COURSE OVERVIEW
The primary focus of this course is how the U.S. educational system promotes socioeconomic opportunities and maintains socioeconomic inequalities. We begin by examining historical and theoretical perspectives on the role of education in U.S. society. We then assess the way in which class, race, and gender affect educational achievement and attainment, and consider stratification between and within schools. Thereafter, we explore the effects of education on socioeconomic attainment, family, health, and civic engagement. We conclude with an examination of trends in education, forecasts for the future, and educational reforms to improve school quality and address socioeconomic
inequalities. Some of the questions addressed throughout the course are: How much equality of opportunity is there? Does education equalize opportunities or widen the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged? How likely is it that individuals end up in the same social stratum as their parents? What role does education play in the process of intergenerational mobility? How does one's class, race, or gender constrain his or her ability to secure societal rewards via the educational system? What consequences does schooling have for life chances? What educational policies or reforms should we strive for?

PREREQUISITES
This course will draw on, without explicitly teaching, basic sociological concepts, ideas of classical social thinkers, and quantitative and qualitative analyses. Sociology majors would ordinarily have acquired relevant background early in their studies, in Introductory Sociology, Introductory Statistics, and Classical Social Theory. Introductory Sociology and Statistics are required parts of the preparation for the sociology major, and Classical Social Theory is required for the major itself. Any sociology student who has not yet completed these requirements is strongly advised to complete them before taking this or other upper division sociology courses.

COURSE ENROLLMENT
This class has an enrollment cap of 150 students. Due to T.A. contracts, we cannot exceed 150 students. Under no exceptions can I add students to the class beyond the 150 slots we have. If you are on the waiting list, you will only be added to the class if another student drops the class. Those students on the waiting list, thus, who continue with the class face the possibility that they may not be added.

COURSE READINGS
All readings are also posted on the course website.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

- **Take-Home Midterm Exam (35%);** Due **Week 5**, Thursday February 9, 2012
- **Take-Home Final Exam (35%);** Due **Week 10**, Thursday March 15, 2012

The prompt for the midterm and final exam will be the same:

> Does the U.S. educational system promote socioeconomic opportunities or maintain socioeconomic inequalities, or do both? In explaining your answer, draw on material learned in lectures and readings.
While the prompt is the same, we expect that your essays will evolve from the midterm to the final exam. First, we expect that you will have learned something from the feedback you receive on your midterm exam. Second, while we expect you to incorporate material from the first half of the class on the midterm, we expect that you will incorporate material from the entire class for the final exam.

The exams are open-book and open-notes, but you may not consult any other person or the exam answers of anyone in the class. The question should be answered in a coherent essay in which you take a position and make an argument supporting that position based on evidence from the course readings and lectures. **Midterm exam responses** should consist of approximately 5 double-spaced pages (no less than 4½ pages and no more than 5½ pages), and **final exam responses** should consist of approximately 7 double-spaced pages (no less than 6½ pages and no more than 7½ pages) on the final exam. Both exams should use 12 point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins.

Your essays should be accompanied by a 1-2 page outline of your argument. Outlines help us to follow your argument, and help you to ensure that your argument proceeds in a logical way.

Your completed exams must be submitted to Prof. Brand in class no later than 11:00 a.m. the day the exam is due. If you are unable to attend class that day, you must submit your time-stamped exam to Prof. Brand’s box in the sociology department (264 Haines Hall).

- **Take-Home Quizzes (20%) Weekly**

  Each week you will compose a 1-page response (double-spaced, using 12 point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins) to a set of 2 questions that test your understanding of the material covered in lectures the week prior. There will be a total of 10 of these quizzes, corresponding to each week of the quarter. You receive a possible 2 points for each quiz response (2% of your grade/week). Quiz questions will be provided each Thursday at the end of lecture and due the following Thursday no later than 11:00 a.m. Week 10 quiz responses can be time-stamped and turned in to TA boxes in 264 Haines Hall on or before Friday, March 23, 2012.

- **Section Discussion Participation (10%) Weekly**

  You will receive one point each week (1% of your grade/week) for your active participation in your weekly discussion section. Please come prepared to raise questions and provide comments on the material covered each week in lectures and in readings.

*(Approximate) Course Grades*
Attendance

Attendance at lectures and discussion sections is mandatory. Lectures will cover material that goes beyond the texts that you read. Everything that happens in lecture is material that you will be expected to incorporate in your take-home exams and quizzes. You cannot use posted slides as a substitute for coming to class. These handouts provide only an outline of what we discuss in class.

Illnesses and Other Emergencies

All students are expected to complete the exams and assignments by the due dates. There will be no make-up work for a missed exam, and missed exams will receive a score of 0. Exceptions will be made only for illness, confirmed by a note from a physician, or other exceptional circumstances (e.g., a death in the family), and also confirmed by documentation. You must supply documentation of illness or emergency (such as a funeral) in order to get an extension for an exam. Travel plans or assignments due in other classes are not acceptable excuses. Confidentiality will be respected. Without documentation, exams will be docked one letter grade per day for lateness. Without documentation, quizzes will receive a 0. Please contact me immediately if you foresee a difficulty with the policy.

Grade Contestation Policy

If you wish to dispute a grade on an exam or quiz, you must submit a statement in writing within two weeks after the exam/quiz was returned to the class explaining the mistake you think has been made. We will not discuss grades with students outside of office hours or appointments; please do not approach me in lecture to discuss your grade. If an exam is re-graded, the entire exam will be re-graded, not just one component. The TAs and I will discuss the exam jointly. Your grade may be raised, stay the same, or be lowered. If you simply want to understand what you can do to improve your next paper, one of the TAs or I will be happy to help you in office hours. Once final grades have been submitted, I will only consider errors in processing.
**Academic Integrity**

It is the responsibility of every UCLA student to support the principles of academic integrity and refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty: [http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html](http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html). Always do your own work, and reference any words that did not originally come from you. See *Bruin Success with Less Stress* [www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess](http://www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess) for an interactive online tutorial designed to help students understand intellectual property issues and proper citing techniques.

**Writing Resources**

*Writing Success Program*
Located in the Student Activities Center (SAC), room 105
Additional writing resources and support is provided on their blog: [www.wspucla.wordpress.com](http://www.wspucla.wordpress.com)

*Student Writing Center*
Work in person with a Peer Learning Facilitator (PLF)
Writing consultations in the residence halls for students living in the res. halls
Mon.-Thurs. from 7-9 p.m.

*Online Writing Center (OWC)*
Submit your paper online, using Google Docs
Discuss your paper with a Peer Learning Facilitator, using Google Voice Chat

In addition, I highly recommend the following books for improving your writing:


**CLASS SESSIONS (SUBJECT TO REVISION)**

I. The Role of Education in U.S. Society

**WEEK 1**

* A. Civic

**B. Vocational**


**WEEK 2**

**C. Meritocracy / Reproduction**


**II. Educational Disparities**

**WEEKS 3-4**

**A. By Social Class**


**WEEK 5**

**B. By Race / Ethnicity**


**C. By Sex / Gender**


**III. Stratification Between and Within Schools**

**WEEK 7**

**A. Between Schools**


**WEEK 8**

**B. Within Schools**


IV. Effects of Education on Socioeconomic Outcomes


WEEK 10

V. Educational Trends and Reforms


