Sociology 239-Women in Science

Time: Monday 9:00-11:50
Location: SSPB 4206
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Overview

While relative position of women over the last 100 years has improved considerably in a number of arenas, including education, women are still underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related fields. This horizontal segregation of fields has garnered substantial attention, and some have suggested that the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields is the final frontier of gender inequality. Further, given that ensuring the existence of a well-trained STEM workforce is vital to the US economy, the underrepresentation of women is extremely policy relevant.

As a seminar, this class will spend a considerable amount of time discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the existing literature. Unlike many seminars, however, instead of focusing primarily on existing research, we will focus in particular on developing ideas for future research directions. To that end, the final assignment will be a grant proposal or research paper around the topics we discuss in class.

Format and Grading

Each week you will be expected to come to class with (1) a critique and (2) an idea for a research project that draw on the readings. Over the course of the quarter, you will be expected to develop a grant proposal or a research paper focusing on the topics we discuss in the class. This will involve outside reading, and I have kept the reading for class light to facilitate this. You will present your grant proposal or research paper to the class in week 10, and the final version is due at the end of the exam period for the class. This is designed to give you an opportunity to incorporate the feedback that you receive on your presentation into your proposal. Your grade will be based on class participation (20%), your presentation (30%), and your written proposal (50%).

Readings

In weeks 2, 7, and 8 we will be reading books. All other readings will be available on the course website.
Week 1. Introduction and overview

Week 2. The STEM Pipeline

Week 3. Bias


Week 4. Aptitude


Week 5. Self Assessments & Choices


**Week 6. Institutional considerations**


**Week 7. Social capital**


**Week 8. Biological differences**


**Week 9. International perspectives**


**Week 10. Presentations**

Presentations of your proposed research projects.

**Exam week.** Final proposal due at the end of the exam period.