This graduate seminar concerns the hierarchical and stratified nature of school systems, including the “nested layers” of classrooms, schools, and districts, and the stratified divisions within school systems such as selective schools, tracks, and ability groups. In the course, students will explore the methodological challenges and substantive implications of stratification and hierarchy for understanding the effects of schools and schooling on student outcomes. Substantively, we will begin with the literature on school effects, moving from early input-output studies to current research that examines the organizational context of schools. We will also examine the impact of stratification within and between schools, focusing on selection processes as well outcomes. Next, we will consider stratification and hierarchy in light of salient policy issues such as standards and accountability, teacher quality, evidence-based practice, and charter schools. Methodologically, we will examine the rationale for and execution of multilevel models, and develop facility with a statistical packages designed to address the hierarchical organization of school systems and other issues that demand a multilevel approach. Substantive and methodological issues will be integrated through seminar discussions, student presentations, and seminar papers.

Students are advised that Sociology 362 or equivalent (statistics through ordinary least squares regression) is necessary for adequate preparation for this course.

Course Requirements

Students will be expected to read assigned material, take part in discussions, complete computer exercises, present work in progress to the class, and write a seminar paper. The course grade will be based on an evaluation of the seminar paper, and satisfactory performance on the other requirements.

Students are asked to bring laptop computers to class sessions. Students for whom this may be a hardship are asked to speak with the instructor on the first day of class.
**Course Readings**

A packet of readings is available for purchase at the Social Sciences Copy Center (6th floor of Social Sciences) and additional readings are on reserve at the Social Science Reading Room (8th floor of Social Sciences). In addition, the following books have been ordered at the University Bookstore:


* indicates recommended book, not required.
SOC/EPS 908 – Fall 2009
Schedule of Topics

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Note: Class will not meet on Thursday, October 22. Instead, we will meet on Monday, October 19, 1:30-4pm, at a location to be announced.
Notes: Readings should be completed in advance of the class session date listed. Supplemental readings indicated by *.

SEP 10

School Effects - 1

J. S. Coleman, *Equality and Achievement in Education*, chapters 2, 6-11. [ON RESERVE]


SEP 17

School Effects - 2


Goldring and Smrekar, *From the Courtroom to the Classroom*, chapters 1-2.


Multilevel Methods - 1


Raudenbush et al., *HLM6*, chapters 1-2.

SEP 24

Organizational Context - 1

Barr and Dreeben, *How Schools Work*, chapters 3-5.


Multilevel Methods - 2

Raudenbush and Bryk, *Hierarchical Linear Models*, chapters 3-5.


OCT 1

Organizational Context - 2


*Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, chapters 4, 6-8.

Multilevel Methods - 3

Bryk and Raudenbush, *Hierarchical Linear Models*, chapters 6, 8.

Raudenbush et al., *HLM6*, chapters 3-4.

OCT 8

Stratification between Schools


Goldring and Smreker, *From the Courtroom to the Classroom*, chapters 7-8.


*Bryk, Lee, and Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, chapter 10.


OCT 15

Stratification within Schools

Jeannie Oakes, *Keeping Track*, chapters 3-8, 11.


**Multilevel Methods - 4**


**OCT 22**

**Selection**


**Multilevel Methods - 5**


Raudenbush et al., *HLM6*, chapters 5-6.
OCT 29

Teacher Quality


Hanushek and Lindseth, Schoolhouses, Courthouses, and Statehouses, chapters 7-8.

Multilevel Methods – 6


NOV 5

Standards and Accountability


**Multilevel Methods - 7**
Raudenbush et al., *HLM6*, chapters 10-11.

**NOV 12**

**Evidence-Based Practice**


**NOV 19**

**Charter Schools**
