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C&I 508.01: Sociology of Education

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C&I 508 Sociology of Education
Fall 2004
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Office Hours
Monday and Thursday 10:00-12:00
Tuesday 1:00-3:00
and by appointment

Course Purpose and Overview

This course examines the various roles played by schools in society. We will explore various theoretical frameworks that have informed the sociology of education and discern their impact on formal education. We will examine questions related to the organizational features of schools, school relationships to other societal institutions, and the role schools play in socializing our youth. We will consider the role of the school in social inequality and explore some current trends and their anticipated impact on student opportunities. While the course will primarily focus on U.S. issues, it will be grounded in a comparative perspective in order to show our connections with other nations.

Class activities will vary from lectures to open discussions to small group dialogues to student presentations. Students will be active participants in the course. You are encouraged and expected to ask questions, raise issues, and otherwise contribute to an informed and substantive classroom discussion. Assigned readings are to be read prior to class sessions and will be the primary focus of each class.

As I teach, I try to be aware of the special needs of individuals as well as the needs of the group. If you require some accommodation, I encourage you to discuss that with me. Please make use of e-mail or call me to discuss assignments or the content of the course. I would be happy to meet with you before or after our class sessions, if that would fit your schedule better.

Required Texts

Brint, S. (1998). *Schools and societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Meier, D. (2002). *In schools we trust: Creating communities of learning in an era of testing and standardization*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Thorne, B. (1993). *Gender play: Girls and boys in school*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

A faculty pack of readings is available at Denny's Copy Shop (Higgins & South Ave.)

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Written assignments are double-spaced, printed on a letter-quality printer, and due during class on the days indicated below. Use APA (5th Edition), Chicago or MLA

documentation where appropriate in your written work. I determine grades by a careful judgment of each assignment against a set of criteria, as indicated for that assignment. In the papers, you should demonstrate that you understand the major issues at stake in the particular area. Your paper should be significantly more than simply a summary of the reading. The papers should be critical and analytical, searching for points of contention or agreement among the different authors. You are expected to note key points and discuss the broader implications. All papers are also evaluated according to the quality of writing. Excellent work earns a point value between 92-100%; good work, 84-91%; fair work, 76-83%; and any work judged to be less than fair in quality is returned for student revision. If a student desires to revise a paper, this must be completed in a short period of time to be determined by both the student and the professor. For any revised work, the grades will be averaged.

Written/Oral Requirements for the course include:

1. Theory Reflection Paper: For this assignment, you will choose one sociological theory as presented in the readings to discuss. Possible choices include: functionalism, conflict theory, interpretive theories, or critical theory. Using deMarrais and LeCompte as your starting point, complete the following:

- describe the main viewpoint of this theory;
- explore the contribution this theory has made to the knowledge base about how schools work;
- support your ideas with reference to the readings in class and others that are appropriate;
- describe your reaction to this theory. How does it support or counter your understanding of education? What value does this theory have for you?

Limit your paper to 2-3 double-spaced, typed pages. Evaluation will be based on clarity in writing, thought and support given to your remarks, and inclusion of the items listed above. This assignment is worth a maximum of 20 points and is **due Sept. 14**.

2. Schooling Issues Reflection Paper: For this paper you will select a few (1-2) articles or chapters from Brint, Meier, or the faculty pack to discuss. Your task is to select a few key points or concepts that are evident in your selected readings. In essence, you will describe the common theme(s) and each author's viewpoint. Summarize the main idea(s) presented and then provide your reaction to the statements. Half of the paper should summarize the key points made by the authors, and half should be your personal remarks. Consider the following questions to guide your reflection:

- What are the key themes presented and how do the authors' viewpoints support or counter one another?
- How did these key points impact your thinking about the given topic?
- How is this a significant issue for education today?
- What questions were raised for you upon reading the articles/chapters?
- What quote was meaningful to you and why?

Keep the reactions focused, but provide depth in your reflections. This paper is intended to provide you an opportunity to reflect on specific points, but is not intended to be a research paper.

Criteria for evaluation will be based upon:

- ability to clearly summarize key points of the article(s),
- ability to make personal connections or reflections pertaining to the topic under discussion,
- depth of discussion,
- clarity in writing.

Limit your paper to 2-3 type written pages. This assignment is worth a maximum of 20 points and is **due Oct. 5**.

3. Midterm essays: This will be a take-home exam asking you to answer essay questions pertaining to the readings and class discussions. You will receive the questions two weeks in advance of the due date. The midterm is worth a maximum of 45 points. **Due Oct. 19.**

4. Book Review: For this assignment you will select an appropriate book related to the field of sociology of education to critique and review. A list of books will be provided early in the semester, but students may choose other books not included on the list. You may want to consider books listed in the bibliography of Meier's *In Schools We Trust*. In the review, you will do the following:

- summarize the main points of the book;
- note the strengths and weaknesses of the work;
- discuss implications of the points made by the author (s);
- provide your own reaction to the content of the book; and
- use course readings to support your remarks.

Limit the paper to 5-7 double-spaced typed pages. Evaluation will be based on clarity in writing, organization of ideas, thought given to remarks, and inclusion of the items listed above. The book review is worth a maximum of 55 points. **Due Nov. 23.**

5. Book Talk: You will provide a brief synopsis of the book you reviewed and engage class members in a short discussion. You may choose to present the work in a poster session format, powerpoint format, or with handouts. Some visual representation of key points is strongly encouraged. Limit your talk to 10-15 minutes. Depending on class numbers, book talks may be presented in small groups.

Evaluation will be based on effective summation of the main points of your book, clarity in presentation, and your ability to stimulate and engage the audience. This assignment is worth a maximum of 15 points.

6. Final Project: You will complete a take-home final project that will ask you to make connections to the readings and discussions throughout the semester. In addition, you may complete an in-class portion of the final to be determined by class members and the professor. The final project is worth a maximum of 30 points and is **due December 14.**

7. Participation: You will be asked to prepare for class sessions as well as to contribute in class activities and discussions. Class participation will be evaluated on the following:

- faithful attendance and appropriate contributions to class discussions;
- appropriate participation in small group activities;
- completion of readings and assignments prior to class meetings.

I will ask you for your own self-assessment of participation at the end of the course. I will incorporate your input when determining your participation grade. Participation is worth a maximum of 15 points.

Assessment Summary

Theory reflection	20 pts.	A (95-100%)
School issues reflection	20 pts.	A-(92-94%)
Midterm	45 pts.	B+(90-91%)
Book Review	55 pts.	B (87-89%)
Book Talk	15 pts.	B-(84-86%)
Final Project	30 pts.	C+(81-83%)
Participation	<u>15 pts.</u>	C (78-80%)
	200 pts	C-(76-77%)
		D (68-75%)

Tentative Sequence of Topics and Reading Assignments:

Aug. 31 Introduction to the Course

Sept. 7 Sociology of Education: Key Theories and Overview of field of study

Readings

*Brint chp. 1

*Fac Pack

de Marrais, K.B. & LeCompte, M. D. (1999). Theory and its influences on the purposes of schooling. In *The way schools work: A sociological analysis of education*. (3rd Ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Assignment- Explore this website www.edweek.com

Sept. 14 Schooling: Differences between industrial and developing countries. Demographics in U. S. Education

Readings

*Brint chp. 2-3

*Fac Pack

Cetron, M. & Cetron, K. (December 2003/January 2004). A forecast for schools. *Educational Leadership* 22-29.

Assignment- Theory Reflection due

Sept. 21 The role of public schools: What should it be?

Readings

*Fac Pack

Hess, F. M. (February 2004). What is a 'public school'? Principles for a new century. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 85 (6), 433-439.

Nathan, L. (February 2004). The larger purpose of public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 85 (6), 440-441.

Nathan, J. (February 2004). Some questions for advocates of public education. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 85 (6), 442-445. 450.

Bacchetti, R. (February 2004). On ongoing conversation. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 85 (6), 446-447

Clinchy, E. (February 2004). Reimagining public education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 85 (6), 448-450.

Goodlad, J. (2004) Why we need public education. In Glickman, C. (Ed). *Letters to the next president*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Sept. 28 Great Schools: What factors contribute to their success?

Readings

* Meier chp 1-2

Selected articles from *Education Week*.

Oct. 5 Parents and Schools

Readings

*Meier chp 3

*Fac Pack

Muller, C. & Kerbow, D. (1993). Parent involvement in the home, school, and community. In Schneider, B. & J. S. Coleman, (Eds.) *Parents, their children, and schools* (pp. 13-42). Boulder: Westview Press.

Galinsky, E. (April 2001). What children want from parents and how teachers can help. *Educational Leadership* 58 (7), 24-28.

Assignment- Schooling Issues Reflection due

Oct. 12 School as Organization: Sociology of Teaching

Readings

*Brint, chp. 8

* Meier chp.4

*Fac Pack

Apple, M. (2000). Teaching and "women's work." In Arum, R. & I. Beattie, (Eds.) *The*

Structure of schooling (pp.346-356). London: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Bryk, A., Lee, V. & Holland, P. (2000). Classroom life. In Arum, R. & I. Beattie, (Eds.) *The Structure of schooling* (pp.146-153). London: Mayfield Publishing Company.

**Oct. 19 Schools and Socialization
Transmission of knowledge**

Readings

*Brint chp. 4-5

*Meier chp. 5

Assignment- Midterm due

Oct. 26 Schools and Social Selection: Social Class and Ethnicity

Readings

*Brint chp. 6-7

Nov. 2 Holiday Election Day

Nov. 9 Schools and Social Selection: Race and Ethnicity

Readings

*Fac Pack

Orfield, G. , Frankenberg, E. D. & Lee, C. (December 2002/January 2003). The Resurgence of school segregation. *Educational Leadership* 60 (4), 16-21.

Barton, R. (Ed.) (Spring 2004). Native education: Bitter past, hopeful future. *Northwest Education* 9 (3), 1-7.

Linik, J. R. (Spring 2004). Healing wounds: Dropout prevention programs in Montana, Alaska, and Washington. *Northwest Education*. 9 (3),10-11.

Briggs, K. (Spring 2004). Slipping through the cracks. *Northwest Education*. 9 (3) 8-9.

Nov. 16 Social Selection: The role of tests and standardization

Readings

*Meier chp.6-8

Fac Pack

Bracey, G. (2003). The No Child Left Behind Act, a plan for the destruction of public Education: Just say no. In *On the Death of Childhood and the Destruction of Public Schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Book presentations

Nov. 23 Schools and Social Selection: Gender

Readings

*Thorne, first half of the book

*Fac Pack

Jobe, D. A. (December 2002/January 2003). Helping girls succeed. *Educational Leadership* 60 (4). 64-67.

Taylor, D. & Lorimer, M. (December 2002/January 2003). Helping boys succeed. *Educational Leadership* 60 (4). 68-71.

Book presentations

Assignment- Book Review due

Nov. 30 Schools and Social Selection: Gender

Readings

*Thorne, second half of the book

Book presentations

Dec. 7 Reform Movements: What can we expect for the future?

Readings

*Brint, chp. 9

*Meier, chp. 9-10

Book presentations

Dec. 14 Wrap-up of the course

Final Project 5:30-7:30 PM