/participation grade.
Active, informed participation is required of all seminar participants (15%). You should complete all readings for the week prior to attending class, and arrive prepared to discuss the materials. To encourage preparedness, I will randomly call on participants to share thoughts and questions.
Once during the semester, you will co-facilitate the discussion (5%) where you will be expected to help seminar participants to cover the main themes, make connections to other readings, and think critically about the material. Sign up by Aug 30th.
Research Paper 50%
For your research paper, you will choose a key issue in contemporary American universities and analyze it by conducting archival, ethnographic or interview-based research on the UC system.

Week 2: Aug 30/Th: Meet with me to set your topic and identify preliminary readings.

Week 4: Sep 11/Tue/3pm: Submit a 500 word memo reviewing your preliminary readings and proposing a research project (5%).

Week 8:
Oct 9/Tue/3pm: Submit a 1000 word memo linking existing literature with your findings (10%).
Oct 11/Th: Meet with me during office hours to discuss your memo.

Weeks 12-13:
Nov 6/Tue/3pm: Submit a full draft of the whole paper (12-15 pages) (15%).
Nov 8/Th-Nov 15/Th: In-class presentations (5%).

Finals week: Dec 6/Th/3pm: Submit the final version (12-15 pages) (15%).

All submissions related to the research paper should be made in hard copy (12 font, single-spaced, single-sided, no cover page) to my box in Barrows 410 by 3 pm.

OTHER GUIDELINES

Course Materials
Readings from books are included in the reader prepared at Copy Central (2560 Bancroft). You can order your reader at www.copycentral.com. Articles are on Bspace (under Resources).

Lateness
Please be on time for class meetings. Late reading memos will not be accepted. Late research assignments will incur significant penalties. Research assignments submitted more than 5 days after the due date will not receive credit. If you are late due to illness or other genuine emergency, you need to provide me with documentation.

Communication/Office Hours
You can email me about urgent issues. If you have a question that needs a detailed response, please come to my office hours (sign up on BSpace, under Sign-up) or email for an appointment.

Academic Dishonesty
Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. All work you turn in MUST be your own. This means no borrowing of ideas or wording from friends’ work, other authors’ work, or the Internet. If you quote from or paraphrase another person’s work, you must cite in the proper manner. Any form of cheating and plagiarism will lead to zero on the exam or assignment and to disciplinary action. Make sure you read UC Berkeley’s Code of Student Conduct regarding academic dishonesty at http://students.berkeley.edu/osl/sja.asp?id=1143. For an overview of plagiarism and how to cite sources, consult http://students.berkeley.edu/osl/sja.asp?id=4068.

Disability Accommodation
The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for verifying that students have disability-related needs for academic accommodations and for planning appropriate accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. Students who need academic accommodations should request them from DSP: 230 César Chávez Student Center, 642-0518. http://dsp.berkeley.edu/teachstudentswithdisab.html. If you need disability-related accommodations, if you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me privately after class or during my office hours.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1/August 23: Introduction

PART I  ORIGINS

Week 2/August 30: European Origins

Recommended:

Week 3/September 6: Emergence of the American University

Recommended:
PART II UNIVERSITY AND SOCIETY, STATE, POLITICS

Week 4/September 13: Research Workshop

Week 5/September 20: Expansion of Higher Education: Mobility versus Reproduction

Recommended:

Week 6/September 27: Rise of the Federal Grant Multiversity

Recommended:

Week 7/October 4: Berkeley in the 1960s
Recommended:

PART III  ISSUES

Week 8/October 11: Access, Diversity

Recommended:

Week 9/October 18: Politics of Knowledge and Curricula

Recommended:
Week 10/October 25: Commercialization of Academic Science


Recommended:

Week 11/November 1: Corporatization of the University


Recommended:


Week 12/November 8: Student Presentations
Week 13/November 15: Student Presentations
Week 14/November 22: Thanksgiving/No Class Meeting

Week 15/November 29: Looking Forward


Recommended:
