

SOC 495
The Organization of Higher Education
WINTER 2016

Instructor: Dan Hirschman

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Time and Location: 4:10pm-5:30pm MW, 3242 LSA

Office Hours: 2:00pm-4:00pm Tu, 4209 LSA

Overview and Objectives

This seminar explores themes from the sociology of organizations in the context of American higher education. We will cover a range of topics including:

- social movements and race on campus
- the politics and mechanics of race-based affirmative action
- the role of rankings in higher ed
- speech codes, free speech debates, and "trigger warnings"
- university responses to sexual assault on campus
- the student loan crisis

Requirements

Attendance and Lateness: You are required to attend all classes. Any unexcused absence beyond the first will affect your participation grade. Unexcused excessive lateness will be counted as an absence. Absences for religious observances are excused, as long as you notify me in advance.

Readings: This course is an upper-level seminar. As such, it carries a substantial reading load. You are expected to read all assigned material before coming to class. The majority of each class will be devoted to discussing the material in greater detail.

Presentations: Most weeks after the first, a student will lead off the discussion with a presentation. These presentations should be 15-20 minutes, and include a handout with a summary of key terms and claims made in the readings. Each student will be expected to present once during the course of the term. We will discuss expectations for the presentations in class.

Response Papers: Each week (other than the one you are presenting), you are expected to write a 500 word response paper. This paper should discuss that week's reading, although it may focus on some readings more than others. The ideal response paper includes a brief summary of some of the major ideas in the readings, along with one or more of the following: thoughtful questions for discussion, critical commentary, connections to other readings, or connections to some current event or debate. Response papers are due by midnight on Sunday. You will be graded on your best eight response papers (meaning that you can "skip" a few weeks if you are satisfied with your grades).

Discussion: During each class, the week's presenter will raise questions about the readings. We will also discuss issues raised in your response papers, as well as other ideas you have about the readings (e.g. connections to previous readings, relevance to contemporary issues, etc.). The material we cover can be challenging at times, but everyone has something to contribute to our discussion, even if you don't fully understand the particular reading in question. If you have a question, chances are that another one of your classmates has it too.

Respect: There are many ways to interpret the course readings in class and many competing views on the topics we will discuss, and I hope we will debate many contrasting viewpoints during the course of the semester. We will be covering issues relevant to current policy debates, including sensitive topics related to race (including affirmative action), sex/gender (including sexual assault), and class. To facilitate good discussion, please keep in mind that we are debating ideas, not each other as individuals. This type of debate might take the form of "I disagree" instead of "you are wrong." Please keep the difference in mind so that we can engage in useful and vigorous discussion!

Final Project: The final project for the class is a short paper that can take one of three forms: a policy brief, a long-form news article, or a research proposal. We will discuss the project in greater detail early in the semester. A draft of the final project is due before the last day of class, which will be used to workshop the papers in small groups. The final version will be due one week later, on 4/25.

Assignments & Grading

Attendance & Participation: 10%

Response Papers: 30%

Presentation: 30%

Final Project: 30%

Details on how each of these items are graded will be discussed in class.

Administrative Issues

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable. Information on the University's academic integrity policy is available [here](#). Any student who plagiarizes will receive an F in the course and any other sanctions imposed by the University.

Accommodations for Learning: If you feel that your attendance or participation may be affected by a disability or medical need, please let me know within the first two weeks of class. For details on the University's policies and available resources, see the Services for Students with Disabilities [website](#).

Email Policy: All course emails must contain "495" in the subject line. Any email that does not contain 495 in the subject may be marked as spam and deleted. Emails marked 495 will be filtered properly. I will try to respond to email within 24 hours during the week. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, please send a follow-up email. Emails sent on Friday or during the weekend will be answered on the following Monday or Tuesday. I expect emails to be polite and professional.

Writing Expectations: The University has many resources to help you with your writing, starting with the [Sweetland Writing Center](#). In addition, I am happy to offer feedback on the mechanics of writing a clear and well-argued paper. Finally, good writing is a habit. I will pay attention to your writing in each assignment as well as in our written communication such as emails. Emails don't require the same level of formality as a research paper, but I will expect a professional and polite tone, complete sentences, well-formulated thoughts, and so on.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Turn off your cell phone and store it during class. If you might need to receive a call during class for some reason, put your phone on vibrate and let me know ahead of time. At times, it may be useful to take notes or reference the course readings on a laptop during class. I expect you to have your laptop closed or put away unless you are using it explicitly for class purposes. Using a laptop for anything other than course-related activities will negatively affect your participation grade, and you may be asked to leave the classroom.

Required Texts

The majority of the readings for the course are available on the course website. We will be reading large sections of three books, which you can either purchase or read on loan from the library. All are available used for a relatively low price (less than \$15, check for used copies), and the first is available to read online free through the UM library. The books, in the order you will need them, are:

Paying for the Party by Elizabeth Armstrong and Laura Hamilton. Available online [here](#).

The Student Loan Mess by Joel Best and Eric Best.

From Black Power to Black Studies by Fabio Rojas.

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction (1/6)

Week 2: Overview & Varieties of Higher Ed (1/11, 1/13)

- Stevens, Mitchell L., Elizabeth A. Armstrong, and Richard Arum. 2008. "Sieve, Incubator, Temple, Hub: Empirical and Theoretical Advances in the Sociology of Higher Education." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34(1):127-51.
- Scott, W. Richard and Manuelito Biag. 2016. "The Changing Ecology of U.S. Higher Education: An Organization Field Perspective."
- Cottom, Tressie McMillan and Gaye Tuchman. 2015. "Rationalization of Higher Education." Pp. 1-17 in *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*.
- Delbanco, Andrew. 2015. "Our Universities: The Outrageous Reality." *New York Review of Books*.

Week 3: A Brief History of Higher Ed (1/20, no class on 1/18 for MLK Day)

- Goldin, Claudia Dale, and Lawrence F. Katz. 2009. "Mass Higher Education in the Twentieth Century." Pp. 247-284 in *The Race between Education and Technology*.
- Katznelson, Ira. 2005. "White Veterans Only." Pp. 113-141 in *When Affirmative Action Was White*.
- deBoer, Freddie. 2015. "The Story of College."

Week 4: Admissions and Affirmative Action (1/25, 1/27)

- Stevens, Mitchell. 2007. "Race." Pp. 140-183 in *Creating a Class*.
- Karabel, Jerome. 2005. "How Affirmative Action Took Hold at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (48):58-77.
- Hirschman, Daniel, Ellen Berrey and Fiona Rose Greenland. Forthcoming. "Dequantifying Diversity: Affirmative Action and Admissions at the University of Michigan." *Theory & Society*.

Week 5: Is College Worth It? (2/1, 2/3)

- Goffman, Erving. 1952. "On cooling the mark out: Some aspects of adaptation to failure."
- Clark, Burton R. 1960. "The 'Cooling-Out' Function in Higher Education." *American Journal of Sociology* 65(6):569-76.
- Collins, Randall. 2002. "The Dirty Little Secret of Credential Inflation." *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Pappano, Laura. 2011. "The Masters as the New Bachelors." *New York Times*.
- Weiss, Andrew. 1995. "Human Capital vs. Signalling Explanations of Wages." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9(4):133-54.
- Cassidy, John. 2015. "College Calculus: What's the real value of higher education?" *New Yorker*.

Week 6: The Other Kind of Class (2/8, 2/10)

- Armstrong, Elizabeth and Laura Hamilton. 2013. *Paying for the Party*, introduction through chapter 4 (Pp. 1-117).
- DeParle, Jason. 2012. "For Poor, Leap to College Often Ends in a Hard Fall." *The New York Times*.
- Jack, Anthony Abraham. 2016. "(No) Harm in Asking Class, Acquired Cultural Capital, and Academic Engagement at an Elite University." *Sociology of Education* 89(1):1-19.

Week 7: Oh, the Places You'll Go! (2/15, 2/17)

- Armstrong, Elizabeth and Laura Hamilton. 2013. *Paying for the Party*, chapter 5 through chapter 9 (Pp. 118-255).

Week 8: (Why) Does College Cost So Much? (2/22, 2/24)

- Archibald, Robert and David Feldman. 2010. "The Real Cost Equation." *Inside Higher Ed*.
- Davidson, Adam. 2015. "Is College Tuition Really Too High?" *The New York Times*.
- Goldberg, Michelle. 2015. "This Is What Happens When You Slash Funding for Public Universities." *The Nation*
- Nelson, Libby. 2015. "Our Greedy Colleges." Available at Vox.com.

- Ginsberg, Benjamin. 2011. “Administrators Ate My Tuition.” *Washington Monthly*.

Spring Break (no class on 2/29, 3/2)

Week 9: The Student Loan Mess (3/7, 3/9)

- Best, Joel and Eric Best. 2014. *The Student Loan Mess*, introduction and chapters 1, 3, 4, 6 (Pp. 1-42, 76-129, 157-180).
- Dynarski, Susan. 2015. “New Data Gives Clearer Picture of Student Debt.” *The New York Times Upshot*.

Week 10: For Fun and Profit (But Mostly Profit) (3/14, 3/16)

- Cottom, Tressie McMillan. Forthcoming. *Lower Ed: How For-Profit Colleges Deepen Inequality*. Introduction.
- Mettler, Suzanne. 2014. “Unscrupulous Profiteers’: The Struggle to Reform the For-Profit Colleges.” Pp. 87-110 in *Degrees of Inequality*.

Week 11: A Game of Rankings (3/21, 3/23)

- Stevens, Mitchell. 2007. “Numbers.” Pp. 31-51 in *Creating a Class*.
- Bowman, Nicholas, and Michael Bastedo. 2009. “Getting on the Front Page: Organizational Reputation, Status Signals, and the Impact of U.S. News and World Report on Student Decisions.” *Research in Higher Education* 50(5):415-36.
- Espeland, Wendy Nelson, and Michael Sauder. 2007. “Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Recreate Social Worlds.” *American Journal of Sociology* 113(1):1-40.
- Nelson, Libby. 2015. “Why a new ranking says the University of Colorado Denver is the best college in the US.” Available at Vox.com.

Week 12: From Black Power to Diversity (3/28, 3/30)

- Rojas, Fabio. 2007. *From Black Power to Black Studies*, chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-92).
- Berrey, Ellen C. 2011. “Why Diversity Became Orthodox in Higher Education, and How it Changed the Meaning of Race on Campus.” *Critical Sociology* 37(5):573-96.
- Pierson, Emma and Leah Pierson. 2015. “What Do Campus Protesters Really Want?” *The New York Times*.
- Skim TheDemands.org.

Week 13: Free Speech and the Law (4/4, 4/6)

- Gould, Jon B. 2001. "The Precedent That Wasn't: College Hate Speech Codes and the Two Faces of Legal Compliance." *Law & Society Review* 35(2):345-92.
- Pearce, Matt. 2015. "Is University of Oklahoma Frat's Racist Chant Protected By 1st Amendment?" *Los Angeles Times*.
- Lukianoff, Greg and Jonathan Haidt. 2015. "The Coddling of the American Mind." *The Atlantic*.
- Cobb, Jelani. 2015. "Race and the Free Speech Diversion." Available at [The New Yorker](#).
- Lind, Dara. 2015. "Little paradises: 22 thoughts on the protests at Yale." Available at [Vox.com](#).
- Nielsen, Laura Beth. 2015. "The Conflicting Promises of Speech and Equality in America." Available at [Huffington Post](#).

Week 14: Social Movements and the Law of Sexual Assault (4/11, 4/13)

- Film: *The Hunting Ground* (shown during class).
- Armstrong, Elizabeth A., Laura Hamilton, and Brian Sweeney. 2006. "Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape." *Social Problems* 53(4):483-99.
- Armstrong, Elizabeth A. and Jamie Budnick. 2015. "Sexual Assault on Campus." *Council on Contemporary Families*.
- Barber, Jennifer, Yasamin Kusunoki and Jamie Budnick. "Women Not Enrolled in Four-Year Universities and Colleges Have Higher Risk of Sexual Assault." *Council on Contemporary Families*.
- Brodsky, Alexandra and Elizabeth Deutsch. 2015. "The Promise of Title IX: Sexual Violence and the Law." *Dissent*.

Week 15: Final Project Workshop (4/18)

- Peer assessment.

Final Project Due 4/25.