



UC Center Sacramento

Engagement and Attainment: The Longer-Term Effects of Ethnic Studies

Wednesday, January 27th

12:00 - 1:00pm

In light of the community concerns regarding COVID-19, this talk will be given as a webinar. The link will be provided on January 26th to those that have registered by 5:00 pm on Monday, January 25th at uccs.ucdavis.edu.

The growing adoption and design features of ethnic-studies courses in U.S. K-12 school districts, particularly in California, have become politically contentious topics. A recent empirical study (Dee and Penner, 2017) presented quasi-experimental evidence that a 9th-grade ethnic-studies course targeted to lower-achieving students in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) significantly improved several near-term predictors of on-track progression through high school (i.e., attendance, GPA, and credits earned). The SFUSD Ethnic-Studies course focuses on themes of social justice, anti-racism, stereotypes, and contemporary social movements of historically excluded groups. Understanding the longer-term causal effects of enrolling in Ethnic Studies on key student outcomes is critical for educational policy and practice, particularly given the current political climate and calls for a focus on anti-racist education. This talk will review findings from the prior study and present new evidence from a pre-registered, regression-discontinuity (RD) study, on the longer-run effects of taking an ethnic-studies course using the student-level sample analyzed by Dee and Penner (2017). This will include examining outcomes at high school graduation as well as other measures of high school persistence and engagement (i.e., enrollment, credit completion, attendance).



Dr. Emily K. Penner is Assistant Professor of Education Policy and Social Context in the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine. Her research focuses on K-12 education policy, and considers the ways that districts, schools, and teachers contribute to and ameliorate educational inequality. She is currently involved in projects examining teacher recruitment and retention in constrained labor and housing markets, how school sorting processes affect student opportunities to learn, and how educator-initiated curricula that center the cultural and historical experiences of traditionally marginalized students impact student outcomes.

For questions contact Brooke Miller-Jacobs at (916) 445-5161 or bmmillerjacobs@ucdavis.edu

The views and opinions expressed during this lecture are those of the speaker and do not necessarily represent the views of UCCS.