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C&I 504.60: History of American Education

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C&I 504 History of American Education
Fall 2002

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Purpose:

John Pulliam describes the history of American education as “a developing rather than a finished area of study. It is concerned with building a full understanding of the current educational situation through the study of the evolution of educational practices, ideas, and institutions in a social context.” We will attempt to fulfill that definition through the study of the ideas and actions of selected individuals and through key events in the historical past.

Required text:

Fraser, James W. *The School in the United States: A Documentary History*. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2001.

Books on reserve, Helena College of Technology:

Education Week. *Lessons of a Century: A Nation's Schools Come of Age*. Bethesda: Editorial Projects in Education, 2000.

Smith, L. Glenn and Joan K. Smith. *Lives in Education: A Narrative of People and Ideas*. 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Evaluation:

I will base my evaluation on your contribution to the five seminars and completion of eight homework assignments, two formal papers, and a final exam. Each of these is described below.

- 1) **Seminar participation:** In addition to active participation during all of the five Helena seminars, each student will share in leading the discussion on one of the following evenings:
 - September 9 - American Revolution
 - September 23 - Common Schools and European influences
 - October 14 - Progressives
 - October 28 - Recent ReformsWe will divide the class into 4 groups of 2-3 people each. These “roundtable” groups will be responsible for organizing and leading discussion of the people or events assigned for the week. Look at the suggestions under the biographical essay assignment for ideas on how to approach this task.

- 2) **Homework assignments:** I could not think of a more sophisticated term for this form of evaluation. It is just as it appears: a brief, written task to check for understanding of the weekly reading assignment during those weeks we do not meet in Helena. I will provide you with the homework assignment on Mondays, with your response due the following Monday.

- 3) **Review of a chapter:** *Lessons of a Century: A Nation’s Schools Come of Age* (on reserve, COT) offers fascinating snapshots of American schools. The editors include many practical as well as philosophical aspects of 20th century schooling, from the evolution of high school sports to the importance of the pencil. Select one theme chapter, for example, “Rites of Passage” and “Who’s in Charge?” Briefly summarize the ideas and analyze their significance to schools and teachers today. Limit your review, due November 4, to four pages. Criteria for evaluation include quality of analysis; clarity of writing; and correct use of the style manual of your choice.

- 4) **Biographical essay:** As with the chapter review, the purpose of this assignment is to develop graduate-level research, analysis, and writing skills. Choose one person who has had a significant impact on American education and write a seven to eight page biographical essay on that person’s life and role in the history of education. The most useful and interesting essays identify and explore a few selected themes. *Lives in Education* (on reserve, COT) offers good background information and notes on additional references for successful completion of this assignment.

The following questions may be helpful as you complete this assignment: What applications or effects do we see of this person's life today? Are her or his ideas still relevant? Why or why not? If this individual is better known outside the field of education than in it, why should we study him or her? What was the social, political, and economic context in which this person lived, and how did it affect his or her ideas and actions? Has this person been misunderstood today? Have his or her ideas been misapplied? If certain ideas have faded from practice, should we update the theory or practice and use it again? If so, how would we do that?

Write your essay in four parts:

1. Historical context: Describe the time in which the person lived. What political, social, religious, intellectual, or economic events were occurring in this person's lifetime?
2. Educational biography: What events of an educational nature contributed to forming this individual as a person and shaping his or her worldview? What key events of childhood and youth had special significance? What personal events became lenses through which this person made sense of life?
3. Development of educational ideas: Describe the individual's major ideas or accomplishments. Explain how he or she was an agent of educational continuity or change.
4. Assessment of significance: How did this person's ideas or actions influence educational policy during his or her own lifetime and beyond? What is the relevance of this person's ideas or actions today?

Criteria for evaluation include quality of resources and analysis; ability to connect historical ideas to contemporary educational practice; clarity of writing; and correct use of the style manual of your choice. Have your outline ready for in-class peer review on October 28. The finished essay is due on or before November 18.

The individuals listed below are good choices for the subject of your essay. If you choose someone not on this list, please confirm your choice with me by October 7.

Thomas Jefferson	Horace Mann	Catherine Beecher
Booker T. Washington	Margaret Haley	W.E.B. DuBois
Maria Montessori	John Dewey	Henry Barnard
John Amos Comenius	Jean-Jacques Rosseau	Emma Willard
Mary Wollstonecraft	Johann Pestalozzi	George Sanchez
Malcolm X	Sarah Winnemucca	Frederick Froebel

- 5) **An open-book, open-note examination.** I will try to ask questions that require synthesis of ideas from the readings and discussion throughout the course. The questions are similar to the ones I write for comprehensive exams. Criteria for evaluation are evidence of understanding of the ideas, people, and/or events in question, ability to synthesize the meaning for us today, and clarity of writing. I will send you the exam questions by November 25. The completed exam is due by December 2.

Summary of course requirements:

Attendance and participation, including leading one “roundtable”; 10 points for each of 5 seminars	50 points
Homework; 10 points for each of 8 assignments	80 “
Review of <u>Lessons of a Century</u> chapter	20 “
Biographical essay	50 “
Final exam	<u>20</u> “
	220 points total

Recommended additional texts:

Pulliam, John and James J. Van Patten. *History of Education in America*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill, 2003.

Urban, Wayne and Jennings Wagoner, Jr. *American Education: A History*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999.

Semester Outline:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
1	Aug 26 in Helena	Intro to History of American Education	pp.xiii-xviii
2	Sep 2 on-line; homework due Sep 9	Colonial America	Chap 1
3	Sep 9 in Helena	Schools for the New Republic	Chap 2
4	Sep 16 on-line; homework due Sep 23	The Common School Movement	Chap 3
5	Sep 23 in Helena	Common School continued	Chap 3
6	Sep 30 on-line; homework due Oct 7	Schooling Moves West	Chap 4
7	Oct 7 on-line; homework due Oct 14	Schools of the South	Chap 5
8	Oct 14 in Helena	The Progressive Era	Chap 7
9	Oct 21 on-line; homework due Oct 28	Growth and Diversity	Chap 6
10	Oct 28 in Helena; biographical essay outline due for peer review today	Cold War Era	Chap 8
11	Nov 4 on-line; homework due Nov 11; <i>Lessons of a Century</i> review due today	Civil Rights	Chap 9
12	Nov 11 on-line; homework due Nov 18	Rights and Opportunities	Chap 10
13	Nov 18 on line; homework due Nov 25; biographical essay due today	Reforms of 1980s and 1990s	Chap 11
14	Nov 25 on-line; exam due Dec 2	Final exam	