

SOCIOLOGY 190.1  
Spring 2016  
Monday 12:00-2:00  
402 Barrows Hall

Prof. Thomas Gold  
446 Barrows Hall  
642-4760; [tbgold@berkeley.edu](mailto:tbgold@berkeley.edu)  
Office Hours: Tues 2:00-4:00; Thurs 2:00-3:00

## THE SOCIOLOGY OF COLLEGE LIFE

As your graduation and departure from Cal loom ever closer, this is an excellent time to reflect on your college experience from the sociological perspective that you have been honing as majors. You are very familiar with C. Wright Mills's definition of "the sociological imagination": understanding the intersection of biography and history as well as the distinction between personal troubles of milieu and public issues of social structure. In this seminar we will move between the micro-personal level of your own experience, and the macro-structural level of history, class, race and institutions to gain a deeper understanding of such issues of how you got here, what you did here, how you got through here, your relations with your original community, and where you are headed.

This seminar will be very intense and active participation in discussion based on assigned readings will count for 50% of the final grade. Other requirements include 2 short (3-5 page) papers (10% each) critically evaluating readings and class discussion, and a final 15+/- page paper drawing together reading, discussion, and research. Students will develop their papers in consultation with the professor. All students should download *Writing for Sociology*, 2nd edition. There will be other unannounced writing exercises which count in "participation."

There are 2 required books available in the ASUC store: Richard J. Light, *Making the Most of College* and Rebekah Nathan, *My Freshman Year*. There will also be a reader available at Copy Central on Bancroft. Additional readings will be posted on the course bcourse site as the semester progresses. Readings marked with an asterisk (\*) below are from the reader.

The syllabus below is subject to radical change as we will invite a number of guest speakers and their schedules are hard to pin down. I will notify you of changes in advance.

Attendance is required. Class will start at 12:15. Eat lunch before or after but not during class unless you want to bring food for everyone. Laptops may not be open during class. Students who have pressing extracurricular demands on their time must notify the professor about this well in advance so that we can work out ways for you to complete all assignments in a timely fashion.

Week 1: January 18: MLK Birthday, no class

Week 2: January 25: Get acquainted

Week 3: February 1: The baggage I brought to Cal: what shaped me before going to college: family, school, community

\*Robert Putnam, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, pp. 1-45, 135-190

\*Hanna Rosin, "The Silicon Valley Suicides," *The Atlantic*, December 15, 2015

\*Linda Banks-Santilli, "Guilt is one of the biggest struggles first-generation college students face," *The Washington Post*, June 3, 2015

\*Doug Oakley, "Lifting up city's young black men," *Montclairion*, October 18, 2013

Week 4: February 8: The Application process: deciding where to apply and where to enroll

Guest: Yang Lor, PhD candidate, Dept. of Sociology

\*Richard A. Settersten, Jr., "The New Landscape of Early Adulthood: Implications for Broad-Access Higher Education" in Michael W. Kirst and Mitchell L. Stevens, ed., *Remaking College: The Changing Ecology of Higher Education*, pp. 113-133

\*Julie Lythcott-Haims, *How to Raise an Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap*, pp. 1-8, 55-71, 77-108, 128-139, 243-259

\*Malcolm Gladwell, "Getting In," *The New Yorker*, October 10, 2005

\*Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education*, pp. 24-58

\*Conor Friedersdorf, "Is the Ivy League Fair to Asian Americans?", *The Atlantic*, December 21, 2012

\*James Traub, "Ivory Tower Intrigues," *Slate*, October 25, 2005

Week 5: February 15: More on the road to college

Video: Either *Waiting for Superman* or *American Promise*

**First paper due February 19, 3:30 p.m. in Prof Gold's box in 410 Barrows**

Week 6: February 22: February 15: First Year Transition (as freshman or transfer)

Rebekah Nathan, *My Freshman Year*, entire

\*Laura Hamilton and Elizabeth A. Armstrong, "the (mis)education of monica and Karen," *Contexts*, November 17, 2012

Week 7: February 29: Life at Cal: classes

Richard J. Light, *Making the Most of College*, Introduction, Ch. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8

\*Ken Bain, *What the Best College Students Do*, pp. 99-132

Week 8: March 7: Diversity

\*Claude M. Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi: how stereotypes affect us and what we can do*, pp. 1-62

\*Jared Keller, "On the Poverty of Student Activism," *Pacific Standard*, September 26, 2015

\*Alina Tugend, "How Racially Diverse Should Elite Universities Be?", *California*, Fall 2015

\*"Strange Rumbblings in Berkeley: What Do Recent Examples of Racial Tensions on and Around Campus Tell Us About Ourselves?", *ibid*

\*Elizabeth A. Armstrong, Laura T. Hamilton, Elizabeth M. Armstrong, J. Lotus Seeley, "'Good Girls': Gender, Social Class, and Slut Discourse on Campus," *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 2014, 77(2), pp. 100-122

\*Hua Hsu, "The Year of the Imaginary College Student," *The New Yorker*, December 31, 2015

Week 9: March 14: Life at Cal: extracurriculars  
Light, Ch. 2,

**Second paper due in Prof Gold's mailbox 3:30 March 18**

Week 10: March 21: **spring break!**

Week 11: March 28: Life at Cal: mentors  
Light, Ch. 5

\*Jean E. Rhodes, *Stand by Me: The Risks and Rewards of Mentoring Today's Youth*, pp. 8-53

\*Bain, pp. 164-198

Week 12: April 4: Persistence

\*Peter Gray, "Declining Student Resilience A Serious Problem for Colleges," *Psychology Today*, September, 2015

\*Susan Dynarski, "For the Poor, the Graduation Gap Is Even Wider Than the Enrollment Gap," *The New York Times*, June 2, 2015

\*Khushoo Bansal, "Barriers to College Completion: An Overview of Bay Area Non-Profit Solutions and Efforts"

Week 13: April 11: Relations with "home"

Week 14: April 18: Who Am I Now? Advice to future college students and administrators

Light, Ch. 9

\*Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, pp. 5-64

Week 15: April 25: Wrap up

**Final Papers due in Prof Gold's box by 3:30, May 6**

