

EDUC 453B: Sociology of Education
Fall 2016
Wednesday 2:30 PM-5:30 PM
Seigle 208

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Description and Format

This course provides an overview of sociological theory and research on education in contemporary U.S. society. We begin with an examination of major theoretical perspectives on the purpose and social organization of mass education in the United States. We then consider topics related to the organization and function of schools, access to educational resources, and group disparities in school experiences and outcomes. This weekly course consists of lectures, readings, in-class discussions and activities, and oral and written assignments.

Expectations for Student Conduct

- 1) *I expect you to arrive to class on time and prepared.* I take attendance when class begins at 2:40p. I will factor tardiness into your final grade.
- 2) *I expect you to attend every class.* Your success in this course depends on regular attendance and participation, so attendance is required. I expect each of you to attend and contribute to class on a regular basis. You are granted one personal day without penalty. All other absences will be excused only with official documentation. Each unexcused absence will result in a final grade reduction of 0.3 (on a 4.0 scale). I will notify your academic advisor(s) and dean's office if you are absent three times. You are responsible for all material covered in your absence.
- 3) *I expect you to submit your work on time.* I accept late assignments submitted within a 72 hours of the due date. All late assignments will be penalized. Late assignments submitted within the first 24 hours are capped at a B+; assignments submitted 24-48 hours late are capped at a C+. Assignments submitted 48-72 hours late are capped at a D+.
- 4) *I expect you to check your University email and Blackboard for course announcements.* Dates, assignments, and topics are subject to change. You are responsible for remaining informed of changes to the course schedule.
- 5) *This classroom is an inclusive space.* I strive to create a classroom environment that is inclusive of a variety of perspectives. This diversity in outlooks only enriches our

classroom experience when we share. Please keep in mind that we will discuss sensitive or difficult topics so take care to respect the views and experiences of others.

Academic Integrity

As a Washington University student, you signed a statement indicating that you have read, understand, and will abide by the University's academic integrity policy. I expect you to honor that commitment in this course, which means: 1) you will not plagiarize the work of others; and 2) all work you present as original must, in fact, be original. You are not permitted to submit papers or assignments in this course that you have submitted in other courses.

You can read a full statement of the University's policy on academic integrity here: <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html>. You each have important contributions to make to our community and I hope that you will not compromise your insights or integrity. I will report any suspected violations of the academic integrity policy to Dean Dirk Killen, the Academic Integrity Officer of the College of Arts & Sciences.

Learning, Testing, or Access Accommodations

To receive accommodations at Washington University, you should apply for a Verification of Individual Student Accommodation (VISA) through Cornerstone's Disability Resources office. For more information, please contact the Disability Resources Office (<http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/DisabilityResources.aspx>). Please remember to submit your VISA to me as soon as possible.

Required Texts

I expect you to complete assigned readings *prior* to class. Readings are due on the date that they are listed. The main books in this course are listed below.

Arum, Richard, Irene R. Beattie, and Karly Ford, eds. 2015. *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. ("Reader" on the syllabus)

Erikson, Ansley T. 2016. *Making the Unequal Metropolis: School Desegregation and Its Limits*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lewis, Amanda E. and John B. Diamond. 2015. *Despite the Best Intentions: How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools*.

Lewis-McCoy, R. L'Heureux. (2014). *Inequality in the Promised Land: Race, Resources, and Suburban Schooling*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Additional *required* readings will be posted on ARES and on Blackboard in the "Required Readings" folder.

Assignments and Grades

Your final grade is based on your performance in the following content areas:

Class Participation—20%
Discussion/Teaching—15%
Critical Reading Memos—25%
Final Project—40%

I encourage you to meet with me if you have questions about your performance, grades, or grading procedures. I use the College of Arts & Sciences' grading scale to determine final letter grades:

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|------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|
| A+/A | 4.0 | B- | 2.7 | D+ | 1.3 |
| A- | 3.7 | C+ | 2.3 | D | 1.0 |
| B+ | 3.3 | C | 2.0 | D- | 0.7 |
| B | 3.0 | C- | 1.7 | F | 0.0 |

Class Participation—20%

You will be evaluated on the quality and frequency of your participation in class. You each have important contributions to make to the course, and I expect you to be actively and respectfully engaged in class. Final course grades reflect the quality of your academic performance, including regular participation. Participation includes asking relevant and critical questions, offering thoughtful contributions to discussions, and participating in small-group exercises.

Discussion/Teaching—15%

In addition to regular course participation, you are required to select a day to lead one-hour of our class meeting. You will develop a lesson plan and decide your method(s) of teaching that day. You might take a lecture or discussion-based approach, or set up an in-class activity that provides insight into the day's topic. Please email me (educ453b@gmail.com) your top three preferences no later than September 17th. We will meet the week before you present to discuss your content and approach.

Critical Reading Memos—25%

You are required to submit eight weekly reading memos that address key issues in the readings. You may choose which weeks you submit papers. These memos should summarize the central thesis of the texts and should include your original critical commentary (e.g., you might choose to critique the author's theoretical perspective, assumptions or biases, quality of data, etc). While you do not have to cover every assigned reading in your memo, you should bring at least two of the texts in conversation with each other. You will be evaluated on the following criteria: (1) quality of issue(s) introduced/addressed; (2) synthesis of empirical and/or theoretical texts; (3) conciseness; and (4) development of key claims. Memos should be no longer than two pages (11 or 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 1 inch margins). **Memos are due on**

Mondays by 11:59 PM (for the topic on the following Wednesday). Please email them to educ453b@gmail.com.

Final Project—40%

There is no final exam in this course. Instead, you will propose a final paper or project that best serves you in your respective programs. For example, it may be useful to write a research proposal. Others may want to develop a critical literature review. I encourage you to meet with your advisor about it. This project must be related use empirical and/or theoretical content from this course. You need to submit a two-page description of this project by **October 19th.** **Final projects are due on December 13th at 5:00 PM.** Please submit your final project to educ453b@gmail.com.

Course Outline and Assignment Schedule¹:

31-Aug Introduction to Sociology of Education

- Course Syllabus

Theoretical Perspectives: Systems of Inequality in Education

7-Sept

- *Reader*, “Introduction”, pp. 1-10; pp. 69-100
- Erikson, Part I
- *Optional:*
 - Collins & Makowsky, Ch. 2: “Karl Marx ”, pp. 26-41 (Blackboard)
 - Collins & Makowsky, Ch. 6: “Emile Durkehim”, pp. 93-106 (Blackboard)

14-Sept Theoretical Perspectives: Stratification, Status Attainment and Social Mobility

- *Reader*, pp. 11-41; 136-152
- Erikson, Part I
- Jennings et al. (2015) “Do Differences in School Quality Matter More Than We Thought? New Evidence on Educational Opportunity in the Twenty-first Century” (Blackboard)

21- Sept Roots of Contemporary Inequality between Schools *Between-School*

Stratification

- *Reader*, pp. 181-222
- Erikson, Part II

28- Sept *School Stratification* ; Race

- Nicki , Ferguson Report excerpts

Race & Ethnicity

¹ Subject to change

- Bonilla-Silva (2006) “Racism without Racists” Ch. 1-2 (Blackboard): grad only
 - Stuart-Wells, Colorblind Policy

5-Oct Within-School Stratification: Tracking, Peer Effects & Achievement

- Lewis & Diamond, Introduction, Chs. 1-2 Opp Culture
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- Lewis & Diamond, Introduction, Chs. 3-6 Tracking
- *Reader*, pp. 223-267
- Darling-Hammond, Ch. 2 “The Anatomy of Inequality” pp. 51-65 (ARES)
- Brint (2006) “Schools and Socialization” pp. 157-174 (Blackboard)
- Hidden Curriculum, College Edition (Blackboard)

Significant Others: Parents and Teachers

- Reader, pp. 336-355

Theoretical Perspectives: Capital Theory and Socialization

- Reader, pp. 42-68
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- Ainsworth (2013) *Sociology of Education: An A-Z Guide* (ARES)
 - "Funding of Schools" pp. 294-297
 - "School Effects" pp. 675-677
 - "Rural Schooling" pp. 662-663
 - "Urban Schooling" pp. 823-825

12- Oct Theoretical Perspectives: Capital Theory and Socialization
MIDTERM DUE

19- Oct Theoretical Perspectives: Capital Theory and Socialization

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26- Oct Socioeconomic Status

- Reader, pp. 288-294; 318-335; 356-365
- MacLeod, Ch. 3. “Teenagers in Clarendon Heights”, pp. 25-48 (ARES)
- MacLeod, Ch. 7. “Leveled Aspirations” pp. 112-149 (ARES)
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2-Nov

9- Nov Gender & Sexuality

- Reader, pp. 462-519
- Connell, Ch. 1 “The Questions of Gender” pp. 1-11 (ARES)
- Additional readings TBA
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16- Nov Educational Change

- Reader, pp. 728-733
- Ballantine & Hammack, Ch. 11: “Educational Movements and Reform” pp., 359-370 (Blackboard)
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24-Nov THANKSGIVING BREAK

30- Nov Presentations

7- Dec Presentations

13-DEC *FINAL PROJECTS DUE at 11:59 PM*