

**SOC 190: THE SOCIOLOGY OF SCHOOL CHOICE**  
COURSE SYLLABUS—FALL 2017—UC BERKELEY

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**Office hours (OH): Tuesdays 12-2 PM, sign up: [www.wejoinin.com/sheets/tbbut](http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/tbbut)**

**Course location: 321 Haviland Hall**

**Course time: Thursdays, 12:10-2:00 PM**

**Course dates: Aug. 24 – Nov. 30 (except Nov. 23)**

**ABOUT THE COURSE<sup>1</sup>**

**Orientation.** As a capstone course for advanced sociology undergraduates, this participatory seminar builds on and applies your sociological knowledge to a specific, contemporary topic: school choice. Through readings, writing assignments, and research projects, you will develop the skills and knowledge to critically engage the school choice movement and its politics. We will address questions of inclusivity, efficacy, and impact—asking especially whether charter schools are living up to their 25-year-old promise of bringing greater equality into U.S. education. The course will begin with an overview of popular contention and the institutional and political contexts at play; develop a conceptual foundation in identity, power, and theoretical orientations; and weigh the evidence on school choice, paying particular attention to organizational dynamics and identity claims.

**Course description.** Like many countries, the U.S. holds great expectations for its educational institutions. Economic productivity, cultural vitality, national unity, community development—broad coalitions attach these and other hopes to the educational process. And recent decades have especially brought to bear another big dream for teachers, schools, and students: the achievement of equality across key axes of social differences—namely race, class, and gender—through an equal, fair, and just schooling system that empowers everyone to realize their potential.

School choice is the political and social fulcrum meant to lift the disadvantaged out of poverty and marginalization. The dream of an egalitarian society is rendered a practical problem with a logical solution: decreasing bureaucratic constraints (labor standards, content restrictions, financial oversights, etc.) and increasing community control (using local governments to address constituents' needs) improves schools' ability to serve diverse populations, and improving schools thus empowers youths to go to college, follow their dreams, and benefit their communities and all of society to boot.

Charter schools are the bastion of school choice, the darling of educational reformers that's won bipartisan support and grown tremendously in recent decades. Promising to fix America's lagging test performance by international standards, the last 15 years or so have seen a tripling of the number of charter schools and a nearly *eight-fold* increase in the number of students served—climbing from 1,542 schools serving 349,714 students in 1999-2000 to reach 6,633 schools serving 2,686,166 students in 2014-15.<sup>2</sup> And with the current federal administration—in which school choice advocate Betsy DeVos serves as Education Secretary—support for charter schools will only keep growing.

In this course, you will develop the knowledge and conceptual foundation to critically engage the complex phenomenon of school choice. Some of the core questions you will encounter are: What

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<sup>1</sup> Full course name: SOC 190 004; Class #: 20554

<sup>2</sup> NAPCS. 2016. "Data Dashboard." *National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) Data Dashboard*. Retrieved (<http://dashboard.publiccharters.org/dashboard/home>).

political and social forces are behind the recent wide-ranging transformations in education? What populations are best served by this emerging system, and who gets left out? How can we best measure the inclusivity and efficacy of educational programs? What are the “externalities” or unintended consequences of structuring education around deregulation, competition, and school accountability for test results? And above all: After 25 years of charter schools, are they living up to their promise of bringing race, class, and gender equality into U.S. education?

This course begins with a broad look at popular contention over the charter movement, followed by an overview of the institutional and political contexts at play (decentralization and accountability). To guide our inquiry, we then develop a conceptual foundation including physical, social, and cultural capitals; the roles of identity and power; and the institutionalist and market-based theoretical orientations. In the last section, we weigh the evidence on school choice as it stands now: we investigate organizational dynamics, pivotal questions around performance and innovation, and finally, how charters make a claim to uniqueness through establishment of an “ideological identity” (as expressed through their mission statements).

**Required readings.** A reader of collected articles and chapters for the course will be available from Copy Central at 2576 Bancroft Way. Many of them will also be available on the bCourses site, and the reader is available for two-hour loan at the Reserve Desk in Moffitt Library.

**Office hours (OH).** OH are an opportunity to build dialogue around sociology and get support for your education, including reading & writing. **To earn full participation credit, you must attend at least one office hour during the semester before Week 13.** Please **sign up online** (see website at top) OR email me (at least 24 hrs. in advance) to make an OH appointment. Location varies between the benches outside Dwinelle Hall, my office at 2420 Bowditch St., or 483 Barrows—depending on weather and schedule—and will be indicated online. Groups are welcome and encouraged.

**Research paper.** The heart of this course is an independent research project you build up over the semester out of course readings, weekly writing assignments, and research activities. Anything related to school choice is an appropriate paper topic: parents’ perceptions of charter schools, political dynamics around vouchers, the growth of charter management organizations, the stories or learning models of specific charter schools, etc. Guided by your initial predictions and the literature, your core argument will emerge from sustained research and reflection over the semester, culminating in a polished report of 15-20 pages offering an original contribution to the school choice movement and scholarship.

Your paper may take one of two forms. First, you may undertake some original empirical research, which means collecting (within a manageable scale) and analyzing data in conversation with course material (more detail below). While I think this option would be the most interesting for you, it also assumes that you have existing methodological skill sets, connections with players in the charter school sector, or a clear and motivating agenda. This may not be true in your case—but fear not: There is an alternative. The second option is for you to write a **detailed research review** that delves into and builds on the scholarship on school choice, engaging **at least eight** academic books or articles<sup>3</sup> in addition to the required readings (as well as any relevant blog posts, newspaper articles, etc.). Papers of either type ask a specific sociological question related to school choice, strategically

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<sup>3</sup> To gather academic sources, consider using Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.com>).

and critically review the relevant findings (whether gathered from the field or scholarship), integrate course concepts, and offer a coherent and logical argument centered on a clear thesis statement.

**Research methods.** You have many research methods at your disposal for empirical projects, from surveys and interviews to data science and archival work. Develop a method that best matches your research question and that also strongly positions your research relative to what is already known. You could complement remote-sounding facts characterizing the state of education for disadvantaged populations with a more humanizing approach: for instance, by fleshing out the struggles and aspirations of real Oakland families given the broader dropout rate in Oakland Unified School District of 35% for African Americans, 40% for Latinos, and 43% for English Language Learners<sup>4</sup>. Or you could interview officials and staff at a local charter school, charter management organization (CMO), or school district in order to build an interpersonal, politically nuanced account of the sustained growth of school choice approaches and CMOs. Working together with the literature to bridge methods and levels of knowledge—some more macro-oriented, others more micro-oriented—grants observational findings broader relevance while also adding flesh & bone to remote-sounding social facts.

If your choice of topic calls for direct observation of students within specific learning environments, I recommend you gather observations while providing administrative and/or pedagogical support at a local charter school. You will need to do the groundwork of making contact, developing relationships, and coordinating schedules to enable field work. There are many options in the Bay Area—and you are welcome to draw on existing relationships you have with educational programs in school choice settings. But I recommend these two nearby charter schools largely serving disadvantaged students:

*Community School for Creative Education:* 2111 International Blvd., Oakland. Waldorf-inspired, focused on artistic expression and balanced learning (“head, heart, and hands”). Serves grades K-8. See <http://www.communityschoolforcreativeeducation.org>.

*REALM Charter School:* Two Berkeley schools—High at 1222 University Ave., Middle at 2023 8<sup>th</sup> St. Emphasizes social justice, project-based learning, and college preparedness. Serves grades 6-12. See <http://www.realmcharterschool.org>.

More macro-level methods are also good options. Content analysis of newspaper articles or teaching-related publications (e.g., *Education Week*) could provide insight into shifting educational paradigms through significant policy changes like the emergence of accountability in late 1980s or the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. Statistical analysis of test scores could determine how ethnicity and income influence academic performance in urban charter schools. Or computational text analysis of charter school mission statements could reveal patterns in organizational identities structured by politics and race/class dynamics<sup>5</sup>. You will need to find your own data and draw on (or expand, within reason) your existing analytical toolkit. There are many resources around campus to help you do this, such as the wonderful consultants at the D-Lab or the Data Science Education Program.

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<sup>4</sup> See “OUSD’s Graduation Rate Continues to Climb” at <https://www.ousd.org/Page/13526>.

<sup>5</sup> This is the current focus of my own research, and I am happy to share data and help you get started.

## RESPONSIBILITIES & ASSIGNMENTS<sup>6</sup>

<b>Grading distribution.</b>	20 %—Attendance, participation, & discussion leadership
	20 %—Reading responses (weekly; 11 total)
	20 %—Project reports (biweekly; 4 total)
	5 %—Presentation of work-in-progress (week VII)
	5 %—Research paper rough draft (due week XII)
	10 %—Revised, polished research paper draft (due week XV)
	20 %—Final research paper (due Friday, Dec. 8 <sup>th</sup> )

**Attendance & participation (20%).** This is a discussion seminar, not a lecture course. The productivity and benefits of the class depend on the *active* participation of every single person. I expect each student to carefully do all the reading each week, to be actively and conscientiously engaged in their research activities, to think about the material and prepare to discuss before class, and to be actively engaged in class discussions. Active engagement includes active listening as well as speaking, but I do expect each student to speak in every class session—there is no substitute for this! You are expected to attend all classes and to be on time.

A major component of your participation is **leading class discussion** with a classmate once during the semester. Dates will be assigned in our second meeting; the first opportunity to lead will be our third meeting (see schedule below for readings). You and your partner will prepare a list of open-ended questions related to the assigned readings (no quiz questions, please) to stimulate class discussion—I will review these with you in my office hours two days before class (see online signup sheet). I recommend that your questions are critical (evaluates the argument, evidence, etc.), applied (connects to real-world issues or experiences, e.g. your research), or synthetic (develops conversation between authors/perspectives). I will participate in discussion and help to connect perspectives and clarify difficult ideas as needed.

**Reading responses – weekly (20%).** To initiate class discussion and confirm that you’re thinking critically about the readings, you are required to post to bCourses a reading response of **250-350 words** no later than 24 hours before each class meeting (from weeks 2 to 14, except week 8). Reading responses will be graded as pass/fail: if you turn them in on time and show consistent effort in engaging with the readings, you will get full credit. You may miss **two** reading responses without it affecting your grade.

Your 2-3 paragraph reading responses fulfills two tasks: summary and critical engagement with the reading. Your **summary** addresses the questions: What is the author’s thesis? What are a few of the specific claims (observations, examples, subpoints, etc.) the author makes to support the thesis? What data does the author use, and how? are they analyzed? Your **critical engagement** addresses the questions: Is the argument convincing, and why? How could it be stronger? How does this relate to other readings, your research, or your observations and experiences?

**Project reports – weeks 4, 6, 8, 10 (20%).** To accumulate data for your research papers and confirm you are engaging consistently with your research, you are required to post to bCourses a

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<sup>6</sup> *To receive full credit, all written work must be double-spaced with 1” page margins and 12-point font.*

project report (**PR; 1-2 pages, PDF format**) no later than 24 hours before class every other week (starting week 4; see course schedule). I will post prompts for these on bCourses, asking you to describe recent developments in your research project: defining a topic and research plan, describing the site/informants/literature, conducting observations/interviews and/or readings, applying sociological concepts and connecting to readings, analyzing your findings, etc. PRs will be graded on a check-plus (thoughtful prose, clear reasoning, exemplary writing) / check (good effort with room to improve) / check-minus (lacking detail or insight, might seem rushed) / no-credit (no clear logic, disconnected from course content) scale. Every PR is essential—no freebies. To help orient you, the first PR prompt is as follows.

**Project report 1: Research Plan – due week IV (part of 20% project reports grade).** For this course, you will either write a detailed research review or carry out a small-scale research project. The former will involve delving into a literature (beyond the course texts) related to school choice and critically analyzing it. The latter option may use as its data source field observations, interviews, newspapers (for content analysis), web content/ textual corpus (for data-scientific analysis), etc. In this report, describe the logic and procedure of your research plan as it is now, responding to the following items.

- ❖ Describe your sociological research question and why you think it's important. Explain how your data source and/or literature will shed light on this question.
- ❖ If doing field work, describe your data source (What does it look like? What is the background of the people involved?<sup>7</sup> Where do these data come from?), how you will get access, your data collection methods, and why these are appropriate. If at all possible, describe your first impressions of your study site/informants/object of study, including any relevant interactions you've had and/or obstacles you've faced.
- ❖ If writing a research review, *briefly* overview the pertinent literature and how your paper will engage it. Identify as best you can the major actors, theoretical camps, and methods in this literature.
- ❖ What obstacles do you anticipate facing as your research progresses? What will you need to learn about your topic, research methods, study venue, literature, etc. in order to develop your project, and how will you learn it?
- ❖ Finally, describe 2-3 course concepts you intend to draw upon in your research (course readings later in semester may be helpful for this), and explain why you think they will be useful.

**Research Plan Meeting (part of 20% project reports grade) – Week III:** You are required to meet with me—after submitting your first project report—to discuss feasibility and tactics for your project. Although I welcome your consultation at any point, this meeting is especially meant to help you in the beginning stages of your research, as you are considering your research topic, what data to use, and how to analyze them.

**Presentation of work-in-progress (5%) – Week VII:** Students will take turns *briefly* presenting their research and getting feedback in a workshop-style atmosphere. With only **five minutes each** to present, this will be an exercise in discipline and efficiency. I encourage you to talk for

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<sup>7</sup> For information on populations served by particular schools, see [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) and <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us>

only 3 minutes or so, leaving 2 minutes for feedback. Be sure to cover: your research question and why it matters; your approach and data source or literature; what you've learned so far, especially any surprises; and anything you'd like help with. Visuals are encouraged and PowerPoint (4 slides max) is welcome but must be set up before class. The more you prepare, the more succinct and powerful will be your presentation. When you yourself are offering feedback, aim to be honest yet constructive. For example, if you think that something won't work or is confusing, suggest an alternative approach or a way to clarify.

**Research paper rough draft (10-25 pages excluding visuals & references, 5%) – Due Week XII:** Building on your weeks of research and accumulated reading responses and project reports, write a rough draft of your research paper according to the prompt. This assignment will be graded on a check-plus/ check/ check-minus/ no-credit scale. A paper that earns full credit (check-plus) will be a strong first effort to tie everything together; it need not be polished, but it does need to reflect a sustained, thoughtful, coherent engagement with your research activities and the course material. Bring a hard copy to class.

**Revised, polished research paper draft (15-20 pages excluding visuals & references, 10%) – Due Week XV:** Building on your previous draft and instructor feedback, write a revised, polished draft of your research paper according to the prompt. Visuals are encouraged. This assignment will be graded on a check-plus/ check/ check-minus/ no-credit scale. To earn full credit (check-plus), papers must be well-organized, well-supported, and diligent, reflecting imaginative application of course material, sustained research activities, and thoughtful engagement with the scholarly, activist, and/or educational communities around school choice.

For peer review, bring to class a total of THREE typed drafts to share—one for you and two for peer reviewers. Please include an **introductory note** summarizing the instructor's feedback on the rough draft you submitted previously (in week XII), the changes you've made to the paper in response, and remaining problems or areas you'd like targeted feedback. When reading, take note of your questions and suggestions for improving the argument, theoretical development, additional sources of information, or ways to use existing data. Peer review forms will be provided in class.

**Final research paper (15-20 pages excluding visuals & references, 20%) – Due Friday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>:** Drawing from your revised, polished draft, peer and instructor feedback, and sustained research and writings, write the final version of your research paper according to the prompt. This assignment will receive a letter grade and significantly affect your overall grade.

Successful papers are original, well-organized, well-researched, and well-supported, with ideas clearly expressed in solid prose. "Good" but uninteresting, formulaic writing will receive a B. To achieve a grade above a B, written work must cohesively weave together course concepts from throughout the semester into a convincing, original central argument that directly addresses a compelling sociological question. Moreover, research-based papers must also insightfully weave analysis of field observations together into the argument, while research review papers must weave in a penetrating analysis of their literature. Such work reflects students' creativity, imagination, insight, and comfort with the sociological perspective as well as initiative, diligence, and commitment to their topic, representing original contributions to the school choice movement and scholarship.

## MISCELLANEOUS INFO

**Help with writing.** Strong, clear writing develops with practice, and revising paper drafts is a great opportunity! I am happy to help revise your papers in office hours (but not over email). I also encourage peer feedback on your research paper drafts (see forms on bCourses) and use of the excellent writing tutors at the Student Learning Center (SLC). See here for more info: <http://slc.berkeley.edu/writing>. You may also want to consult the excellent *Writing Guide for Sociology* and other resources on the Berkeley Sociology website (<http://sociology.berkeley.edu/undergraduate-writing-resources>).

**bCourses.** Our bCourses site is a forum for me to post readings, materials, and links; I also invite you to post any appropriate comments, questions, and links you feel are relevant to the course. There's a lot about school choice out there in cyberspace, so post away—but please use prudent judgment about what is and is not appropriate. My hope is that our course site can serve as a venue for discussion outside the classroom, thereby enhancing our discussions during class.

**Before & after class.** Our time will pass quicker than you expect. I strongly recommend warming up first: take at least 10 mins right before class to review lecture and reading notes. To help your memory, please also “cool down” by spending around 10 minutes right after class to update and clarify your notes.

**Absences.** Our time is precious! You may have *one unexcused absence* for illness or outside commitments. Beyond that, I ask for a doctor's note or other official documentation to excuse you. If you miss class, it is your job to learn what was covered—ask your classmates!

**Late assignments.** Late papers will incur a reduced grade of one third of a letter per day (e.g., from A to A-, or B- to C+). Lateness will not affect your grade **only** if you provide official documentation and notify me ASAP. Please know that this strict deadline is so I can offer you substantive and timely feedback on your works in progress.

**Use of electronic devices during class.** While technology has a wonderful potential to aid learning, it also risks being a huge distraction from discussion. I provisionally allow you to use laptops to take notes and reference readings—but **this privilege may be revoked if I observe anyone web-surfing, checking email, or otherwise being electronically off-task. Also, please silence and put away your cell phones.** Lastly, for in-class writing exercises & notes, please bring paper and a pen.

**Email policies.** I usually answer emails within 24 hours. Please keep emails short and restricted to administrative matters (e.g., absences). Rather than send me long or broad questions, come to office hours or bring them to class. Also, please make sure your bCourses email is correct.

**Academic Integrity.** Take this honor code to heart—you are responsible for it:

*As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others.*

In practice, this means all your submitted written work must be your own. If you cite or borrow *any* ideas from another source, including texts you paraphrase, you must include appropriate citation. If I discover evidence of cheating or plagiarism, then you will receive a failing grade. For specific guidelines on citation and Berkeley policies on plagiarism, please refer to

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Citations.html>. And you can read more about the honor code here: <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/berkeley-honor-code>.

**Feedback.** I value your feedback on what works and what doesn't in this course. I will provide you ways to give me feedback in class, including midterm evaluations. Additionally, feel free to email me or speak to me after class or in office hours. The sooner you say something, the better the odds that I can change it.

**Special needs.** Please consult with me if you need anything special to make participation in the class easier for you—whether due to learning disabilities, participation in athletics, parenthood, etc. I can't promise to accommodate you, but I'll do what I can. For DSP, please provide a letter of accommodation ASAP to secure extra time on take-home exams.

**On mental health.** College can be really stressful. For support, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) at the Tang Center (2222 Bancroft Way, 510-642-9494), and the Career Center (<https://career.berkeley.edu>). If you need someone to talk to immediately, call the 24/7 Suicide Prevention and Crisis Hotline (415-499-1100).

**This is my job.** Sorry, but we're not Facebook friends, beer friends, etc. while you're in this course. Our respective roles require our relationship to be strictly professional—you are a student, I am staff. Let's be courteous, thanks!

## COURSE SCHEDULE<sup>8</sup>

### PART I: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

*Week I (08/24). Introductions and course overview  
(no assignments or reading)*

*Week II (08/31). What's at stake*

§ Assignments due: **RR1** §

#### *Required readings:*

- Strauss, Valerie. 2017. "What 'school choice' means in the era of Trump and DeVos." *Washington Post*, May 22. Retrieved ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/05/22/what-school-choice-means-in-the-era-of-trump-and-devos/?utm\\_term=.f59b5510997f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/05/22/what-school-choice-means-in-the-era-of-trump-and-devos/?utm_term=.f59b5510997f)). 6 pgs.
- Fuller, Bruce. 2015. "The Verdict on Charter Schools?" *The Atlantic*, July 8. Retrieved (<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/07/the-verdict-on-charter-schools/397820/>). 9 pgs.
- Russakoff, Dale. 2015. *Assessing The \$100 Million Upheaval Of Newark's Public Schools*. Philadelphia, PA. Audio. Retrieved (<http://www.npr.org/2015/09/21/442183080/assessing-the-100-million-upheaval-of-newarks-public-schools>). 29 mins.
- \*\* Bankston, Carl L. et al. 2013. "Charter Schools." *Contexts* 12(3):16–25. 10 pgs.

#### *Recommended readings:*

- Oliver, John. 2016. "Charter Schools." *Last Week Tonight*. Retrieved ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_htSPGAY7I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_htSPGAY7I)). 18 mins.
- Wall, Patrick. 2017. "The Privilege of School Choice." *The Atlantic*, April 25. Retrieved (<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/04/the-privilege-of-school-choice/524103/>). 23 pgs.
- Smiley, Tavis. 2017. "Interview with Author & Research Professor Diane Ravitch." *Tavis Smiley*. Video. Retrieved (<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissmiley/interviews/author-research-professor-diane-ravitch/>). 24 mins.
- Brown, Emma. 2016. "School Choice Advocates Divided over Trump and His Education Pick, Betsy DeVos." *Washington Post*, December 12. Retrieved ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/school-choice-advocates-divide-over-trump-and-his-education-pick-betsy-devos/2016/12/09/6c377824-b806-11e6-b8df-600bd9d38a02\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/school-choice-advocates-divide-over-trump-and-his-education-pick-betsy-devos/2016/12/09/6c377824-b806-11e6-b8df-600bd9d38a02_story.html)). 4 pgs.

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<sup>8</sup> Note: I ask that you respond in the weekly bCourses reading responses (RRs, with an analytical question) to those texts designated with two asterisks (\*\*). Project reports are designated as "PR".

*Week III (09/07). Decentralizing the public square*

§ Assignments due: **RR2, Research Plan Meeting with Jaren §**

*Required readings:*

- \*\* Renzulli, Linda. 2014. "Educational Transformations and Why Sociology Should Care." *Social Currents* 1(2):149–56.
- Adamson, Frank. 2016. *Privatization or Public Investment in Education?*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. 12 pgs.
- Fuller, Bruce. 2009. *Inside Charter Schools: The Paradox of Radical Decentralization*. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press. "Introduction: Growing Charter Schools, Decentering the State". 12 pgs.

*Recommended readings:*

- Asante, Molefi Kete and Diane Ravitch. 1991. "Multiculturalism: An Exchange." *The American Scholar* 60(2):267–76.
- Fuller, Bruce. 2009. *Inside Charter Schools: The Paradox of Radical Decentralization*. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1: "The Public Square, Big or Small?: Charter Schools in Political Context". 54 pgs.
- Arum, Richard. 1996. "Do Private Schools Force Public Schools to Compete?" *American Sociological Review* 61:29–46.

*Week IV (09/14). Accountability (for test scores) in educational policy*

§ Assignment due: **RR3, PR1 §**

*Required readings:*

- Blinder, Alan. 2015. "Atlanta Educators Convicted in School Cheating Scandal." *The New York Times*, April 1. Retrieved (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/02/us/verdict-reached-in-atlanta-school-testing-trial.html>). 5 pgs.
- \*\* Linn, Robert L. 2000. "Assessments and Accountability." *Educational Researcher* 29(2):4–16.
- Paino, Maria, Rebecca L. Boylan, and Linda A. Renzulli. 2017. "The Closing Door: The Effect of Race on Charter School Closures." *Sociological Perspectives* 60(4):747–67.

*Recommended readings:*

- Klein, Alyson. 2017. "Ed. Dept. Steps Up Pace of States' ESSA-Plan Reviews." *Education Week*, August 17. Retrieved (<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/08/17/ed-dept-steps-up-pace-of-states.html?qs=ESSA>).
- Watanabe, Maika. 2007. "Displaced Teacher and State Priorities in a High-Stakes Accountability Context." *Educational Policy* 21(2):311–68.
- Mehta, Jal David. 2013. "The Penetration of Technocratic Logic into the Educational Field: Rationalizing Schooling from the Progressives to the Present." *Teachers College Record* 113(5):1–40.

Oakes, Jeannie, Martin Lipton, Lauren Anderson, and Jamy Stillman. 2013. "Policy and Law: Rules That Schools Live By." Chapter 4 in *Teaching to Change the World*. 4th ed. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

## PART II: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

*Week V (09/21). The divide and what sustains it: Forms of capital*

§ Assignments due: **RR4** §

### *Required readings:*

Reardon, Sean F. 2013. "The Widening Income Achievement Gap." *Educational Leadership* 70(8):10–16.

Becker, Gary S. 2015. "Human Capital." Pp. 42–43 in *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*, edited by R. Arum, I. R. Beattie, and K. Ford. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Sage Publications, Inc.

Kao, Grace. 2004. "Social Capital and Its Relevance to Minority and Immigrant Populations." *Sociology of Education* 77(2):172–75.

Weber, Max. 1946. "The Rationalization of Education and Training." Pp. 14-16 in *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*, edited by Richard Arum, Irene R. Beattie, and Karly Ford. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

\*\* Lamont, Michele and Annette Lareau. 1988. "Cultural Capital: Allusions, Gaps and Glissandos in Recent Theoretical Developments." *Sociological Theory* 6(2):153–68.

### *Recommended readings:*

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241–58 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. Richardson. Westport, CT: Greenwood. Retrieved (<http://www.arlt-lectures.com/bourdieu.pdf>).

*Week VI (09/28). Having more and knowing how to use it: How culture shapes educational futures*

§ Assignment due: **RR5, PR2** §

### *Required readings:*

\*\* Delpit, Lisa. 1988. "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children." *Harvard Educational Review* 58(3):280–99.

Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67(5):747–76.

### *Recommended readings:*

Khan, Shamus Rahman. 2011. "Privilege." Pp. 120-135 in *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*, edited by Richard Arum, Irene R. Beattie, and Karly Ford. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

- Tyson, Karolyn, William Darity, and Domini R. Castellino. 2005. "It's Not 'a Black Thing': Understanding the Burden of Acting White and Other Dilemmas of High Achievement." *American Sociological Review* 70(4):582–605.
- Bowles, Samuel, Herbert Gintis, and Peter Meyer. 1975. "The Long Shadow of Work: Education, the Family, and the Reproduction of the Social Division of Labor." *Insurgent Sociologist* 5(4):3–22.
- Deresiewicz, William. 2008. "The Disadvantages of an Elite Education." *The American Scholar* 77(3):20–31.

*Week VII (10/05). Presentation of works-in-progress*

§ Assignment due:

**Be prepared to present and receive feedback on your developing project! §**

*Week VIII (10/12). Organizational theories I: Institutionalism from "above" and "below"*

§ Assignment due: **RR6, PR3** §

*Required readings:*

- Huerta, Luis A. and Andrew Zuckerman. 2009. "An Institutional Theory Analysis of Charter Schools: Addressing Institutional Challenges to Scale." *Peabody Journal of Education* 84(3):414–31.
- \*\* Hallett, Tim. 2010. "The Myth Incarnate: Recoupling Processes, Turmoil, and Inhabited Institutions in an Urban Elementary School." *American Sociological Review* 75(1):52–74.

*Recommended readings:*

- Davies, Scott, Linda Quirke, and Janice Aurini. 2006. "The New Institutionalism Goes to the Market: The Challenge of Rapid Growth in Private K-12 Education." Pp. 103–22 in *The New Institutionalism in Education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Meyer, John W., Richard W. Scott, and Terrence E. Deal. 1980. *Institutional and Technical Sources of Organizational Structure: Explaining the Structure of Educational Organizations*. Stanford, CA: Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance, Stanford University. 28 pgs.

*Week IX (10/19). Organizational theories II: Market-based perspectives*

§ Assignments due: **RR7** §

*Required readings:*

- \*\* Chubb, John E. and Terry M. Moe. 1988. "Politics, Markets, and the Organization of Schools." *The American Political Science Review* 82(4):1066–87.

Betts, Julian R. 2005. "The Economic Theory of School Choice." Pp. 14–39 in *Getting Choice Right: Ensuring Equity and Efficiency in Education Policy*, edited by J. R. Betts and T. Loveless. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

*Recommended readings:*

Friedman, Milton. 1955. "The Role of Government in Education." Pp. 123–44 in *Economics and the public interest*, edited by R. A. Solo. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

### **PART III: WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE ON SCHOOL CHOICE**

*Week X (10/26). Organizing the charter sector*

§ Assignment due: **RR8, PR4** §

*Required readings:*

\*\* Farrell, Caitlin, Priscilla Wohlstetter, and Joanna Smith. 2012. "Charter Management Organizations: An Emerging Approach to Scaling Up What Works." *Educational Policy* 26(4):499–532.

Finnigan, Kara S. 2007. "Charter School Autonomy: The Mismatch between Theory and Practice." *Educational Policy* 21(3):503–26.

*Recommended readings:*

Jennings, Jennifer L. 2010. "School Choice or Schools' Choice?: Managing in an Era of Accountability." *Sociology of Education* 83(3):227–47.

Ferguson, Joshua et al. 2012. *Charter-School Management Organizations: Diverse Strategies and Diverse Student Impacts*. Cambridge, MA: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc./Center on Reinventing Public Education. **Pgs. xxi-xxxii** [Executive Summary].

Northern, Amber M. and Michael J. Petrilli. April 2017. "Is a Charter School Likely to Fail? Look at the Application." *Education Next*. Retrieved (<http://educationnext.org/charter-school-likely-fail-look-application/>).

*Week XI (11/02). Debating choice: Are charter schools innovative & high-performing—and for whom?*

§ Assignments due: **RR9** §

*Required readings:*

Pendergrass, Susan Aud and Nora Kern. 2017. "The Case for Charters." Pp. 237–51 in *The Wiley Handbook of School Choice*, edited by R. A. Fox and N. K. Buchanan. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Nelson, F. Howard. 2017. "The Case Against Charter Schools." Pp. 252–66 in *The Wiley Handbook of School Choice*, edited by R. A. Fox and N. K. Buchanan. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

\*\* Berends, Mark. 2015. "Sociology and School Choice: What We Know After Two Decades of Charter Schools." *Annual Review of Sociology* 41(1):159–80.

*Recommended readings:*

- Lubienski, Christopher. 2003. "Innovation in Education Markets: Theory and Evidence on the Impact of Competition and Choice in Charter Schools." *American Educational Research Journal* 40(2):395–443.
- Cremata, Edward et al. 2013. *National Charter School Study*. Stanford, CA: Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), Stanford University.

**Week XII (11/09).** *Competing educational philosophies: Who gets taught what and how?*

§ Assignments due: **RESEARCH PAPER ROUGH DRAFT, RR10** (Note: For this week's RR, respond to all three readings—they are closely connected.) §

*Required readings:*

- \*\* Dewey, John. 1938. "Traditional vs. Progressive Education." in *Experience and education*. Indianapolis, IN: Kappa Delta Pi. 5 pgs.
- \*\* Hirsch Jr., Eric Donald. 1996. *The Schools We Need, and Why We Don't Have Them*. New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell. Excerpts (10 pgs. total).
- \*\* Zeehandelaar, Dara and Amber M. Winkler. 2013. *What Parents Want: Education Preferences and Trade-Offs*. Dayton, Ohio: Thomas B. Fordham Institute. Retrieved (<https://edexcellence.net/publications/what-parents-want.html>). **Pgs. 3-8, 12, 15, 43-44, 48 only** (11 pgs. total).

*Recommended readings:*

- Golann, Joanne W. 2015. "The Paradox of Success at a No-Excuses School." *Sociology of Education* 88(2):103–19.
- Flynn, Joseph E., Andrew T. Kempt, and C. Steven Page. 2013. "Promoting Philosophical Diversity and Exploring Racial Differences in Beliefs about the Purposes of Education: What It Means for African-American Learners." *The Journal of the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators* 5(1):53–71.
- Oakes, Jeannie, Martin Lipton, Lauren Anderson, and Jamy Stillman. 2013. "Politics and Philosophy: The Struggle over the School Curriculum." Chapter 3 in *Teaching to Change the World*. 4th ed. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Strike, Kenneth A. 2004. "Community, the Missing Element of School Reform: Why Schools Should Be More like Congregations than Banks." *American Journal of Education* 110(3):215–32.

**Week XIII (11/16).** *Ideological differentiation in charter schools*

§ Assignments due: **RR11, work to revise & polish research paper draft** §

*Required readings:*

McShane, Michael Q. and Jenn Hatfield. 2015. *Measuring Diversity in Charter School Offerings*. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute (AEI). **Pgs. i-5 only** (7 pgs. total).

\*\* King, Brayden G., Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Melissa Fry. 2011. "Identity Realization and Organizational Forms: Differentiation and Consolidation of Identities Among Arizona's Charter Schools." *Organization Science* 22(3):554–72.

*Recommended readings:*

Renzulli, Linda A., Ashley B. Barr, and Maria Paino. 2015. "Innovative Education? A Test of Specialist Mimicry or Generalist Assimilation in Trends in Charter School Specialization Over Time." *Sociology of Education* 88(1):83–102.

Brewer, Marilyn B. 1991. "The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17(5):475–82.

Zuckerman, Ezra W. 2016. "Optimal Distinctiveness Revisited: An Integrative Framework for Understanding the Balance between Differentiation and Conformity in Individual and Organizational Identities." Pp. 183–99 in *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Identity*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Morphew, Christopher C. and Matthew Hartley. 2006. "Mission Statements: A Thematic Analysis of Rhetoric Across Institutional Type." *The Journal of Higher Education* 77(3):456–71.

*Week XIV (11/23). No class; Give thanks!*

**§ Catch up, work to revise & polish research paper draft §**

*Week XV (11/30). Peer review of revised, polished research paper drafts*

**§ Bring to class a total of THREE typed drafts, each including an introductory note describing recent changes and possible problem areas §**

**§ § § FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE (HARD COPY): Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> (end of RRR week), no later than 4:00 PM, in my mailbox in 410 Barrows § § §**

**Have a lovely summer!**