Educational Studies 200: Analyzing Schools
Trinity College
Spring 2020

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Seabury N-033

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Course Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:25-10:40 AM, Library Room 181

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1PM – 5PM, Seabury N-033
Tuesdays 11AM – 1PM, The Underground Cafe

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.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

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

Course Readings
You are required to purchase a Course Reader for this course. The Course Reader will include most readings from Week 3 (February 5) 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.

All students must complete a volunteer authorization form for the Hartford Public Schools by ________________

A copy of your signed contract must be uploaded to Moodle by Sunday, February 16 at 11:59 PM (Writing Exercise 4).
Course Evaluation

Class Participation = 20 points

Class begins on time and you are required to attend all classes from start to finish. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period using a sign-in sheet. The sign-in sheet will be turned over after class begins. Students who arrive after the attendance sheet has been turned over are counted as late. Leaving early incurs the same penalties as arriving late. If you know that you will be absent or will arrive late or leave early, please contact me in advance to arrange to make up work missed. More than two unexcused absences and/or more than two late arrivals or early departures will affect your grade, except in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. It makes sense to reserve your allowed unexcused absences for cases of illness.

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.

Unless otherwise stated, no cellphones or laptops should be used in class. You will be alerted once. Subsequently, points will be deducted from your class participation grade. If you require your laptop as a part of accommodations for a documented disability, please see the “Students with Disabilities” section of the syllabus on page 6.

Reading Summaries or Discussion Questions 10x1 = 10 points

Beginning Week 2 (January 29 and 31), you will submit a reading summary (1-2 sentences) OR a discussion question once a week. The class will be divided into two groups, with one group submitting for Tuesday readings and one group submitting for Thursday readings. Summaries/questions are due by 11:59 PM on the day before class (Monday at 11:59 PM for Tuesday readings, Wednesday at 11:59 PM for Thursday readings). Submissions between 12:00 AM and 9:25 AM on the day of class will receive a 50% deduction. Submissions after 9:25 AM will not be accepted and will receive 0 points.

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) 4x10 = 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. More information about each Analysis Paper will be distributed in class.

1) Social and Cultural Contexts of Schooling – due Thursday, February 6
2) Theories of Learning – due Tuesday, February 25
3) Explaining Educational Inequality – due Thursday, March 26
4) Curriculum Project Proposal – due Tuesday, April 14

*Eight Writing Exercises (~1 page each) 8x2 = 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. More information about each writing exercise will be distributed in class.

Exercise 1) Introduce yourself, potential contributions, and what you hope to learn to your placement teacher – due Sun, Jan 26

Exercise 2) Write a rich vignette on student learning at your school placement – due Tues, Feb 11

Exercise 3) Peer edit an assigned student’s learning vignette to improve clarity – due Sun, Feb 16

Exercise 4) Upload your signed contract with your classroom teacher – due Sun, Feb 16

Exercise 5) Describe the diversity of your classroom – due Thurs, Mar 12

Exercise 6) List 2-3 ideas for your Curriculum Project – due Mon, Mar 23

Exercise 7) Write a thoughtful thank you letter to your classroom teacher – due Tues, April 28

Exercise 8) Complete Curriculum Project peer evaluation (not required if you worked alone) – due Fri, May 8

*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 **Thursday, February 27 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 **Sunday, April 26 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 April 27th – May 5th).

*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 (and your partner) to creatively apply the concepts and themes we have discussed this semester to a curriculum that could be taught. Additional information will be distributed in class. The written paper is due on **Friday, May 8 at 11:59 PM**. If you work in a pair, you will submit one paper together.

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments will be penalized with a 10% deduction for every 24-hour period beyond the deadline, with exceptions granted only for documented medical and family emergencies. Other extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the instructor and will be handled on an individual basis. One- and two-point assignments have different late policies; see specific assignments for details.

**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+).

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). Go buy the reader when you leave class today so that you are ready to go.

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 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.
HONOR CODE STATEMENT

Please refer to the Trinity College Student Integrity Contract, specifically the section on Intellectual Honesty.

STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS

In the middle of the semester, just as I am asked to evaluate your performance, I may ask you to evaluate mine using an evaluation form designed by other Trinity faculty. At the end of the year, you will be asked to evaluate the course using the standard Trinity College course evaluation.

MOODLE

We will use Moodle to access course materials and for submitting class assignments. Please log in to Moodle every week to keep alert to any changes to our course syllabus or schedule.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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 notify faculty during the first two weeks of the semester or a minimum of 10 days prior to needing your accommodations. Please be sure to meet with me privately to discuss implementation.

If you do not have approved accommodations, but have a disability requiring academic accommodations, or have questions about applying, please contact Lori Clapis, Coordinator of Accessibility Resources at 860-297-4025 or at Lori.Clapis@trincoll.edu.
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 1/21 Introduction to the Course

Thur 1/23 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, JANUARY 26 AT 11:59 PM **

Tue 1/28 Education and Socialization

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 1/30 No Class, Professor Douglas Away

Presentation will be recorded and uploaded to Moodle
Tues 2/4 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 2/6 Classical Theory and Behaviorism

Phillips and Soltis, Perspectives on Learning, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 3-32)

** ANALYSIS PAPER 1 DUE ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6 AT 11:59 PM **

Tues 2/11 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, FEBRUARY 11 AT 11:59 PM **

Thurs 2/13 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, FEB 16 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 2/18 Inequality Across Schools: School Finance and Segregation
**No reading summaries/discussion questions.**


**Thur 2/20 NO CLASS – TRINITY DAYS**

**Tue 2/25 Inequality Within Schools: Tracking**


**** ANALYSIS PAPER 2 DUE TUESDAY, FEB 25 AT 11:59 PM **

**Thur 2/27 Class Inequality: Social Reproduction Theories**


** ** ONE REFLECTION JOURNAL DUE THURSDAY, FEB 27 AT 11:59 PM **

**Tue 3/3 Gender and Sexuality: Schools as Gendering & Heteronormative Institutions**


**Thur 3/5 Race and Educational Disparities, Part 1: Oppositional Culture and Counterarguments; Stereotype Threat**


**Tue 3/10 Race and Educational Disparities, Part 2: Implicit Bias & Racism in Schools**


**Thur 3/12 Immigrant Students, Emergent Bilinguals, and Inequality**


**WRITING EXERCISE 5 DUE ON THURSDAY, MARCH 12 AT 11:59 PM**

**Tue 3/17 & Thur 3/19 NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

**WRITING EXERCISE 6 DUE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 22 AT 11:59 PM**


**Tue 3/24 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 3/26 School-Based Reforms


** ANALYSIS PAPER 3 DUE THURSDAY, MARCH 26 AT 11:59 PM **

Tue 4/2 Multicultural Education & Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

**No reading summaries/discussion questions.**


Thur 4/4 Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Ethnic Studies

**No reading summaries/discussion questions.**


Tue 4/9 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 4/11 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 4/14 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, APRIL 16 AT 11:59 PM **

Thur 4/16 Curriculum Design: Evaluation
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 4/21 Education for Democracy


Thur 4/23 Radical Theories of Schooling


** REFLECTION JOURNAL DUE SUNDAY, APRIL 26 AT 11:59 PM **

Tue 4/28 Course Wrap Up

** WRITING EXERCISE 7 DUE TUESDAY, APRIL 28 AT 11:59 PM **

** CURRICULUM PROJECT PRESENTATION DATES TBD (most likely two afternoons between April 27-May 4) **

** CURRICULUM PROJECT DUE FRIDAY, MAY 8 AT 11:59 PM **
** WRITING EXERCISE 8 DUE FRIDAY, MAY 8 AT 11:59 PM **