Educational Studies 320: Anthropology and Education  
Trinity College  
Fall 2021

Professor: Jia-Hui Stefanie Wong (she/her/hers)  
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McCook 312

Course Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:50 AM-12:05 PM  
Clement Chemistry 210

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10 AM-12 PM, outdoors behind McCook if weather permits, or in McCook 312.  
Note: My office door may be closed during office hours for COVID safety reasons – just knock! I may switch office hours to Zoom during the semester and will notify you of any changes.  
Schedule an appointment: https://calendly.com/stefaniewong/

Course Description

The anthropology of education has a rich history of investigating the links between culture, learning, and schooling. Anthropologists studying education have sought to illuminate learning and academic achievement as social processes and cultural products that cannot be understood apart from the socio-cultural contexts in which they occur. In this upper-level seminar, we will explore selected works in the anthropology of education—both classic and
contemporary—in order to understand the unique contributions anthropology makes to the study of education, and in particular, to the study of marginalized groups in education. We will explore topics such as race, gender, class, and language in education and how they have been addressed by anthropologists. Students will read critically a variety of detailed ethnographic and qualitative studies focusing on formal schooling and informal education in the United States and in other countries. As a class, we will also engage in our own anthropological study of an educational issue. By both reviewing these studies and conducting our own, we will explore the central questions: What is a cultural analysis of schooling? What unique insights does ethnography—anthropology’s signature method—offer into teaching, learning, schools, and key educational problems? And finally, how can a cultural analysis of schooling inform efforts to create a more socially just educational system?

Over the course of the semester, you will be able to:

- Describe, evaluate, and put into practice the methods of educational anthropology
- Identify and analyze how educational anthropology informs our understandings of teaching, learning, and schools
- Explore and imagine how educational anthropology can contribute to creating more equitable and just schools
- Contribute to the body of literature on educational anthropology

**Course Readings**

As a class, we will read two books this semester. They are available at the bookstore or online, as well as on reserve at the library. While you are required to read both books, you are not required to purchase them.


All other readings will be available on Moodle. 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. I encourage you to interpret the readings through your personal experiences and to attempt to understand them through the eyes of people unlike you. You should analyze the readings in relation to your experiences, other readings from class, and other scholarly literature you have read.
Course Evaluation

Class Participation = 20 points
Because this is a discussion-based seminar, your attendance and participation are essential, both for your learning and that of your classmates. Missing class can affect depth of understanding and is frequently reflected in the quality of written analysis and in your overall learning experience. Class begins on time and you are required to attend all classes from start to finish.

If you know that you will be absent or will need to 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 medical or family emergencies. Absences for these reasons may be made up through an alternative assignment. Email me to receive permission to complete a makeup assignment. Especially during this semester, I encourage you to reserve your allowed absences for cases of illness or family emergencies. Every two late arrivals, early departures, and/or instances of leaving class will count as an absence.

Effective attendance and participation means more than just being present. 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 and relevant themes. 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.

Your class participation will be evaluated based on your participation and contributions to learning in class. Outstanding participation involves not only making thoughtful contributions, but also leaving space for your classmates to share their opinions and perspectives and being a reflective listener.

A pandemic-related note: It is possible that some of our class sessions may have to take place on Zoom. If this happens, please leave your video on whenever you can. I know that we are all tired of Zoom and having the camera on can be exhausting. But I hope that being able to see each other will help us feel more connected and build a community, even if we can’t be together in person. I understand that we may all need to sometimes turn off our video, and that’s okay. But when you can, please make an effort to turn on your camera.

Critical Reading Responses = 20 points
Twice during the course, you will submit critical reading responses based on one unit of course reading (for Units 2-5). Critical reading response assignments will be determined after the first class meeting, when students will be able to express preferences for their reading response units. More information about this assignment will be distributed in class. Critical reading responses are due as follows:
Anthropological Research Project
Over the course of the semester, we will engage in an anthropological research project to analyze an educational issue at Trinity. Your work on the project will include various components which you will submit for evaluation, including your final paper.

In groups formed based on interest (3-4 students each), you will develop a research question that can be explored anthropologically. All students will collect and analyze ethnographic data. The project will culminate in a small group presentation and individually written papers.

Ethics Training = 3 points
You must complete a Trinity IRB approved Ethics Training and upload evidence of your completion to Moodle. Visit this link and complete Option A: http://commons.trincoll.edu/irb/ethics-training/ – due Sunday, September 26 at 11:59 PM

Research Plan = 10 points
As a small group, you will develop a research plan (3-4 pages) to explore your sub-question. The plan should articulate your group’s research question, explain its significance to educational studies, describe the data collection you will complete, and detail how this data collection will enable you to explore your research question. Each group member must complete at least 2 hours of fieldwork per week for at least 8 weeks of the semester, on average. Fieldwork must include participant observation, and can also include interviews or other forms of data collection. The research plan will be written collectively by your small group, and all group members will receive the same grade, except in extenuating circumstances. If your project requires IRB approval, your group must also submit your IRB application by this date. – due Sunday, October 3 at 11:59 PM

One Set of Fieldnotes = 5 points
You will individually write detailed fieldnotes after each fieldwork session. You must submit a set of fieldnotes (at least 2-3 pages) so that I can provide feedback on them. – due Sunday, October 17 at 11:59 PM

Note: Fieldnotes can sometimes be personal, sensitive, and/or difficult to share. If there is a portion of your fieldnotes that you are uncomfortable sharing with me, you may redact or rewrite/summarize that portion. If you do this, please just indicate that you have done so when you submit your fieldnotes (e.g. replace redacted text with “2 paragraphs redacted”).

Last updated: 9/8/21
All Other Fieldnotes = 5 points
All fieldnotes should be submitted with your final paper. You should also share fieldnotes with your research team throughout the semester. – due Sunday, December 5 at 11:59 PM

Annotated Bibliography Entry = 5 points
Individually, you will read and complete an annotated bibliography entry of a scholarly work related to your group’s research project. Each group member should select a different work to review. Each entry should be about 1-2 paragraphs long. More information about this assignment will be distributed in class. – due Tuesday, October 26 at 10:50 AM (bring a hard copy to class)

Analytic Memos 2x10 = 20 points
Twice during the semester, you will individually analyze your own fieldnotes or other data (e.g. interview transcripts, artifacts/documents collected) and write a memo (2-3 pages) outlining at least one emerging theme you see in the data. You should connect your analysis to at least one academic, anthropological text (can be a course reading, but does not need to be) in your memo. – due Sunday, October 31 and Sunday, November 21 at 11:59 PM

Research Plan Update/Progress Report = 5 points
Because ethnographic research often evolves as data collection proceeds, your group will submit an update/progress report of your research (1-2 pages). In it, you will explain if, how, and why any of your research questions have changed and/or been refined (or why they have not changed), detail the progress you have made in your data collection, and describe and justify any changes you have made for future data collection plans. – due Sunday, November 7 at 11:59 PM

Research Oral Presentation (evaluated by guest evaluator) = 10 points
As a small group, you will present an overview of your small group’s findings and conclusions to the rest of the class in a 10 minute oral presentation, plus 5 minutes for questions and answers. All group members will receive the same grade on the presentation, except in extenuating circumstances. Presentations will occur in class on December 7 and 9. The exact schedule will be determined later in the semester.

Research Project Collaboration Evaluation = 2 points
You will individually complete a form that evaluates your group’s collaboration efforts. – due Thursday, December 16 at 11:59 PM.

Final Paper = 20 points
You will individually write a final paper (8-10 pages) that analyzes your small group’s research question. To do this, you will draw on data that you and other group members
collected (i.e. fieldnotes, interview transcripts where applicable). Your group can opt to approach your final papers in one of two ways:

1) Each person individually analyzes the same research question. Different researchers may have different lenses and approaches to data analysis, and so you and your group members may have different focuses and/or interpretations of the same data.

2) Your group divides your research question into even sub-questions questions, with each group member analyzing a different sub-question.

Your paper should include the following elements: problem/issue statement, thesis statement, reflection on researcher positionality, literature review, methods, findings, discussion, and implications for policy, practice, and future research. You may use all or part of your analytic memos within the paper, although you may find that you will need to edit or add to your earlier analyses. The final paper is due on Thursday, December 16 at 11:59 PM.

**Grading Scale**
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**

**Face Mask Requirement**
Per Trinity College policy, you are required to wear a face mask in the classroom, from the beginning to the end of class. Masks must cover your nose and mouth completely. **There are no exceptions to this policy.** You may not remove your mask to eat or drink during class; therefore, please plan ahead.

At times, it may be difficult to hear one another with our masks on. Therefore, please do your best to speak loudly and clearly during class discussions.

**Accommodations for Students in Isolation or Quarantine**
It is possible that students in the class will need to isolate or quarantine at some point. During our first class session, we will discuss possible accommodations, such as:
- The entire class meets virtually
- A hybrid format, where students in isolation or quarantine Zoom into our in-person class
- A combination of the above, depending on factors such as the number of students in isolation/quarantine, class activities scheduled, etc.
While I will welcome your thoughts and feedback, I will make all final decisions on how to adjust classes to accommodate students in isolation/quarantine.

No matter which option we pursue, if you are in isolation or quarantine, and feeling healthy, you are required to attend virtual/hybrid class sessions. Excused absences from a virtual/hybrid class session are only permitted if you are ill.

**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](https://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/StudentAccessibilityResources/students).

**The Writing Center**

You are encouraged to use the Writing Center, staffed by specially trained Writing Associates, to improve your writing—no matter your skill level. The Writing Center will be open for appointments for the fall semester starting Sunday, September 19, 2021. Hours of operation: Sundays 7:00-10:00 p.m., ET and Monday through Thursdays 3:00 - 10:00 p.m., ET. The Writing Center offers a mix of in-person appointments, Online Appointments (synchronous/real-time, audio/video, chat interactions), and eTutoring Appointments (asynchronous document sharing: receive an edited document 24hrs after your appointment). Visit the Writing Center for further information and procedures. You can make appointments online by registering at [https://trincoll.mywconline.com/](https://trincoll.mywconline.com/).

If you visit the Writing Center for support on an assignment in this course (excluding fieldnotes) prior to submission, you will receive 5% extra credit on the assignment. You must have the Writing Center send me confirmation of your visit in order to receive the extra credit.

**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.

**Late Assignments**
Please make every effort to submit assignments on their scheduled due dates. Submitting assignments late can quickly put you behind on subsequent assignments. However, in recognition of the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, you may have two 48-hour extensions on individual written assignments. If you are unable to complete an assignment by a due date, email me as soon as possible to let me know that you will be using one of your extensions. If you require additional extensions due to pandemic-related challenges, please contact me so that we can make necessary adjustments. Any late work must be submitted by Thursday, December 16 at 11:59 PM.

In order to respect your group members’ time, you may not apply an extension to a group assignment or a presentation. Late group or presentation 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 my 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 me if you are interested in an extra credit assignment to receive approval.

As noted above, you may also receive extra credit on a particular assignment by receiving support from the Writing Center.
Course Schedule
All readings should be completed BEFORE class on the date they are listed.

Unit 1: Introduction to Anthropology and Education
What is educational anthropology? What types of questions do educational anthropologists ask and answer? How do they answer these questions? What does it mean to do anthropological research in educational contexts?

Thur 9/9 Course Introduction

Tue 9/14 Introduction to Educational Anthropology


Thur 9/16 What is Ethnography?


Tues 9/21 Doing Ethnography


Thur 9/23  Research Ethics and Institutional Review Boards

American Anthropological Association Principles of Professional Responsibility:  
http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/


Trinity College Institutional Review Board Definitions:  
http://commons.trincoll.edu/irb/definitions/

** Ethics Training due on Sunday, September 26 at 11:59 PM **

Tues 9/28  Ethics, Researcher Positionality, and “Insider”/“Outsider” Research

Choose one of the following two pieces:
Villenas, Sofia. (2010). The colonizer/colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the field. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice* (pp. 345-362).

Green, Keisha. (2014). Doing double dutch methodology: Playing with the practice of participant observer. In Django Paris & Maisha Winn (Eds.), *Humanizing research: Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities* (pp. 147-160).


**Unit 2: Ethnographies of Class Inequality**
How does anthropological research help us better understand how class inequality plays out in educational contexts?

Thur 9/30  Class Identities and Logics

Last updated: 9/8/21

** Research Plan due by Sunday, October 3 at 11:59 PM **

** Tue 10/5 **  
Class and Resistance, Part 1  

** Thur 10/7 **  
Class and Resistance, Part 2  

** Tue 10/12 **  
NO CLASS – Trinity Days

** Thur 10/14 **  
Explaining Racial Disparities in Education  


** One Set of Fieldnotes due on Sunday, October 17 at 11:59 PM **

** Tue 10/19 **  
Understanding Race and Racism in Education  


Last updated: 9/8/21
**Thur 10/21**  **Challenging Racism In Education**


**Tue 10/26**  **Research Project Literature Review Reading**

**Annotated Bibliography Entry due on Tuesday, October 26 at 10:50 AM (bring a hard copy to class)**

**Unit 4: Ethnographies of Gender and Sexuality**
How does anthropological research help uncover the ways that ideas about gender and sexuality shape educational experiences?

**Thur 10/28**  **Gender in U.S. Contexts**


**Analytic Memo 1 due on Sunday, October 31 at 11:59 PM**

**Tue 11/2**  **Gender and Justice in International Context, Part 1**

**Thur 11/4**  **Gender and Justice in International Context, Part 2**

**Research Plan Update/Progress Report due on Sunday, November 7 at 11:59 PM**

**Tue 11/9**  **LGBTQ Students, Teachers, and Issues in Schools**

Last updated: 9/8/21
Unit 5: Ethnographies of Immigration, Nationalism, and Schooling
What does anthropological research tell us about the roles that schools play in national identity and the incorporation of immigrants?

Thur 11/11 Immigrant Students Making Sense of Schools


Tue 11/16 Schools Making Sense of Immigrant Students


Thur 11/18 Schooling and the Construction of Citizens in International Contexts


** Analytic Memo 2 due on Sunday, November 21 at 11:59 PM **

Tue 11/23 & Thurs 11/25 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break
No scheduled class this week, but your group must meet with me by November 30 to discuss your plans for your final presentation and papers.
Unit 6: Anthropology for Change: Anthropological Research and Activism

What role do educational anthropology and educational anthropologists play in working for change and justice? What is the relationship between research and activism?

Tue 11/30  (Youth) Participatory Action Research

Irizarry, Jason & Brown, Tara. (2014). Humanizing research in dehumanizing spaces: The challenges and opportunities of conducting participatory action research with youth in schools. In Django Paris & Maisha Winn (Eds.), Humanizing research: Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities (pp. 63-80).


Thur 12/2  Anthropology and Activism


** All Fieldnotes due Sunday, December 5 at 11:59 PM **

Tue 12/7  Final Presentations

Thur 12/9  Final Presentations

Tue 12/14  Course Wrap Up

** Research Project Collaboration Evaluation due Thursday, December 16 at 11:59 PM **

** Final Paper due Thursday, December 16 at 11:59 PM **