Educational Studies 200: Analyzing Schools
Trinity College
Fall 2019

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McCook 312

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Course Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:25-10:40 AM, McCook 303
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3-4 PM in McCook 312
Wednesdays, 10 AM-12 PM in the Cave
Or by appointment (email me and suggest a few times you are available)

Course Description
This course introduces the study of schooling within an interdisciplinary framework. Drawing upon sociology, we investigate the resources, structures, and social contexts which influence student opportunities and outcomes in the United States. From anthropology, we examine how classroom and school cultures shape experiences of teaching and learning. From psychology, we contrast theories of learning, both in the abstract and in practice. From philosophy, we examine competing educational goals and their underlying assumptions regarding human nature, justice, and democracy. In addition, a community learning component, where students observe and participate in nearby K-12 classrooms for three hours per week, will be integrated with course readings and written assignments.

Over the course of the semester, you will be able to:
• Identify and analyze issues that affect teaching and learning in schools
• Recognize various goals of schooling and the beliefs that underlie them, and consider ways to best achieve and balance them
• Explain how and why inequality persists in schools
• Apply concepts and theories in the educational literature to real world K-12 classrooms and schools
• Analyze and imagine possibilities for creating more just schools

The key goal of this course is to explore the central question: How can we best understand the practices, policies, and patterns in classrooms and schools in ways that enable us to create and sustain just, inclusive, effective, engaging, and pedagogically strong educational spaces?

Course Requirements and Evaluation
You are required to purchase a Course Reader for this course. The Course Reader will include most readings from Week 3 (September 17) and beyond. Readings for Weeks 1-2 and some readings will be available on Moodle. More information will be discussed in class.
Read and reflect on all the assigned readings before class on the date they are listed on the syllabus. Come to class prepared to engage with the class in discussing the readings. Reading loads and difficulties will vary; it will be in your best interest to look ahead and budget your time accordingly. You should analyze the readings in relation to your experiences, other readings from class, and other scholarly literature you have read.

School Placements in Hartford Public Schools
Clusters of students will be assigned to work with classroom teachers in different schools in Hartford. Students will work as *participant observers* with their classroom teachers for at least 8 three-hour sessions (a total of 24 hours) over the course of the semester. The objectives are for Trinity students to:

- Integrate theoretical readings with first-hand experiences in K-12 schools
- Develop meaningful relationships with students and teachers, deepen understandings and reflections on the contexts of urban schools and the purposes of education, and assist teachers and students where appropriate
- Identify potential resources and gain practical experience about teaching and curricula

Typically, participant observation is more than just quietly watching (although at times, it may involve just that). Most times, however, participant observation will include more active roles in the classroom, such as learning alongside students, one-on-one tutoring, working with small groups, preparing materials for a classroom project, accompanying a field trip, and (in some cases) planning and teaching a brief lesson.

During your initial visit with the teacher, you will complete a basic contract to establish your schedule and role in the classroom. If you are unable to make a scheduled session due to a documented medical or family issue, contact your cooperating classroom teacher as soon as possible to arrange an alternate time. *A copy of your signed contract must be uploaded to Moodle by Sunday, Sept 29 at 11:59 PM (Writing Exercise 4).*

Course Evaluation
You will be evaluated on the items listed below. More detailed information about assignments will be distributed in class. Unless told otherwise, submit assignments on Moodle.

**Class Attendance and Participation**
Class begins on time and you are required to attend all classes from start to finish. More than two absences will affect your grade, except in cases of illness, religious observances, or family emergencies. Absences for these reasons may be made up through an alternative assignment. You must email me to receive permission to complete a makeup assignment. I encourage you to reserve your allowed absences for cases of illness. You should not leave the classroom during class unless it is an emergency. Every two late arrivals, early departures, and/or instances of leaving class will count as an unexcused absence.

Your class participation will be evaluated based on your participation and contributions to learning in class. Please note that outstanding participation involves not only making thoughtful
contributions in class (whether in large or small group discussions), but also leaving space for your classmates to share their opinions and perspectives and being a reflective listener.

**Reading Quizzes**

= 10 points

At various points during the semester, class will begin with a 5 minute reading quiz. Quiz dates will not be announced in advance, and quizzes must be turned in 5 minutes after class begins. If you are absent from or late to class, you will not be able to make up quizzes, unless your absence is due to a medical or family emergency. Quizzes will evaluate whether you grasp the main concepts and themes discussed in the readings.

**Hartford Classroom Participant Observation** (evaluated by classroom teacher) = 10 points

At the end of the semester, your classroom teacher will evaluate you based on your level of engagement, reliability, and effort demonstrated.

**Four Analysis Papers** (2-4 pages each)

= 40 points

Analysis papers allow you to illustrate your understanding of course readings and themes, support claims with evidence and examples, and integrate theory and practice. All Analysis Papers should be uploaded to Moodle by 11:59 PM on the date they are due. If you visit the Writing Center for support on an Analysis Paper, you will receive extra credit (0.5 points).

1) Social and Cultural Contexts of Schooling – due Thursday, Sept 19
2) Theories of Learning – due Thursday, Oct 3
3) Explaining Educational Inequality – due Thursday, Oct 31
4) Curriculum Project Proposal – due Tuesday, Nov 19

**Eight Writing Exercises** (~1 page each)

= 16 points

Writing Exercises promote reflective thinking about course themes and your experiences in your school placement. All Writing Exercises should be uploaded to Moodle by 11:59 PM on the date they are due. Writing Exercises submitted within 24 hours of the deadline will receive a 50% deduction. Writing Exercises submitted more than 24 hours late will not be accepted and will receive 0 points.

1) Introduction to placement teacher – due Sun, Sept 8
2) Student learning vignette – due Tues, Sept 24
3) Peer edit learning vignette – due Sun, Sept 29
4) Signed contract with classroom teacher – due Sun, Sept 29
5) Classroom diversity – due Thurs, Oct 24
6) Curriculum Project ideas – due Sun, Nov 3
7) Thank you to classroom teacher – due Thurs, Dec 5
8) Curriculum Project collaboration evaluation (not required if you worked alone) – due Fri, Dec 13

**Reflection Journal on Hartford School Placement**

= 15 points

After each 3-hour participant observation at your school placement, you will write a brief reflection (1-2 pages) on the session. Ideally, this reflection should be written as soon as possible after your participant observation. These reflections are not intended to be formal pieces of writing, but are primarily designed to allow you to process your participant observation experiences and consider connections to course themes.
You will not have space in each reflection to describe all 3 hours of your observation in detail. Rather, you might choose to focus on overall impressions, a particular instance or example that sparked your thinking, or a question that arose during the day’s participant observation.

At least 4 of the 8 reflections should include a connection to a course reading. At the end of the semester, you will write a final reflection and evaluation on what you learned at your school placement (1-2 pages). You will submit one reflection journal that includes a connection to a course reading on Tuesday, October 8 at 11:59 PM to receive feedback (worth 2 out of 15 points for the complete journal). The complete journal (8 reflections + final reflection) is due on Thursday, Dec 5 at 11:59 PM.

Curriculum Project Oral Presentation (evaluated by coordinators) = 10 points
You will present an overview of your curriculum project (see below for details on the project) for your instructor, classmates, and school placement coordinators. The presentation will be evaluated by the school placement coordinators and will take place on two afternoons which will be determined later in the semester. You must be available for at least one of these afternoons (most likely 4:00-6:00 PM on weekdays between Dec 4-11).

Curriculum Project Written Paper = 15 points
Individually or in pairs, you will design a plan for how you would teach a thematic unit (4-5 lessons) to a group of students similar to those in your classroom placement. The assignment is designed for you to creatively apply the concepts and themes we have discussed this semester to a curriculum that could be taught. The written paper is due on Thursday, Dec 12 at 11:59 PM. If you work in a pair, you will submit one paper together.

Grading Scale
The total number of possible points in this course is 136. When calculating your final grade, your lowest 10-point grade (an Analysis Paper, Hartford Classroom Participant Observation, or Curriculum Project Oral Presentation) will be dropped, resulting in an adjusted total of 126 points. If you do not submit a 10-point assignment at all (i.e. you receive a 0), you forfeit the right to drop your lowest 10-point grade, and your grade will be calculated based on a total of 136 points.

The grading scale is as follows:
90 to 100% = A (outstanding work)
80 to 89% = B (good work)
70 to 79% = C (adequate work)
Below 70% = D or F (unsatisfactory work)

Each letter grade is divided into equal thirds for minus (-), regular, and plus (+) letter grades (e.g. 80 to 83.33 is a B-, 83.34 to 86.67 is a B, and 86.68 to 89.99 is a B+).
Academic Policies

Accessibility
Trinity College is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have approval for academic accommodations, please provide notification electronically using SARC Online during the first two weeks of the semester or a minimum of 10 days prior to utilizing your accommodations. Following notification, students are required to meet with faculty to further discuss implementation of accommodations. If you do not have approved accommodations, but have a disability requiring accommodations, or have questions about applying, please contact Lori Clapis, Coordinator of Accessibility Resources at Lori.Clapis@trincoll.edu, 860-297-4025 or refer to the Student Accessibility Resources (SARC) website: https://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/StudentAccessibilityResources/students.

Intellectual Honesty and Plagiarism
According to Trinity College policy, intellectual honesty “assumes that students do their own work and that they credit properly those upon whose work and thought they draw” (Trinity College Student Handbook, 2016). While we often draw upon the work of others, it is essential that any work presented as your own is indeed your own, no matter how big or small the assignment. Ideas and/or words that are not yours should always be appropriately cited.

Intellectual dishonesty and plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated in this class. Instances of academic dishonesty or plagiarism may result in assignment failure, course failure, referral to the Honor Council, and/or other consequences. If you are unsure about how to use another scholar’s work to support your own ideas without plagiarizing, please ask me.

Academic Citations
It is always important in academic writing to give credit to other people’s ideas. You are required to appropriately cite works in all assignments for this course, whether you quote them directly or draw on their ideas. You may use any citation style, as long as you use it consistently.

Use of Electronics
Unless you require accommodations or have otherwise received permission from me, use of electronics (phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) is not permitted during class time, as they can be a distraction to you or your classmates.

Late Assignments
Unless otherwise noted, late assignments will be penalized with a 10% deduction for every 24-hour period beyond the deadline, with exceptions granted only for medical and family emergencies. Other extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the instructor and will be handled on an individual basis.

Re-Writes and Extra Credit
If the instructor warrants that a re-write of an assignment is appropriate, you will meet with the instructor to self-assess errors and review grading comments. The paper will be resubmitted on an agreed timeline for up to 90% of the assignment point value.
Extra credit assignments may be offered at the instructor’s discretion. An example of an extra credit assignment might include attending a lecture or community event and writing a reflection that connects to course readings and themes. Please see the instructor if you are interested in an extra credit assignment to receive approval.

**How to Succeed in this Course**

**Come prepared to all classes.** You should fully prepare for all classes. This includes arriving on time and ready to participate, completing all reading and/or other assignments prior to class, and bringing any necessary materials (such as readings and notes).

**Actively engage in class.** Reflect on and analyze the readings and your placement experiences and make thoughtful contributions in discussions. Listen respectfully when others are speaking or sharing.

**Actively engage in your school placement.** Arrive as scheduled and on time to each session. Make efforts to genuinely get to know, build relationships, and learn from the teacher and students in your school placement.

**Make use of feedback.** We all learn through receiving feedback about what we’re doing well and what we can improve on. Pay attention to my feedback on your assignments, especially early in the semester, and think about how you can incorporate suggestions into future work. Make the most of peer editing opportunities and the Writing Center (you can drop in or make an appointment; see [http://writingcenter.trincoll.edu](http://writingcenter.trincoll.edu) for more information).

**Reach out when you need help.** I encourage you to ask questions in class if you do not understand something. If you are confused, it’s likely that other students are, too. If you are more comfortable seeking assistance in a more private setting, feel free to ask me by sending an email (for quick questions), stopping by my office hours, or making an appointment. You can also ask your TAs about any questions. You should also use your classmates or other peers as a resource – sometimes just talking through confusion can help clarify things.

**Course Schedule**

*Note: All readings should be read BEFORE class on the date they are listed.*

**UNIT 1: Social and Cultural Contexts of Schooling (Perspectives from Anthropology & Sociology of Education)**

How does the sociocultural context of schooling (cultural beliefs, social organization, political tensions, etc.) impact teaching and learning? What cultural values are reflected in different approaches to education?

**Tue 9/3**  **Introduction to the Course**

**Thur 9/5**  **The Context of Urban Education**
Pedro Noguera (2003), *City Schools and the American Dream*. Preface (pp. xi-xiv); excerpt of Chapter 1, “Finding Hope Among the Hopeless” (pp. 1-16), Chapter 2, “The Social Context and Its Impact on Inner-City Schools” (pp. 23-41). New York: Teachers College Press.


** WRITING EXERCISE 1 DUE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 AT 11:59 PM **

**Tue 9/10  Education and Socialization, Part 1**
Kathleen de Marrais and Margaret LeCompte (1999), *The Way Schools Work: A Sociological Analysis of Education*, “The social organization of schooling” (pp. 43-52) and “What is taught in schools” (pp. 222-228, 236-247). New York, Longman.


**Thur 9/12  Education and Socialization, Part 2**


**Tues 9/17  Hartford Public Schools Context**

UNIT 2: Theories of Learning
How do different theories explain how people learn? How do these theories shape teaching and learning practices in schools and classrooms?

Thur 9/19    Classical Theory and Behaviorism
Phillips and Soltis, Perspectives on Learning, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 3-32)

** ANALYSIS PAPER 1 DUE ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 AT 11:59 PM **

Tues 9/24    Constructivist Theories, Part 1: Piaget, Dewey, and Vygotsky
Phillips and Soltis, Perspectives on Learning, Chapters 4-6 (pp. 33-66).

** WRITING EXERCISE 2 DUE TUESDAY, SEPT 24 AT 11:59 PM **

Thur 9/26    Constructivist Theories, Part 2: Bruner
Phillips and Soltis, Perspectives on Learning, Chapter 7 plus learning vignettes (pp. 67-75, 98-99, 107-108).

** WRITING EXERCISES 3 & 4 DUE SUNDAY, SEPT 29 AT 11:59 PM **

UNIT 3: Explaining Educational Inequality
How do different theorists and scholars explain disparities in educational opportunities, experiences, and outcomes? How and why do these disparities map on to categories of difference (class, race, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, language, etc.)?

Tue 10/1    Inequality Across Schools: School Finance and Segregation


Thur 10/3    Inequality Within Schools: Tracking

** ANALYSIS PAPER 2 DUE THURSDAY, OCT 3 AT 11:59 PM **

Tue 10/8    Class Inequality: Social Reproduction Theories

** ONE REFLECTION JOURNAL DUE TUESDAY, OCT 8 AT 11:59 PM **

Thu 10/10  Gender and Sexuality: Schools as Gendering & Heteronormative Institutions  


Tue 10/15  NO CLASS – TRINITY DAYS

Thu 10/17  Race and Educational Disparities, Part 1: Oppositional Culture and Counterarguments; Stereotype Threat  


Tue 10/22  Race and Educational Disparities, Part 2: Implicit Bias & Racism in Schools  


Thu 10/24  Immigrant Students, Emergent Bilinguals, and Inequality  

Alejandro Portes. (2002). English-only triumphs, but the costs are high. *Contexts 1*(1), 10-15.
**WRITING EXERCISE 5 DUE ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24 AT 11:59 PM**

**Tue 10/29**  
Students with Special Needs and Inequality  


**UNIT 4: Teaching for Change**  
How can educators challenge inequalities at the school and classroom level? What assumptions and understandings about learning, equity, knowledge, and justice do these approaches reflect?

**Thur 10/31**  
School-Based Reforms  


**ANALYSIS PAPER 3 DUE THURSDAY, OCT 31 AT 11:59 PM**

**WRITING EXERCISE 6 DUE ON SUNDAY, NOV 3 AT 11:59 PM**  

**Tue 11/5**  
Multicultural Education & Culturally Relevant Pedagogy  


**Thur 11/7**  
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Ethnic Studies  

**Tue 11/12**  
Reframing Family-School Connections
UNIT 5: Curriculum Design
How can educators design lessons, units, and curricula in ways that challenge inequality and link rich learning objectives, activities, and evaluation components?

Thur 11/14 Curriculum Projects and Objectives for Student Learning


Browse CT Core Standards > Materials for Teachers (http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=475), especially for the subject area(s) you are considering for your Curriculum Project

Tue 11/19 Curriculum Design: Teaching Activities and Resources
Bloom’s Taxonomy, access at: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/


Additional resources, including subject-specific materials, are available in the Ed Studies Resource Center (McCook 301). Materials may be checked out.

** ANALYSIS PAPER 4 DUE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 11:59 PM **

Thur 11/21 Curriculum Design: Evaluation

How to Design a Rubric, DePaul University Teaching Commons. Read, “Rubrics,” “Types of Rubrics,” “Creating Rubrics,” “Evaluating Rubrics.” Access at: https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching-guides/feedback-grading/rubrics/Pages/default.aspx

UNIT 6: Philosophy of Education
What is the purpose of education and schooling? What is worth learning? How should debates over these issues be resolved in a democratic society?

Tue 11/26 Education for Democracy


Thur 11/28 NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING

Tue 12/3 Schooling for Liberation and Social Justice


Thur 12/5 Course Wrap Up

** REFLECTION JOURNAL DUE THURSDAY, DEC 5 AT 11:59 PM **

** WRITING EXERCISE 7 DUE THURSDAY, DEC 5 AT 11:59 PM **

** CURRICULUM PROJECT PRESENTATION DATES TBD (most likely two afternoons between Dec 4-11) **

** CURRICULUM PROJECT DUE THURSDAY, DEC 12 AT 11:59 PM **

** WRITING EXERCISE 8 DUE FRIDAY, DEC 13 AT 11:59 PM **