INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION  
(Syllabus Version 1.22.19)  
05:300:200  
Tuesdays 9:50-12:50  
Location: Scott Hall 104  
Friday morning mandatory meetings and school visits  

Instructor: Tanja Sargent  tanja.sargent@gse.rutgers.edu  
Office Hours: GSE Room 36B, Wednesdays 1:30-4:30 pm  
Office Hours Sign Up Sheet  

Course description  

The aim of this course is to introduce key issues in education and then observe and reflect on them in practice. The course introduces students to critical issues in U.S. education, including: race; immigration; special education; gender and sexuality as well as theories of learning and teaching and student and teacher experiences. Examples of key concepts that will be grasped during the course include culturally relevant pedagogy, Universal Design for Learning, translanguaging, and gender expansiveness.  

Students will draw upon course readings, students’ own experiences as learners, school visit observations, and class discussions and activities to develop an understanding of the social contexts of contemporary schooling. Each week is organized to consider educational issues from both a theoretical perspective, and from the realities of educational practice in schools. In addition, the class will model various pedagogical strategies; and these experiential exercises will provide for an examination of teaching and learning.  

The New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers that are covered in this course include  
1.ii.2 The teacher acquires the essential knowledge that will allow them to create developmentally appropriate instruction that takes into account individual learner’s strengths, interests, and needs and that enables each learner to advance and accelerate their learning and prepares the teacher to collaborate with families, communities and colleagues and other professionals to promote learner growth and development.  
2.i.4 The teacher develops the critical disposition to allow them to value diverse languages, dialects and cultures and to seek to integrate them into their instructional practice to engage students in learning.  
11.i.1 The teacher reflects on their personal biases and accesses resources to deepen their own understanding of cultural ethnic, gender and learning differences to build stronger relationships and create more relevant learning experiences.
Learning goals

1. To inspire and empower students to become inspiring and effective teachers who work as classroom change agents
2. Students will demonstrate critical understandings about the social and historical contexts of teaching and learning in the US through written assignments and in-class discussions.
3. Students will observe and reflect upon contemporary educational practice in diverse settings and analyze their observations in light of the theories learned in class.
4. Students will reflect on their own educational autobiography and consider how this will impact their own teaching beliefs and practices as future teachers.
5. Students will begin to develop their strengths as teacher researchers during school visits and in their final paper about an educational issue of their choice.

Readings

Required Text ordered at the Rutgers Bookstore


Additional readings are available through Canvas Files and through the Rutgers Library Course Reserves. (Search for “Sargent”).

Expectations and Class Rules

Read the syllabus carefully. You are responsible for knowing what is contained in the syllabus and for adhering to due dates and requirements in the syllabus without any reminders from me.

School visits

A key component of this course are the Friday mandatory meetings and school visits to four different sites. Meeting and school visit schedule is as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Intro to Ed School Visit Orientation (8:30-10:30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>Movie day (8:00-12:00 am)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>Secondary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>Special Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>ESL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rutgers does not provide transportation to the schools, so it is up to individual students to make their own arrangements. Students should expect to travel a minimum of thirty minutes each way to their assigned school. You will be given an opportunity to discuss the possibility of carpooling with classmates on the first day of class. If you know for a fact that you will be carpooling with a specific group of classmates, please indicate this on the contact sheet you will fill out at the Intro to Ed Orientation meeting on 2/1/2019. Please have your travel arrangements

Attendance in class and at Friday meetings and school visits is mandatory. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for class. One excused absence (e.g. for illness, religious holiday or serious event) will be permitted. 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. After the first absence, 5 percent will be deducted from your participation grade for every subsequent absence.

Please note that you cannot receive course credit without completing all the required school visit observation hours.

Have access to the relevant readings and your discussion post in class every week. Please be sure that you have access to the necessary reading materials and your discussion post for EVERY class so that you will be able to refer to them in class and make your contributions.

Use of technology: Off-task use of electronic devices is extremely distracting to your learning and the learning of those around you. Use of electronic devices in the class is limited strictly to conducting classroom work: accessing course materials, current events articles, referring to your reading discussion post to assist you in contributing in class, writing notes for group presentations etc. Please close email and all social media applications and silence and put phones away. Let me know at the start of the semester or before class if, for any reason, you might be expecting an emergency text or call that would require monitoring of your phone. Violations of these expectations will result in a lowered participation grade.

All assignments are required to pass this course. All written work is graded based on thoroughness, quality of analysis, level of support from data and/or literature, organization, and clarity.

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

| 93-100 | A    |
| 88-92  | B+   |
| 83-87  | B    |
| 78-82  | C+   |
| 73-78  | C    |

All written work must be properly referenced using the APA (American Psychological Association) reference style. You are expected to cite course readings and other articles and multimedia materials in your writing assignments. For your final paper, include a separate references page in APA format. In your discussion posts simply add the references at the end of your discussion post. One good resource for APA reference style is https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
Check your e-mail regularly. I will use Canvas for announcements and email 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** is essential to the success of the educational enterprise and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the academic community. You are responsible for knowing the Rutgers University Academic Integrity guidelines. These can be found at [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/) and in the following document [http://senate.rutgers.edu/FinalInterimAcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf](http://senate.rutgers.edu/FinalInterimAcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf)

**Learning Accommodations**
Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’ disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form).

**Assignments**
1) Weekly discussion postings 20%
2) Current events presentations 5%
3) Educational autobiography 10%
4) School visit journals 40%
5) Final project presentation 5%
6) Final project 15%
7) Class participation and attendance 5%
8) Extra credit up to 5%

Grading rubrics are available in Canvas Assignments.

1) **Weekly discussion postings (250 words minimum)**
You will be responsible for posting 8 out of 12 posts in the discussion forum about the week's readings. Posts must be a minimum of 250 words, are to respond to the guiding questions for each week (see below) and should refer substantively to all of the week’s required readings. You are also required to post at least one comment each week in your reading group for all of the 8 required discussion posts. There is no minimum number of words for the comments but comments must be substantive and extend the discussion. Please keep commenting friendly and encouraging. Posts and comments should show knowledge of the texts and move beyond summary. Ideally they will show evidence of careful reading and critical thinking about the texts. **Conclude each discussion forum post with one or two discussion questions or takeaway**
**points that you can bring with you to class.** Use your posts to begin working on your school visit journals.

Discussion posts are due midnight, the night before class.

2) **Current Events**
At the start of class every week students will present and discuss current education issues in the news. Students must prepare to share news items at least twice during the semester. Sign up for two dates in Canvas Pages and paste a link to a news article about and education issue under the relevant date. Prepare a discussion question based on your selected article. After sharing your news item, facilitate a brief class discussion on your article. Use your discussion question as a way to spark a conversation with the class. Be sure to find articles from reputable sources (NPR, NYTImes, Washington Post, US News and World Report, OZY, Education Week, China Daily, Times of India, AlJazeera, Helsinki Times, The Independent (UK) etc.) Acknowledge your source and any potential bias you may be aware of.

3) **Educational Autobiography (750-1000 words)**
In this paper, you will write about one experience from your own educational autobiography. Develop the story of your experience with rich and evocative detail and have a main point or thesis that you would like to convey.

4) **School Visit Journals (1000-1500 words)**
During each school visit you will be focusing on observing a different theme as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Visit</th>
<th>Observation Focus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school visit</td>
<td>To what extent is culturally relevant pedagogy and content apparent in the school and classroom? Focus your notes on the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school visit</td>
<td>In what ways does the school reinforce or mitigate the structural inequalities in society? Focus your notes on the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed visit</td>
<td>To what extent is Universal Design of Learning apparent in the school and classroom? Focus your notes on an individual student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL visit</td>
<td>How do schools support the learning and success of immigrant students and emerging bilinguals? Focus your notes on the content of the curriculum and the teacher-student and peer to peer interactions in the classroom.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Take careful notes during your school visit. As soon as possible after your visit, preferably on the same day, type up your notes and fill them in from your memory of what you observed. You will need to refer to these notes to write your school visit journal assignments. In your school visit journal, you should write separate observations and interpretations.

- **Observations.** These are detailed rich descriptions of the classroom environment and organization, vignettes of telling events, or captured monologue or dialogue.
- **Reflections & Analysis.** What do you interpret this event, dialogue, or description to mean? In your analysis, draw on course readings to make connections to what you are seeing. Please cite at least one quote from each text that you use as a way of grounding
your own thoughts. Choose these quotes carefully. They should add to, extend and/or help you to explain a cogent point you are making. We will be looking for evidence that you are reading and thinking critically about the various assigned texts and how these can be applied to thinking analytically about what you are observing in the school visit.

**Have access to your school visit notes in class throughout the semester.** Your school visit notes will be a resource that will help ground our in-class discussions in the actual practice of schools.

On Friday 2/8 you will have a chance to practice writing your observations when you take notes on a video of teaching. While you watch the video you will practice observing the lesson and focusing on the teacher, student, classroom environment and the content of the curriculum. You will also practice separating description and interpretation in your write up of your notes in preparation for your note taking when you go on your school visits.

5) **Final Project** (1000-1500 words double-spaced)
The final project will allow you to select an educational issue that you are most interested in. On the first day of class you will have the opportunity to select a topic from among a list that we will generate collaboratively in class. Throughout the semester you will search for readings and resources to explore your topic in more depth including the news item you select for your current events presentation. Use your school visits to try to observe the issue in practice if possible.

6) **Final Presentation** (5-10 slides)
During the last lesson you will present your final project in class and we will learn from each other. Create a presentation of 5-10 slides using PowerPoint or Google Slides (remember to set Google Slide sharing permissions to anyone anywhere can view or edit) and upload these into Canvas Assignments.

7) **Class Participation**
In addition to the basic norms that you come to class and your school visit placement prepared, and on time, you are expected to be a full, responsible, and engaged participant in our classroom community and through your comments on discussion posts, work on group assignments and so forth.

8) **Extra credit opportunities (up to 5%)**
You will receive extra credit points for attendance at the information session about the 5 year program as well as other activities related to furthering your understanding of schooling and the teaching profession. Receive my approval for extra credit before you attend the event. You are encouraged to share information about opportunities with the rest of the class. In order to receive extra credit for these activities please write a one page summary and reflection of the activity and submit through Canvas along with an email alert to me that you have submitted it.
# CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Video</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 1/22</td>
<td>Race in American Society</td>
<td>Race: The Power of an Illusion</td>
<td>McIntosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 1/29</td>
<td>Characteristics of learning in early childhood</td>
<td>Cisneros Ladson Billings chapters 1-3 Duckworth</td>
<td>Take Harvard Implicit Association Test--Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 2/1</td>
<td>Mandatory meeting: Introduction to Education Orientation 8:30-10:30 Busch Campus Center Multipurpose Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3 2/5</td>
<td>Culturally relevant teaching</td>
<td>Carini Danielson Ladson-Billings Chapter 4 NJ Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
<td>Educational autobiography Due Friday 2/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 2/8</td>
<td>Intro to Ed Movie Day 8:00-12:00 Academic Building Room 2400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 2/12</td>
<td>Nature of knowledge</td>
<td>Dewey (selected excerpts) Hirsch (selected excerpts) Ladson-Billings chapter 5 NJ Student Learning Standards</td>
<td>1. As part of your discussion post, in addition to responding to the guiding questions, select a paragraph from Dewey to share in class. 2. Final project topic due in Canvas Pages along with three citations of readings you will use Due Friday 2/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 2/15</td>
<td>Elementary school visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 2/19</td>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td>Oakes Rubin</td>
<td>As you write your discussion post prepare for an in-</td>
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</table>


class debate about tracking making use of both of the readings. Be ready to argue both FOR and AGAINST tracking.

Elementary school visit journal **Due Friday 2/22**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Segregation</th>
<th><strong>Talk by Jonathan Kozol at Yale University</strong></th>
<th>Kozol Anyon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/26</td>
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**Fri 3/1** Secondary school visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Motivation and competition</th>
<th>The Race to Nowhere, Two Million Minutes</th>
<th>Kohn Demerath</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
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Secondary school visit journal **Due Friday 3/8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Universal Design for Learning</th>
<th><strong>Wilson Oyler NYEngage Grade 2 English Language Arts curriculum</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>3/12</td>
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</table>

**Fri 3/15** Special Ed visit

3/ 19 NO CLASS Spring Break. Have Fun!!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Suarez-Orozco (introduction and selected child profile of immigration available on Canvas in Files) <strong>Jigsaw: Choose one</strong> Abu El-Haj Orellana Wing</th>
<th>1. Describe how the particular immigration story of your selected student has impacted their education. 2. Sign up for Jigsaw reading and be prepared to explain it to class 3. Special Ed school visit journal <strong>Due Friday 3/29</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Emerging bilinguals</td>
<td>Garcia Gadotti Wallerstein</td>
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<td>4/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 4/5</td>
<td>ELL visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Global perspectives</td>
<td>Darling-Hammond Farrell Getting started with iEARN</td>
<td>ELL school visit journal <strong>Due Friday 4/12</strong></td>
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<td>4/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Gender (Online class)</td>
<td>Katch Mangin Gender Inclusive Schools Toolkit</td>
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<td>4/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Building a community of diverse learners</td>
<td>Ladson-Billings Chapter 7 Sapon-Shevin</td>
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<td>4/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Final presentations</td>
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<td>Final presentation on final paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 5/6</td>
<td>Final paper due</td>
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List and schedule of Readings and Guiding Questions

Week 1

Week 2

Guiding Questions: What are some of the characteristics of childhood? How does the teacher’s response to children affect their learning? How can teachers best support learning?

Week 3
NJ Professional Standards for Teachers

Guiding Questions: What can we learn by observing students? Why bother getting to know students’ interests? What factors limit our powers of observation? What constitutes effective pedagogy? How can we evaluate quality teaching?

Week 4

Guiding Questions: What is the nature of knowledge? What should the content of the curriculum be? What is the role of content in the culturally relevant classroom?

Week 5

**Guiding Questions:** How do the daily practices of schooling reproduce societal inequalities? What societal inequalities seemingly correspond with the schooling experiences of different students? How do schools sort and categorize students? What workable alternatives to tracking exist?

**Week 6**  
**Kozol, J. (1 September 2005).** Still separate, still unequal: America’s educational apartheid. *Harper’s Magazine v. 311, n. 1864*  

**Guiding Questions:** How do race, ethnicity and social class structure students’ experiences in the US schooling system? What roles have race and ethnicity played in the US schooling system historically?

**Week 7**  

**Guiding Questions:** What are the best ways to motivate students? How can educational success be socially constructed and “produced”? What are the consequences of high levels of competition and academic pressure?

**Week 8**  

**Guiding Questions:** What assumptions about disability shape the way we educate disabled students? How do inclusive practices benefit special education students and their peers? What are the various components of Universal Design for Learning?

**Week 9**  
Choose one


**Guiding Questions**: How is transnational migration shaping education around the world? What are some of the ways that immigrant students experience schooling?

**Week 10**


**Guiding Questions**: How have ideas changed over time about educating emerging bilinguals? What are some ways that prospective teachers can cultivate their critical multilingual awareness? What was revolutionary about Paulo Freire’s approach to teaching?

**Week 11**

**Darling-Hammond, L., Burns, D., Campbell, C., & Hammerness, K.** (2017). *Empowered educators: How high-performing systems shape teaching quality around the world.* John Wiley & Sons, chapters 1, 2 and 4. *(In chapter 2 select one country case study to read)*


**Getting Started with iEARN** [https://iearn.org/about/about-getting-started#whatIEARN](https://iearn.org/about/about-getting-started#whatIEARN)

**Guiding Questions**: What are some successful policies and practices used by other countries (in both the “South” and the “North”) in education?

**Week 12**


**Guiding Questions:** How are gender stereotypes hurtful to everyone? How can teachers and schools support gender expansive children? What can be done to disrupt the development of harmful masculinities that are performed in school environments?

**Week 13**


**Guiding Questions:** How can we teach to meet the needs of all our students? What can we do to build cooperative, inclusive classroom communities?

**Week 14**

Class presentations