Educational Studies 305: 
Immigrants and Education
Trinity College  Spring 2009
Wednesdays, 1:15-3:55 PM
McCook 309

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
(and by appointment)

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Introduction

Immigration has been a defining characteristic of the United States since its founding, and has long affected other nations as well. While immigrant experiences are extremely diverse, education consistently plays a strong role in defining, mitigating, complicating, and addressing itself to the challenges immigrants face as they navigate a new land. What are some of the different ways that education has been used to affect immigrants’ experiences? Have public schools been a force for the social mobility of immigrants, or have they in some cases been an impediment? Have public schools adapted to diverse immigrant cultures, or have they been an instrument of assimilation? What other educational institutions have addressed the needs of new immigrant populations?

As we will see, the story of immigration and education is made up of many stories. Through readings on the experiences of immigrants and the particular role of schools in these experiences, we will develop and discuss competing ideas about immigration and education and different ways of examining the issues of immigrants and education. The first half of this class thus presents an extremely wide array of immigrants’ educational experiences and ways of understanding the role education plays in these diverse experiences.

In the second half of this class, you will develop your own ideas through independent research. Your research may involve work with a community organization or school to understand how educational systems affect immigrants, research on an educational policy that affects immigrants, interviews with immigrants to understand individual experiences, or historical research on a particular immigrant population. The objective of the final project is to gain a depth of knowledge on one aspect of immigration and education.

The final section of the class will involve “collectivizing” our knowledge and presenting it to the community in the form of a public round-table discussion on immigration and educational resources in Hartford and beyond.
Responsibilities and Assignments

Class Participation

This is a small seminar with a highly participatory, inquiry-based format. We are each responsible for both our own and one another’s learning, and you do both yourself and your classmates a service by engaging fully in all aspects of this course. I expect you to arrive in class on time, having done all assigned reading, and ready to engage in class discussion and activities. I also expect you to attend every class session. More than one absence will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

Discussion Facilitation

During the first half of the semester, you will be responsible for working with one or two of your classmates to facilitate discussion on one of the books assigned. Discussion leaders should plan to meet with me the week before facilitation to get my help and input in planning the class session. It is your responsibility to arrange this meeting with me at a time when all facilitators have read the book and have already produced an outline of ideas for discussion facilitation. It will be helpful if these ideas are in writing.

You are encouraged to be creative in your facilitation!

Short Book Review Papers – 3-4 pages each

You will write short reviews of two of the full books that we read in this class. Book reviews should be useful to people who have not read the book, serving to advise potential readers as to not only what the book is about, but also why it is important, what it successfully explains, and what it fails to explain.

Each review should be 3-4 pages in length and should engage in a critical analysis of the book, including areas of particular insight and contribution, a brief explication of the prominent ideas put forth in the book, and a discussion of any shortcomings or lingering questions you have about the book. Feel free to look to examples of book reviews in academic journals (such as Anthropology and Education Quarterly, Cultural Anthropology, American Journal of Sociology, or International Migration Review) for style, tone, or format models. (Unlike the book reviews you may read in these academic journals, however, you do not need to do any research for your reviews or include any literature.)

Clarity and insightfulness are key components of good book reviews. Reviews are due before class, and must be posted to Blackboard.
Theory Paper/Proposal – 2-3 pages

Mid-way through the semester, you will have an opportunity to consider what are, to you, the most interesting questions related to immigration and education. The theory paper is a discussion paper, and need not include a thesis. Instead, your theory paper should point to some key questions and concerns that will guide you as you complete your class project.

Project Journal

Throughout the first half of the semester, I will introduce potential formats and sites for student projects. You may choose your project from among those I suggest, or you may invent your own. Once you have chosen a project, you should begin your project journal by describing what you plan to do in your initial Project Journal post on Blackboard.

Throughout the second half of this class, you will be working on your research project, which will involve outside sources on immigrants’ educational experiences and institutional support (potentially including interviews, participant-observation, demographic or historical research, and/or secondary sources). You will keep a journal of your project on Blackboard, including at least 5 thoughtful, informal reflections on your project. I will read and respond to your Project Journal regularly, so feel free to include questions!

Your classmates will also read your journal, which will help us as a class as we plan the round-table (see below). Therefore, make sure that you describe your project, data, findings, and thoughts in a thorough and organized (if informal) fashion in your journal.

Round-Table Contribution

As a group, we will conclude the class with a public round-table on the role of education for immigrants’ success and the available support for immigrants in schools and community organizations. We will invite the individuals involved in each project to participate in this round table, as well as anyone else who might be interested.

The planning for the round-table cannot be set far in advance. It is by its nature a collaborative project that will take shape out of our discussions and student projects over the course of the semester. Because the planning for the round-table will likely involve several hours of outside meetings and planning, you will receive credit toward your grade for your contribution to the round-table’s success.
Final Paper – around 10 pages

Your final paper is a report on your individual project, in which you use the data you have gathered during your project to address the concerns and questions you articulated in your mid-term Theory Paper (and/or other concerns, if you wish). We will discuss the final paper in detail as the semester progresses.

**Grading**

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Facilitation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Review Papers (2)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theory Paper/Proposal</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Project Journal</td>
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<td>Round-Table Contribution</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>Final Paper</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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Be advised that adequate work earns a C, good work earns a B, and excellent work earns an A in this class. The penalty for overdue assignments will be 10% for every 24-hour period beyond the deadline. Exceptions will be granted only for documented medical or family emergencies.

Please notify me during the first week of the course if you require any special accommodations (such as religious observances, learning disabilities, etc.).

All books are available in the bookstore. Additional readings will be available in class.

**Class Schedule**

**January 21**

Introduction, course overview, and discussion facilitation assignments
Comparative Perspectives on Immigration and Education

January 28 – Comparative/Historical


February 4 – Comparative/Ethnographic

Read entire journal issue (accessible online via JSTOR):


Special Issue: Ethnicity and School Performance: Complicating the Immigrant/Involuntary Minority Typology

Issue Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/i360315

Research on Immigrant Experiences

February 11

*Lives in Translation: Sikh Youth as British Citizens*
Kathleen Hall

February 18

*All American Yemeni Girls: Being Muslim in a Public School*
Loukia Sarroub
February 25

*Up Against Whiteness: Race, School, and Immigrant Youth*
Stacey Lee

March 4

*Hopeful Girls, Troubled Boys: Race and Gender Disparity in Urban Education*
Nancy Lopez

March 11

*Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*
Mary Waters

**Spring Break**

March 25 – Quantitative Approaches to Immigration and Education

*Theory Papers/Proposals Due*

Rachael Barlow – Quantitative Data Analysis Session using the “National Survey of Latinos on Education” from the Pew Hispanic Center.

Read about the Pew Hispanic Center on their web site: http://pewhispanic.org/about/

April 1 – Psychological Approaches to Immigration and Education


*Theorizing Immigrant Experiences and Affecting Educational Systems*

April 8


**April 15**


Brettell, Caroline B. and James F. Hollifield

**April 22 – Student Project Workshop**

Read all Project Journals on Blackboard

**April 29 (or alternate date TBD)**

Public round-table discussion on immigrants and education, designed and facilitated by the class

**FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 4 BY 5:00 PM**