

Introduction to Education

Mondays & Wednesdays, 1:10 – 2:30 pm

05:300:200:07

ED – 030

Fall 2014

CONTACT

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OFFICE HOURS

GSE Room 011

Mondays, 3:00 – 4:00 pm

(Or by appointment.)

This course introduces students to critical issues in U.S. education, including: the structures of schools and schooling, theories of learning and teaching, students' experiences, teachers' experiences, inequality, family and community relationships, and contemporary school reform policies.

Course Overview

Taking a multidisciplinary approach to the study of education, this course examines educative practices in and outside of school contexts. We will focus on critical issues in U. S. education, including: the structures of schools and schooling, theories of learning and teaching, students' experiences, teachers' experiences, inequality, family and community relationships, and contemporary school reform policies. We will make comparisons between learning and teaching in and outside of school contexts.

A key component of this course is a field placement in two different school sites. This field placement involves 8 three-hour visits on Friday mornings.

In this course, you will draw upon your own experiences as learners, your field observations, the readings and class discussions and activities to develop an understanding of contemporary schooling, and equally importantly, of education as a process that is at the heart of all human activity. Each week is organized to consider educational issues from both a theoretical and research perspective, and from the realities of educational practice in school and out of school contexts. In addition, class will model various pedagogical strategies; and these experiential exercises will provide for an examination of teaching and learning.

Required Texts

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schultz, B. (2007). *Spectacular things happen along the way: Lessons from an urban classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Readings

All other readings will be on electronic reserve on the library website (search “Introduction to Education,” *not* my name). Please note that there are multiple pages of reserves which are in alphabetical order by title.

You will need to have access to the readings while in class. You may print the articles for free at the GSE computer lab on the second floor.

Course Expectations

A successful class will depend on every member of the group being actively engaged as both learners and teachers. It is my assumption that each of us has valuable perspectives and experiences that will inform our collective, developing knowledge.

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for class. Because much of the work we do in class depends on partnering and small work groups, your contribution is necessary not only for your success but for the success of your peers. Two (2) excused absences (e.g. for illness or serious events) will be permitted. Being more than 15 minutes late for class will count as an absence. More than two (2) absences will lower your overall course grade one full assignable grade for each additional absence (i.e. If your course grade was to be an A, you will receive a B+ for 3 absences, a B for 4 absences, and a C+ for 5, and so forth). If you miss class, use the university absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence – an e-mail is automatically sent to me.

In addition, because you are working with teachers and children who expect you to be there, *you should never be absent on field observation days*. In the event of an emergency or illness, you must contact your cooperating teacher and let her/him know you will be absent. You must also plan to reschedule that visit at a later date.

Note: You cannot receive course credit without completing all the required hours.

Learning in this class will require your active participation and a high degree of independence, responsibility, and intellectual resourcefulness (ability to search out and make connections across theory, practice, sites, ideas, people, etc.) in all of your work. There are many ways to participate in class; actively listening, asking questions, commenting on the thoughts of others, or discussing tentative, speculative ideas are valued as much as stating original, completely formed thoughts. I encourage you to take intellectual risks and to support your colleagues (and professor) to do the same.

It is very important that you let me know if you have questions about the concepts being discussed during the course. Please see me during office hours or e-mail me with any questions or concerns.

Anyone with a learning difference needing accommodations of any kind should contact me as soon as possible.

This class is discussion-oriented. For this class to be effective, *all students must come prepared to discuss the week's assigned readings and to share your field observations.* Response papers (see below) are intended to help you think about the issues raised in the readings ahead of class time. You are expected to read each week's assigned readings even on the weeks that you do not write a response paper.

Keep notes on the readings. These notes will be important for completing your portfolio assignments.

All assignments are required to pass this course. An "A" assignment is exceptional work; not work that merely meets the requirements outlined in the syllabus. All written work is graded based on thoroughness, quality of analysis, level of support from data and/or literature, organization, and clarity. A final "A" grade will be assigned for an overall grade point average of 3.7 or greater.

All written work must be properly referenced using the APA (American Psychological Association) reference style. You are expected to cite course readings in most assignments. Every paper referencing another text (or the ideas of another scholar) must include a separate reference page in APA format.

Students are expected to turn in all work on time. If you need an extension, be sure to ask for it *before* it is due. Extensions will only be granted for legitimate reasons - *absences are not a legitimate excuse.* When an extension has not been granted, grades on assignments will be lowered one grade for each calendar day that they are late (i.e. A to A- to B+, and so forth). No assignments will be accepted more than one week from the due date.

You are expected to demonstrate respect for our classroom community. This means being attentive to each class member and refraining from activities that distract from our work together. All electronic equipment (mobile phones, reader devices, laptops, etc.) must be turned off at the beginning of class.

You should take notes in class by hand, unless you have a particular need to use a keyboard or virtual notepad. If this is the case, please discuss it with me. This way you are able to actively participate without distractions from the latest Facebook updates, tweets, or sports scores.

Check your e-mail regularly. I will use e-mail for announcements and to contact you individually. You will need to pay attention to these e-mails in a timely fashion. If you do not usually use your Rutgers e-mail account, be sure that you have set it to forward to the account that you do check.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the success of the educational enterprise and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the academic community. Every member of that community bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic

integrity are upheld. Only through a genuine partnership among students, faculty, staff, and administrators will the University be able to maintain the necessary commitment to academic integrity.

The University administration is responsible for making academic integrity an institutional priority and for providing students and faculty with effective educational programs and support services to help them fully understand and address issues of academic integrity. The administration is also responsible for working with other members of the academic community to establish equitable and effective procedures to deal with violations of academic integrity.

For further information, visit <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Any involvement with cheating, the fabrication or invention of information used in academic exercise, plagiarism, facilitating academic dishonesty, or denying others access to information or material may result in disciplinary action being taken at either the college or university level. Breaches of academic integrity can result in serious consequences ranging from reprimand to expulsion.

<http://senate.rutgers.edu/FinalInterimAcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf>

Assignments

Reading Blogs and Comments (20% of final grade)

You will write 11 blog entries over the course of the semester. This includes one **introduction** blog, nine **reading response** blogs, and one **current issue** blog.

All blog entries should be *informal*, but *well-written*. In other words, you can use casual language and should write in the first-person. However, your blog entries should have a clear structure – they should not read like stream of consciousness. They should also be free of spelling and grammatical errors.

Reading response and current issue blogs should be a **minimum of 500 words** in length. Because these blogs are meant to help prepare you for class, ***no late blogs will be accepted.***

➤ *INTRODUCTION BLOG*

Due Wednesday, Sept. 3rd, by 8 pm.

This is an informal blog that is just meant to help me get to know you a little better. Please introduce yourself, including:

- where you grew up, and what your school(s) was (were) like
- what year you're in at Rutgers, and what you're hoping to do when you graduate
- why you're taking this class

➤ *READING RESPONSE BLOGS*

Due each week by Sunday at 8 pm

The goal of these blogs is to help you process the readings. You can explore issues or questions about the readings, address the relationship between the different

readings, and draw these readings into conversation with your personal and fieldwork experiences.

I do not expect you to understand all the texts thoroughly. Rather, blogs will be graded based on evidence that you put **effort** into reading the texts, thinking about their content, and composing a blog entry that clearly reflects your thoughts.

Note that we have 13 weeks of reading, so you may take 4 weeks “off” from blogging. However, you are still expected to have thoroughly read the readings for those weeks.

YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL NINE BLOGS ON TIME IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE.

Further Instructions on Reading Blogs:

- ❖ You may choose to write in response to the question posed on the syllabus, or on a theme of your choice.
 - ❖ You should cite at least one quote from each text as a way of grounding your own thoughts. These quotes should add to, extend and/or help you to explain a cogent point you are making.
- ❖ You are also encouraged to draw from personal experience, though please remember that your blog is not private.
 - ❖ You should conclude each blog with at least two discussion questions, takeaway points, or thoughts you’d like to discuss in class.

➤ *CURRENT ISSUE BLOGS*

Due your assigned week by Sunday at 8 pm.

You will sign up to write one blog on a current issue or event pertaining to education. This blog should explain what’s happening and cite the article, website or podcast you got your information from, including a link if possible. At the end, you should also **raise one question** you would like people to consider in reference to your issue or event.

Be careful that you get your information from a trustworthy news source. If you’re not sure where to look, many major news sources (e.g. NPR, the *New York Times*) have regular columns/reports on education.

➤ *COMMENTS*

Due each week by Tuesday at 8 pm.

You will read and comment on the current issue blogs written by your peers. You should comment a total of nine times over the course of the semester.

Field Journals (20% of final grade)

DUE Friday, Oct. 24th & Friday, Dec. 12th

After each visit to your school site, you will write about 1-2 single-spaced pages about a key issue or incident that you observed that day. You will focus on separating your *observations*—what you actually saw—from your *interpretations*—what you think it means.

At the end of each set of school observations (i.e. twice over the course of the semester) you will turn in a set of annotated field notes. These field notes should reflect your 4 visits to each

school site, with commentary that links your observations to the readings. You will show evidence that you are thinking carefully and analytically about what you are seeing in your placements in relation to what you are learning in our course.

A detailed description and rubric is available on Sakai.

Reflection Letters (20% of final grade, 500 words, double-spaced)

Twice over the course of the semester you will write a reflection letter in response to the following specific questions. In these letters you are expected to draw on readings (at least 5), class discussions, writing forums, and your observations to make a case for the position you are taking. A rubric is available on Sakai.

- a) First Reflection Letter: **DUE Wednesday, Oct. 29th**
What *should* the purposes of education in a democracy be? What currently constrains our society from realizing those purposes? Provide evidence to support your claims.
- b) Second Reflection Letter: **DUE Wednesday, Dec. 17th**
If you could make one reform to bring about more engaging and equitable learning environments for all children, what would it be? Choose one reform—of pedagogy, curriculum, or institutional policy—that we have studied and make a case for why you believe this reform is critical to creating the kind of learning environment you would like to advocate.

Educational Autobiography (15 % of final grade; 750-1000 words, double-spaced)

DUE Wednesday, Oct. 8th.

In this paper, you will choose one experience from your own educational autobiography and analyze it in relation to one of the course readings. You will develop a thesis (an interpretation) that links your experience to the reading you have chosen. A detailed description and rubric is available on Sakai.

Analysis of Inequality (15 % of final grade; 750-1000 words, double-spaced)

DUE Wednesday, Nov. 26th

In this paper, you will analyze an aspect of inequality or an attempt to redress inequality that you have observed in your school placement. You will use selected readings to analyze what is happening in the situation you observed. A detailed description and rubric is available on Sakai.

Class Participation (10% of final grade)

In addition to the basic norms that you come to class (and your field placement) prepared, and on time, you are expected to be a full, responsible, and engaged participant in our classroom community, discussions, group assignments and so forth.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Wednesday, Sept. 3

INTRODUCTION

Please read the syllabus in advance of coming to class.

DUE - Introduction Blog

(Posted to Sakai by 8:00 pm Tuesday, Sept. 2).

Week 2: Monday, Sept. 8th & Wednesday, Sept. 10th

THE WORLD OF CHILDHOOD

What is childhood like? How do race, class and gender influence the experience of childhood?

- 1) Dillard, A. (1987). *An American childhood*. (pp. 20-23, 42-49). New York: NY: Harper & Row.
- 2) Cisneros, S. (1991). *Woman hollering creek: And other stories*. (pp. 3-20). New York, NY: Vintage.
- 3) Rose, M. (1982). I just wanna be average. In *Lives on the boundary: A moving account of struggles and achievements of America's educational underclass*. (pp. 11-37). New York, NY: Penguin.

DUE - 1st Reading Response Blog

(Posted to Sakai by 8:00 pm Sunday, Sept. 7, and hardcopy in class)

Week 3: Monday, Sept. 15th & Wednesday, Sept. 17th

EDUCATION AS HUMAN PRACTICE

How do children (and adults) actually learn something new? Given this view of learning, why might it be important to observe students carefully?

- 1) Almy, M. & Genishi, C. (1979). *Ways of studying children: An observation manual for early childhood teachers*. (Ch. 2: pp. 21-50). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 2) Carini, P. (2000). A letter to parents and teachers on some ways of looking at and reflecting on children. In M. Himley & P. Carini (eds.), *From another angle: Children's strengths and school standards*. (Ch. 3: pp. 56-64). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 3) Rogoff, M. (2003). Learning through guided participation in cultural endeavors. In *The cultural nature of human development*. (Ch. 8: pp. 282-326). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Week 4: Monday, Sept. 22nd & Wednesday, Sept. 24th

THE "HIDDEN CURRICULUM" OF SCHOOLING

What do we learn in school other than academic subjects?

- 1) Dewey, J. (1922/1966). Individuality, equality and superiority. In J. Ratner (ed.), *Education today*. (pp. 171-177). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- 2) Jackson, P. W. (1968/1990). The daily grind. In *Life in classrooms*. (Ch. 1: pp. 3-37). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 3) Kohn, A. (1999). Lures for learning: Why behaviorism doesn't work in the classroom. In *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes*. (Ch. 8: pp. 142-159). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Week 5: Monday, Sept. 29th & Wednesday, Oct. 1st

SCHOOLING & INEQUALITY

While education is supposed to be “the great equalizer,” schooling can actually act to maintain inequality. How does this happen?

- 1) Anyon, J. (1980). “Social class and the hidden curriculum of work.” *Journal of Education*, 162(1): 67-92.
- 2) Kozol, J. (2005, September 1). “Still separate, still unequal: America’s educational apartheid.” *Harper’s Magazine*, 311(n.1864), 41-54.
- 3) **CHOOSE EITHER:**
 - a. Demerath, P., Lynch, J. & Davidson, M. (2008). Dimensions of psychological capital in a U.S. suburb and high schools: Identities for neoliberal times. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 39(3): 270-292.
 - b. Persell, C. H. & Cookson, P. W. (1986). Chartering and bartering: Elite education and social reproduction. *Social Problems* (33), 2: 114-129.

DUE - First Field Journal Entry

(Posted to Sakai and hard copy in class.)

Week 6: Monday, Oct. 6th & Wednesday, Oct. 8th

SORTING, CLASSIFYING, & TRACKING

Does it “work” to sort students into different groups based on “ability”? What are the consequences of this?

- 1) Mehan, H. (2000). Beneath the skin and between the ears: A case study in the politics of representation. In B. Levinson et al. (eds.), *Schooling the symbolic animal: Social and cultural dimensions of education*. (pp. 259-279). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- 2) Oakes, J. (1986). “Beyond tracking.” *Educational Horizons*, 65(1): 32-35.
- 3) Rubin, B. (2006). “Tracking and detracking: Debates, evidence and best practices for a heterogenous world.” *Theory Into Practice*, 45(1): 4-14.

DUE - Educational Autobiography

(Posted to Sakai by Wednesday, Oct. 8th, at 11:59 PM.)

Week 7: Monday, Oct. 13th & Wednesday, Oct. 15th

RACE, ETHNICITY, & CULTURE***How do race, ethnicity, and culture impact how schools respond to students? How do they impact what students need from schools/teachers?***

- 1) Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. (Ch. 1-3: pp. 1-58). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jigsaw:

- 2) Lee, S. (1996). Unraveling the “Model Minority” stereotype: Listening to Asian American youth. (Ch. 1 & 3: pp. 1-16, 52-69). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 3) Lomawaima, K. T. & McCarty, T. L. (2006). *To remain an Indian: Lessons from a century of Native American education*. (Ch. 7 & 8: pp. 134-166). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 4) Orellana, M. F. (2001). “The work kids do: Mexican and Central American immigrant children’s contributions to households and schools in California.” *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3): 366-389.
- 5) Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2002). Literate at home but not at school: A Cambodian girl’s journey from playwright to struggling writer. In G. Hull & K. Schultz (eds.), *School’s out: Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. (pp. 61-95). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Week 8: Monday, Oct. 20th & Wednesday, Oct. 22ndGENDER & SEXUAL ORIENTATION***How do gender and sexual orientation impact students’ experiences in schools?***

- 1) Brown, L. M. (2005). In the bad or good of childhood: Social class, schooling and white femininities. In L. Weis & M. Fine (Eds.). *Beyond silenced voices: Class, race and gender in United States Schools*. (pp. 147-162). Revised. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- 2) Kimmel, M. (2004). “What about the boys?” What the current debates tell us – and don’t tell us – about boys in schools. In M. Kimmel, *The gendered society reader*. (pp. 243-262). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- 3) Padawer, R. (2012, August 8). What’s so bad about a boy who wants to wear a dress? *New York Times*. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/magazine/whats-so-bad-about-a-boy-who-wants-to-wear-a-dress.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
- 4) Denizet-Lewis, B. (September 27, 2009). Coming out in middle school. *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/27/magazine/27out-t.html>)

DUE - First Annotated Field Journal

(Posted to Sakai by Friday, Oct. 24th, at 11:59 PM.)

Week 9: Monday, Oct. 27th & Wednesday, Oct. 29thEDUCATION IN CONTEXT***How much should what you teach and how you teach it be impacted by the context you’re teaching in?***

- 1) Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. (Ch. 4-6: pp. 59-138). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- 2) Schultz, B. (2008). *Spectacular things happen along the way: Lessons from an urban classroom*. (Introduction, Ch. 1-2: pp. ix-52). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

DUE - First Reflection Letter

(Posted to Sakai by Wednesday, Oct. 29th, at 11:59 PM.)

Week 10: Monday, Nov. 3rd & Wednesday, Nov. 5th

INTRODUCING CRITICAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

What is real learning? What sorts of experiences prompt real learning?

- 1) Duckworth, E. (1987). *The having of wonderful ideas and other essays on teaching and learning*. (pp. 1-14). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 2) Schultz, B. (2008). *Spectacular things happen along the way: Lessons from an urban classroom*. (Ch. 3-5: pp. 53-125). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 3) Wallerstein, N. (1987). Problem-posing education: Freire's method for transformation. In I. Shor (ed.), *Freire for the classroom: A sourcebook for liberatory teaching*. (Ch. 2). Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

Week 11: Monday, Nov. 10th & Wednesday, Nov. 12th

DEBATING THE CANON

What DOES every American need to know?

- 1) Banks, J. A. (1997). *Teaching strategies for ethnic studies*. (pp. 3-34). (6th ed). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- 2) Cooley, R. (2003). "Beyond pink and blue." *Rethinking Schools*, 18(2).
- 3) Hirsch, E. D. (1987). Cultural literacy: What every American needs to know. (Ch. 1 & 5, pp. 1-32, 110-133). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Week 12: Monday, Nov. 17th & Wednesday, Nov. 19th

DIVERSE LEARNERS

What strategies make it more likely that children of varying abilities can succeed in the classroom? What is challenging and what is rewarding about inclusive classrooms?

- 1) Armstrong, T. (2000). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom*. Washington D.C.: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- 2) Belkin, L. (2004, September 26). The lessons of classroom 506: What happens when a boy with cerebral palsy goes to kindergarten like all the other kids. *New York Times Magazine*, 41-49.
- 3) Oyler, C. (2001). "Democratic classrooms and accessible instruction." *Democracy and Education*, 14(1): 28-31.
- 4) Sapon-Shevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world: A practical guide to building cooperative, inclusive classroom communities*. (pp. 15-33). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

THANKSGIVING WEEK: Monday, Nov. 24th

NO CLASS!

DUE - Inequality Analysis

(Posted to Sakai by Wednesday, Nov. 26th, at 11:59 PM.)

Week 13: Monday, Dec. 1st & Wednesday, Dec. 3rdIMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS

How can schools be improved? (What solutions have people suggested? Which seem promising to you?)

- 1) Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). The flat world, educational inequality, and America's future. In *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine*. (Ch. 1 & 6: pp. 1-26 & 163-193). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 2) Schultz, B. (2008). *Spectacular things happen along the way: Lessons from an urban classroom*. (Ch. 6-7: pp. 126-158). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- 3) Jennings, J. & Rentner, D. S. (2006). "The ten big effects of the No Child Left Behind Act on public schools." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 88(2): 110-113.

Jigsaw:

- 4) Meier, D. (2009). "Reinventing schools that keep teachers in teaching." *Rethinking Schools*, 23(3).
- 5) Michie, G. (2009). "Another path is possible: Two Chicago principals keep an eye on what matters." *Rethinking Schools*, 24(1).

Week 14: Monday, Dec. 8th & Wednesday, Dec. 10thDESEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION

Why are American schools still segregated 60 years after the Brown decision? Is achieving true integration important?

- 1) Chemerinsky, E. (2005). The segregation and resegregation of American public education: The court's role. In J. C. Boger & G. Orfield (Eds.), *School resegregation: Must the South turn back?* (pp. 29-50). Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- 2) Powell, J. A. (2005). A new theory of integrated education: True integration. In J. C. Boger & G. Orfield (eds.), *School resegregation: Must the South turn back?* (pp. 281-304). Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- 3) Wells, A. S., Duran, J. & White, T. (2008). "Refusing to leave desegregation behind: From graduates to racially diverse schools to the Supreme Court." *Teachers College Record*, 110(12): 2535-2570.

DUE - Second Annotated Field Journal

Posted to Sakai by Friday, Dec. 12th, at 11:59 PM.

Week 15: NO CLASS

DUE - Second Reflection Letter

All Reading Responses

Posted to Sakai by Wednesday, Dec. 17th, at 11:59 PM.