

# **SOCI-4204 SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION**

## **Term I 2020-2021**

### **Instructor**

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### **Class Meetings**

Tuesday, 11:30 AM – 1:15 PM  
T.C. Cheng Building, United College (UCC), C1 (Online until further notice from the university)

### **Course Website**

The course website is available through CUHK's Blackboard at <https://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk>. You will need to log in to your CUHK account to access this website.

### **Course Descriptions**

This course introduces to students the key theories, approaches, and ideas in the field of sociology of education. We will explore influential studies in sociology of education, and link them to educational challenges and problems in the real world. Education-related topics covered in this course will include stratification and inequality, school, family, peers, community, rural-urban divide, migration, gender, mass education, and elite formation, among others. Readings will not be region-specific but topic-based, representing the typical research questions on a particular topic. By reading and discussing empirical studies throughout the course, students will learn how to discover and analyze the key sociological and practical issues of education.

### **Objectives**

#### *Major Objectives*

Familiar with the most fundamental theories and concepts in sociology of education.  
Know how to analyze educational issues from a sociological instead of personal perspective.  
Understand the structural factors shaping and being shaped by educational outcomes.  
Aware of the role of education (alleviating or exacerbating) in the worldwide social inequality.

### *Minor Objectives*

Learn to read and evaluate empirical studies and think critically.

Develop an interest in education (either research or practice).

### **Textbook and Readings**

All required readings of the course will be posted on Blackboard. No textbook is required, but the following book is recommended for reference.

Arum, Richard, Irene R. Beattie, and Karly Ford, eds. 2014. *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

### **Academic Integrity**

Normal standards of academic integrity apply. The university adopts a “zero tolerance” policy on academic dishonesty. Please refer to the university’s policy and regulations at <https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

### **Grading and Evaluation**

Students are expected to attend all lectures and participate in the discussions in class. Also, students should attend tutorial sessions and do presentations. Details of tutorial session are listed in the last section. To encourage continuous learning, there will be four in-class short exams. The exams will test the knowledge you have learned in the preceding weeks. The dates of exams will be announced at least one week ahead and each exam counts the same toward the final grade.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

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Participation in Class	20%
Participation in Tutorials	10%
Presentation	20%
Exams	12.5%*4=50%

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### Grade Descriptors

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
- F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.

## **Class Schedule**

### Part I Backgrounds

#### **01. Sep. 08 Introduction**

### Part II Fundamental Theoretical Perspectives

#### **02. Sep. 15 Conflict and Functional Theories**

Collins, Randall. 1971. "Functional and Conflict Theories of Educational Stratification." *American Sociological Review* 1002–1019.

Collins, Randall. 1977. "Some Comparative Principles of Educational Stratification." *Harvard Educational Review* 47(1):1–27.

#### **03. Sep. 22 Human Capital, Social Capital, and Cultural Capital; World Society Theory**

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241–58 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94:S95–S120.

Meyer, John W., Francisco O. Ramirez, and Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal. 1992. "World Expansion of Mass Education, 1870-1980." *Sociology of Education* 128–149.

### Part III Key Issues and Debates

#### **04. Sep. 29 The Role of Education in Social Stratification, Mobility, and Reproduction (I)**

Dale, Stacy Berg, and Alan B. Krueger. 2002. "Estimating the Payoff to Attending a More Selective College: An Application of Selection on Observables and Unobservables." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117(4):1491–1527.

Haim, Eyal Bar, and Yossi Shavit. 2013. "Expansion and Inequality of Educational Opportunity: A Comparative Study." *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 31:22–31.

Rivera, Lauren A. 2011. "Ivies, Extracurriculars, and Exclusion: Elite Employers' Use of Educational Credentials." *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 29(1):71–90

**05. Oct. 06 *The Role of Education in Social Stratification, Mobility, and Reproduction (II)***

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1973. "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction." Pp. 71–112 in *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change*, edited by R. Brown. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Reardon, Sean F. 2011. "The Widening Academic Achievement Gap between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations." *Whither Opportunity* 1(1):91–116.

**06. Oct. 13 *School As an Equalizer?***

- Alexander, Karl, and Stephen L. Morgan. 2016. "The Coleman Report at Fifty: Its Legacy and Implications for Future Research on Equality of Opportunity." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 2(5):1–16.
- Downey, Douglas B., Paul T. Von Hippel, and Beckett A. Broh. 2004. "Are Schools the Great Equalizer? Cognitive Inequality during the Summer Months and the School Year." *American Sociological Review* 69(5):613–635.

**07. Oct. 20 *What Makes Effective Schooling?***

- Angrist, Joshua D., and Victor Lavy. 1999. "Using Maimonides' Rule to Estimate the Effect of Class Size on Scholastic Achievement." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 114(2):533–575.
- Proudford, Christine, and Robert Baker. 1995. "Schools That Make a Difference: A Sociological Perspective on Effective Schooling." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 16(3):277–292.

**08. Oct. 27 *Gender and Education***

- Buchmann, Claudia, and Thomas A. DiPrete. 2006. "The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement." *American Sociological Review* 71(4):515–541.
- Voyer, Daniel, and Susan D. Voyer. 2014. "Gender Differences in Scholastic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis." *Psychological Bulletin* 140(4):1174.

**09. Nov.03 *Urban-Rural Gap in Education***

- Tam, Tony, and Jin Jiang. 2015. "Divergent Urban-Rural Trends in College Attendance: State Policy Bias and Structural Exclusion in China." *Sociology of Education* 88(2):160–180.
- Gonzales, Roberto G., and Ariel G. Ruiz. 2014. "Dreaming beyond the Fields: Undocumented Youth, Rural Realities and a Constellation of Disadvantage." *Latino Studies* 12(2):194–216.

### **10. Nov. 10 Peers, Communities, and Education**

- Ding, Weili, and Steven F. Lehrer. 2007. "Do Peers Affect Student Achievement in China's Secondary Schools?" *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 89(2):300–312.
- Ainsworth, James W. 2002. "Why Does It Take a Village? The Mediation of Neighborhood Effects on Educational Achievement." *Social Forces* 81(1):117–152.

### **11. Nov. 17 Migration and Schooling**

- Alba, Richard, Jennifer Sloan, and Jessica Sperling. 2011. "The Integration Imperative: The Children of Low-Status Immigrants in the Schools of Wealthy Societies." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37:395–415.
- Chen, Yuanyuan, and Shuaizhang Feng. 2013. "Access to Public Schools and the Education of Migrant Children in China." *China Economic Review* 26:75–88.
- Zhou, Minhui, Rachel Murphy, and Ran Tao. 2014. "Effects of Parents' Migration on the Education of Children Left behind in Rural China." *Population and Development Review* 40(2):273–292.

## Part IV Challenges and Trends

### **12. Nov. 24 New Technologies and Online Education**

- Emanuel, Ezekiel J. 2013. "MOOCs Taken by Educated Few." *Nature* 503(7476):342–342.
- Lambert, Sarah R. 2020. "Do MOOCs Contribute to Student Equity and Social Inclusion? A Systematic Review 2014–18." *Computers & Education* 145:103693.
- Au, K. H. 2006. "Diversity, Technology, and the Literacy Achievement Gap." *International Handbook of Literacy and Technology* 2:363–367.

### **13. Dec. 01 Education Expansion and Elite Formation**

- Hannum, Emily, and Claudia Buchmann. 2005. "Global Educational Expansion and Socio-Economic Development: An Assessment of Findings from the Social Sciences." *World Development* 33(3):333–354.
- Williams, Gareth, and Ourania Filippakou. 2010. "Higher Education and UK Elite Formation in the Twentieth Century." *Higher Education* 59(1):1.

## **Research Topics for Group Projects**

1. Taking Hong Kong or any other country/region as a case study, which of the functional and conflict theories could better explain the increased requirement of schooling for employment?
2. How do different forms of capital (social, cultural, or economic capital) affect educational outcomes? You can choose one form or different forms of capital.
3. How do family backgrounds affect educational outcomes? Family backgrounds are broadly defined, which could include parental education, family income, parents' occupations, family environments, among others. You can choose a particular aspect or a combination of different aspects of family backgrounds.
4. How does education affect income?
5. How does education affect employment?
6. From the perspective of education, explain the transmission of inequality across generations.
7. Could education promote social mobility?
8. Do schools maintain or reduce the inequality between rich and poor students?
9. Does school type (public or private, elite or non-elite) matter for educational outcomes?
10. Does school type (elite or non-elite) matter for employment (or income)?
11. Do girls have advantages in educational outcomes? Why?
12. Do left-behind children in rural areas disadvantaged in educational outcomes, compared with non-left-behind rural children?

13. Do migrant children from rural areas to urban areas disadvantaged in educational outcomes, compared with urban children?
14. How do peers affect educational outcomes?
15. How do communities or neighborhood affect educational outcomes?
16. Will new technologies increase or reduce educational inequality?
17. Will online education increase or decrease students' academic performance, compared with traditional face-to-face instruction?
18. Does online education weakens or even will replace the role of school?
19. How does education expansion relate to functional and conflict theories?
20. Does education expansion increase or decrease social inequality (e.g., educational inequality, income inequality)?

## **Tutorial Guidelines**

Tutorials are designed to help students develop and work on group research projects. The project should be group-based in principle. Students form groups by themselves, with 2-3 students in each group. In extreme circumstances when there are difficulties to find groupmates, a student can work alone after getting the approval from TA. But the same evaluation standards still apply. Each group will choose the research topic for their group project, discuss their group project with TA, and finally present their group project in the tutorial sessions. There will be four tutorials sessions on Weeks 4, 7, 12, and 13, respectively.

### *Tutorial Session 1: Orientation*

- Tutorial introduction: introduce the objectives, guidelines, and policies of tutorials.
- Group formation: form groups, with or without the help from TA.
- Topic selection. Each group select a research topic from the twenty topics listed in the preceding section. Different groups could select the same topic, but they should finish their own project independently. If cheating (e.g., similar argument, similar evidence, and similar conclusion) is found in group projects, both groups will be penalized by low grades. **All students should come to the session to choose a group and research topic. After Tutorial Session 1, no change is allowed in group composition and research topic.**
- Presentation date selection: use lucky draw to decide on the date and time for presentation.

### *Tutorial Session 2: Middle-stage Progress Report*

- Students come to meet with TA to report their progress on the group project and discuss any issues they have encountered. Also, each group should write a formal report outlining their progress. The report should be submitted to TA within one week after their meeting with TA.
- TA decides on the format of the report. The report should outline (1) the research topic, (2) the motivation to select this research topic, and (3) the key ideas or arguments in the project.



*Tutorial Sessions 3 & 4: Group Project Presentations.*

- Two days before the presentation date, each group should prepare a handout of the presentation and email it to TA.
- The presentation should cover the following essential parts: (1) the motivation, (2) the significance, (3) the objectives, (3) the existing theories and literature, (4) the empirical evidence (either first hand or second hand evidence), and (5) a conclusion with some discussion.
- Notes: first hand evidence means that you have conducted some data analysis by yourself; second hand evidence means that you have obtained such empirical evidence from other people’s work. There is no preference on first or second hand evidence for the project. The evaluation will be primarily based on the logic and coherence of the project.

Tutorial Timeslot Arrangement:

Tutorial	Time	Venue	Week 4 Introduction	Week 7 Mid-stage Report	Week 12 Presentation	Week 13 Presentation
A	Tuesday (2:30- 4:15pm)	T.B.D.	29/09/2020	20/10/2020 Individual group meeting	24/11/2020	1/12/2020
B	Tuesday (4:30- 6:15pm)	T.B.D.	29/09/2020	20/10/2020 Individual group meeting	24/11/2020	1/12/2020
C	Wednesday (2:30- 4:15pm)	T.B.D.	30/09/2020	21/10/2020 Individual group meeting	25/11/2020	2/12/2020

Tutorial online enrollment form (Microsoft Forms):

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Z0SPUnKTWkqMlPonAoUhXZ6Y80hI6OxJt0gronabu5ZUQzVWT00wNE5YQUUyTkk3UkJVVTFQVFFGSC4u>