

**SOCIOLOGY 190:  
SOCIAL NETWORKS AND INEQUALITY:  
WHY WHO-YOU-KNOW MATTERS**

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INSTRUCTOR: PROFESSOR SANDRA SMITH

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1-3pm, 468 Barrows

Online office hours sign-up: <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/hndra>

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

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When it comes to getting a job, a common refrain is, "It's not what you know; it's who you know." But do social ties really make a difference for mobility, and if so, how? What types of social ties matter, where and how are they forged, and to what kinds of jobs do they provide access? And finally, what do social ties do to facilitate finding work, under what conditions do they help, and what logics of assistance underlie their engagement? In this seminar, we will address these questions by highlighting key debates animating the field. In the process, we review theories and concepts central to this subfield, including theories of network and organizational embeddedness, network theories of social capital, and theories of social capital activation and mobilization.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

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Final grades will be determined as follows:

75% **THREE ANALYTIC PAPERS:** Essays should be 8-10 pages in length; each is worth 25%

of your final grade and will be assessed based on how well you logically develop and support an argument, drawing from course lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions. Paper due dates are as follows:

- First paper assignment due: 10am, October 15<sup>th</sup>
- Second paper assignment due: 10am, November 19<sup>th</sup>
- Third paper assignment due: 4pm, December 10<sup>th</sup>

Please organize your time wisely as **late papers will not be accepted under any circumstances.**

**Plagiarism is a very serious offense and will be treated as such. Any student**

**suspected of plagiarizing will be investigated thoroughly and, if necessary, will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs for disposition.**

**For more information**

about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, please visit the following website:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism>

25% SECTION ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Attendance and participation in class meetings is mandatory. Students' final grades will reflect the extent and nature of their engagement.

**READING MATERIALS:**

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Most of the assigned readings can be found in the following books, which students can purchase at the University Book Store:

- *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*, by Mark S. Granovetter
- *Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America*, by Cecilia Menjívar
- *Race and the Invisible Hand: How White Networks Exclude Black Men from Blue-Collar Jobs*, by Deirdre Royster
- *Unanticipated Gains: Origins of Network Inequality in Everyday Life*, by Mario Luis Small
- *Lone Pursuit: Distrust and Defensive Individualism Among the Black Poor*, by Sandra Susan Smith
- *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*, by Carol Stack

These books are also available on 2-hour reserve at Moffitt Library.

The remainder of the readings for the course can be found in the "Resources" section of the course's bSpace page.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:**

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WEEK 1: AUGUST 27<sup>TH</sup>

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE: DO SOCIAL TIES MATTER?

WEEK 2: SEPTEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

NO CLASS—ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAY

WEEK 3: SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>

NETWORKS AND SURVIVAL

Carol Stack, *All Our Kin*

WEEK 4: SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

THE FOURTH C: SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," on bSpace
- Ron Burt, Introduction of *Structural Holes*, on bSpace
- James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," on bSpace
- Nan Lin, "Social Capital: Capital Activated through Social Relations," Chapter 2 of *Social Resources and Social Action*, on bSpace

WEEK 5: SEPTEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup>

NETWORK EMBEDDEDNESS AND THE STRENGTH OF WEAK TIES

Mark Granovetter, *Getting a Job*

WEEK 6: OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup>

MORE ON NETWORK EMBEDDEDNESS:

NETWORK SIZE, COMPOSITION, AND STRUCTURE

Edwina Uehara, "Dual Exchange Theory, Social Networks, and Informal Social Support," on bSpace

WEEK 7: OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

CLASS CANCELLED—OUT OF TOWN/CONFERENCE

Use this break to work on the first paper assignment, due October 15<sup>th</sup>.

WEEK 8: OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>

WHERE ARE SOCIAL TIES FORGED?

INSTITUTIONS AND NETWORK INEQUALITY

Mario Small, *Unanticipated Gains*

WEEK 9: OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup>

GENDER AND NETWORK INEQUALITY

Ron Burt, "The Gender of Social Capital," on bSpace

WEEK 10: OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup>

RACE AND NETWORK INEQUALITY

Deirdre Royster, *Race and the Invisible Hand*

WEEK 11: NOVEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>

DOES ACCESS TO SOCIAL CAPITAL GUARANTEE ITS MOBILIZATION?

Sandra Susan Smith, *Lone Pursuit*

WEEK 12: NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>

NO CLASS—ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAY

Use this break to work on the second paper assignment, due  
November 19<sup>th</sup>.

WEEK 13: NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

NETWORKS AND IMMIGRATION

Cecilia Menjivar, *Fragmented Ties*

WEEK 14: NOVEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup>

CRITIQUES OF A PERSPECTIVE

Ted Mouw, "Social Capital and Finding a Job: Do Contacts  
Matter?," on bSpace

WEEK 15: DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

RRR (READING, REVIEW, & RECITATION) WEEK

WEEK 16: DECEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>

FINAL PAPER DUE, 4PM