

Educational Studies 200: Analyzing Schools

Trinity College Spring 2009
Monday 1:15-3:55pm in McCook 225

<http://www.trincoll.edu/Academics/Study/EducationalStudies/>

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Introduction:

analysis (noun, plural *analyses*; adjective *analytical*; verb *analyze*)

1. *The separation of a whole into constituents with a view to its examination and interpretation.*

This course introduces the study of schooling within an interdisciplinary framework. Drawing upon sociology, we investigate the resources, structures, and social contexts that influence student opportunities and unequal outcomes in the United States and other countries. From psychology, we contrast different theories of learning, both in the abstract and in practice. Finally, using philosophical thinking, we investigate how competing educational goals should be resolved in a democratic society. The course also includes a community learning component, where students engage in participant-observation for three hours per week in nearby public elementary and secondary classrooms, and integrate first-hand experiences with discussions of course readings and writing assignments.

Readings:

Available at bookstore in Ed Studies section:

DC Phillips and Jonas Soltis, *Perspectives on Learning, fourth edition*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004). ISBN 0807744476; \$18

Additional readings will be made available in class.

How to succeed in this course:

Attend each class session on time, bring relevant readings and notes, and participate regularly in discussions. Keep a calendar (paper or digital) to manage your time and stay ahead of deadlines for all of your classes and other obligations. If an illness, family emergency, or one-time scheduling conflict interferes with attending class, immediately inform your instructors and inquire about how to compensate for what you have missed.

Take the initiative by asking questions. If you don't understand something, odds are that other students are wondering about the same issue. Go ahead -- ask the question!

The instructor is assisted by TAs who attend all classes, facilitate small group discussions, and write comments on (but do not grade) written assignments. Make an appointment with any one of us to talk about improving your learning in the course. Feel free to stop by during office hours, or make an appointment in advance (by suggesting 2-3 days/times that would be convenient to meet). Email is the best way to contact me, or stop by my office.

How your work will be evaluated:

Five 3-4 page analysis papers (to integrate theory and practice) 5 x 10 =50 pts

- #1 Sociology of the Classroom
- #2 Theories of Learning
- #3 Explaining Educational Inequality
- #4 School-based Reform Strategies
- #5 Curriculum Project Proposal

Five 1-page writing exercises (to promote reflective thinking) 5 x 2 =10 pts

- A) Introduce yourself in letter/email to teacher before placement
- B) Reflect on first day at placement & teacher profile, with contract
- C) Identify and describe a rich example of student learning
- D) Reflect on your relationships with students/teachers/parents
- E) Overall evaluation of your experience at school placement

Classroom Participant-Observation (evaluated by classroom teacher) =15 pts

Curriculum Project - Oral Presentation (evaluated by coordinators) =10 pts

Curriculum Project – Final Draft (evaluated by instructor) =15 pts

Cumulative Final Exam =10 pts

NOTE: Initially, the total number of points equals 110. When calculating the final grade, your lowest 10-point grade will be dropped, resulting in an adjusted total of 100 points.

Be advised that adequate work (70-79%) earns a C, good work (80-89%) earns a B, and outstanding work (90-100%) earns an A in this class. The penalty for overdue assignments will be 10% for every 12-hour period beyond the deadline, with exceptions granted only for documented medical or family emergencies. Please notify the instructor during the first week of the course if you require any special accommodations (such as religious observances, learning disabilities, etc.).

Mon Jan 26 Introduction to Syllabus & Placements in Hartford Public Schools

Participant-Observation Guidelines:

Clusters of students will be assigned to work with classroom teachers in different schools in the area. In each school, a coordinator has been designated to help organize placements, guide orientations, and facilitate communication with classroom teachers.

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Main Phone</u>
M.D. Fox Elementary School - coordinator Elise LaRosa	470 Maple Avenue	695-3600
McDonough Elementary School - coordinator Carmen Vargas-Guevara	111 Hillside Avenue	695-4260
Moylan Elementary School - coordinator Erin Doyle	101 Catherine Street	695-4500
Hartford Magnet Middle School - coordinator Mark Flaherty	53 Vernon Street	757-6201

Hartford Public Schools website: <http://www.hartfordschools.org/>
HPS info on weather-related closings: 695-SNOW (695-7669)

Trinity Ed Studies website:
<http://www.trincoll.edu/Academics/Study/EducationalStudies/>

Students will work as “participant-observers” with their classroom teachers for at least 8 three-hour sessions (a total of 24 hours) over the course of the semester. The objectives are for Trinity students to:

- Integrate theoretical readings with first-hand experience, in order to complete the analysis paper assignments required in the course
- Develop meaningful relationships with students and teachers, to deepen our reflections on the contexts of urban schools and the purposes of education
- Identify potential resources and gain practical experience for designing a curriculum project

Clusters of students **will attend a mandatory orientation session during the second week of the course** with their school coordinator. (Exact times TBA).

During the initial visit with the teacher, students will complete and return a contract to establish their schedule and role in the classroom. “Participant-observation” is more than just quietly watching; it includes more active roles in the classroom, such as one-on-one tutoring, working with small groups, preparing materials for a classroom project, and (in some cases) planning and teaching a brief lesson.

At the end of the semester, classroom teachers will evaluate Trinity students’ placement experiences based on their level of engagement, reliability, and effort demonstrated in the classroom.

Unit 1: Sociology of the Classroom

Question: How do cultural beliefs, social organization, and political contradictions shape teacher-student interactions in the classroom?

Mon Jan 26 Urban Education: Hollywood versus Reality

Read:

Sophie Bell, "Dangerous Morals: Hollywood Puts a Happy Face on Urban Education," *Radical Teacher* 54 (1998): 23-27.

Pedro Noguera, *City Schools and the American Dream*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003), pp. 1-16.

Video excerpts in class:

Stand and Deliver, fictionalized portrayal of Jaime Escalante, (1988). VID 0730

High School II, documentary of Central Park East HS, F. Wiseman (1994). VID 0203

Distribute: Writing Exercise A

After you have been assigned to a teacher, introduce yourself and what you hope to contribute to the classroom in an email to your teacher, plus a printed copy to hand-deliver. Post copy on Blackboard before your first placement session begins.

Mon Feb 2 Looking Inside Classrooms: International Comparisons and Contradictions of Reform: Teaching in Hartford Schools

Read:

Kathleen deMarrais and Margaret LeCompte, "The Social Organization of Schooling" and "What is Taught in Schools" in *The Way Schools Work: A Sociological Analysis of Education, third edition*. (NY: Longman, 1999), 43-52, 222-228, 236-247.

Sharan Merriam, "Being a Careful Observer," *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 94-111.

James Stigler and James Hiebert, "The TIMSS Videotape Study" in Alan Sadovnik et. al., eds., *Exploring Education, second edition* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), pp. 276-281.

Linda McNeil, "Contradictions of Reform" in Alan Sadovnik et. al., eds., in *Exploring Education, second edition* (2001), pp. 245-255.

Jeff Archer, "Under Amato, Hartford Schools Show Progress" *Education Week* (March 1, 2000).

Robert Frahm, "Overhaul for Four Schools: Worst-Performing Facilities in City to Undergo Curriculum, Staffing Changes," *Hartford Courant*, July 26, 2007.

Read on-line: Dougherty, Wanzer, and Ramsay, *Missing the Goal: A Visual Guide to Sheff v O'Neill School Desegregation: June 2007*. <http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css/>

In class: borrow video CD:

Eighth-Grade Mathematics Lessons: US, Japan, and Germany (US Department of Education, TIMSS Study, 1998).

Distribute: Paper topic #1, DUE Friday Feb 6th at 2pm

Distribute: Writing Exercise B

Write a one-page reflection about the first day at your school placement and post on Blackboard. Bring a printout, plus a copy of your signed contact, to the evening discussion session to share insights about placements. Day/time _____

Unit 2: Theories of Learning

Question: How do classical and contemporary theorists explain how people learn?

Mon Feb 9 Classical Theory, Behaviorism, and Constructivists (part I)

Read: Phillips and Soltis, *Perspectives on Learning*, intro and chapters 1-6

Video excerpt in class: *First Graders Divide 62 by 5* (TC Press, 1999). VID 2730

Distribute: Writing Exercise C

Identify and describe a rich example of student learning from your classroom. Bring to class to discuss on Monday, Feb 16th

Mon Feb 16 Constructivists II: Bruner & Making Sense of Theories of Learning

Read: Phillips and Soltis, *Perspectives on Learning*, chapters 7 and 9 (not 8)

Video excerpt in class: *A Private Universe* (Annenberg/CPB, 1987). [Ed Res Ctr]

See companion website: <http://www.learner.org/teacherslab/pup/>

Distribute: Paper topic #2, DUE Friday Feb 20th at 2pm

Mon Feb 23 Special Needs Students and Second Language Learners
and Making Sense of Race, Class, Gender and the Test Score Gap

Read: Kate McEachern, "Regular Classroom Teachers' Perceptions of Mainstreaming: One Year After Full-Inclusion." Senior Research Project, Educational Studies Program, Trinity College, Fall 2006.

Guadalupe Valdes, *Learning and Not Learning English: Latino Students in American Schools*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2001, pp. 10-28, 42-61.

Read: Data from SAT and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

In Class: Standardized test score analysis and brainstorming activity

Print out and bring "Strategic School Profile" for your school from CT Dept of Ed web:
<http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/districts/index.htm>
School Profiles > Regular Ed by School 2006-07 > Hartford [find school]

Unit 3: Explaining Educational Inequality

Question: How do different theories attempt to explain racial, social class, and gender gaps in educational achievement?

Mon March 2 Economic Capital, Social Capital, and Curricular Tracking
and Social Class & Cultural Capital

Read: Jonathan Kozol, "Children of the City Invincible: Camden, New Jersey," *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. (NY: Crown, 1991), chapter 4.

Pedro Noguera, *City Schools and the American Dream*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003), chapter 2.

Jeannie Oakes, "The Distribution of Knowledge," *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* (New Haven: Yale Press, 1985), excerpts from chapter 4.

In class: Data on education, race, and social class in metropolitan Hartford

Janny Scott and David Leonhardt, "Shadowy Lines that Still Divide," in *Class Matters* (NY: Times Books, 2005), 1-26.

On-line: "Interactive Graphic: How Class Works," *New York Times* website (2005).
http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/national/20050515_CLASS_GRAPHIC/index_01.html

Annette Lareau, "Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Cultural Capital." *Sociology of Education* 60 (1987), pp. 73-85.

Rick Green, "Chapter 6: A Jolt of Juanita," *Hartford Courant* (November 21, 1999).

Mon March 9 Cultural Discontinuities and Oppositional Identities
and the Social Psychology of Stereotype Threat

Read: Lynn A. Vogt et.al., "Explaining School Failure, Producing School Success: Two Cases." *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 18 (December 1987): 276-286.

John Ogbu, "Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities in Comparative Perspective," in M. Gibson and J. Ogbu, eds., *Minority Status and Schooling*. (NY: Garland, 1991).

View video: *Puerto Rican Passages* (CPTV, 1995). [VID 2231 and Ed Resource Ctr]
Showing by TA at _____ or go to library video reserve.

Read: Claude Steele, "A Threat in the Air: How Stereotypes Shape Intellectual Identity and Performance," reprinted in Eugene Lowe, ed., *Promise and Dilemma: Perspectives on Racial Diversity and Higher Education* (Princeton, 1999), excerpt from pp. 107-108.

Claude Steele, "Thin Ice: Stereotype Threat and Black College Students" *Atlantic Monthly* (August 1999), pp. 44-54.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/99aug/9908stereotype.htm>

Paul Sackett, Chaitra Hardison, and Michael Cullen, "On Interpreting Stereotype Threat as Accounting for African American-White Differences on Cognitive Tests," *American Psychologist* 59 (January 2004): 7-13.

Video excerpt in class: *Secrets of the SAT* (PBS Frontline, 1999). [Ed Res Center]
See full interview with Claude Steele at:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/sats/interviews/steele.html>

Distribute: Paper topic #3, DUE Friday, March 13th at 2pm (before break)

Mon March 16 no class - spring break

Unit 4: School-based Reform Strategies

Question: How do different school-based reform strategies attempt to improve education? What assumptions do these strategies make about the causes of educational inequality?

Mon March 23 Cooperative Learning, Detracking, and Single-Sex Education

Read: Robert Slavin, *Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, Practice, 2nd edition*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995), chapters 1 and 2.

In class: Cooperative learning exercise; mid-semester course evaluation

Video in class: Michelle Fine et. al., *Off-Track: Classroom Privilege for All* (Teachers College Press, 1998). [VID 1931]

Read: Myra and David Sadker, "Hidden Lessons," *Failing at Fairness: How America's Schools Cheat Girls* (NY: Scribner's, 1994), chapter 1.

Robert Frahm and Rachel Gottlieb, "Merits of Single-Sex Classes Debated," *Hartford Courant*, March 5, 2004.

Video in class: *Failing in Fairness* (NBC Dateline, February 8, 1994). [Ed Resource Ctr]

Distribute: Writing Exercise D

Describe and reflect on your relationships with students, teachers, staff, and parents at your school placement. Post on Blackboard and bring copy to class on March 30th.

Read: Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/education/ed_mi_overview.html

In class: Curriculum project guidelines and evaluation criteria; exercise on identifying and articulating objectives for student learning; matching potential partners for projects

Mon April 13 Linking Objectives, Learning Activities, Resources, and Evaluation
Location TBA _____

Read: Linda Christensen, "Unlearning the Myths that Bind Us: Critiquing Cartoons and Society," in *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching about Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word*. (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 2000).

Kelley Dawson Salas, "Teaching About Toxins: Students Explore the Health Issues Affecting their Community," *Rethinking Schools* 18 (Winter 2003): 22-25.

Read: Linda Christensen, "Portfolios and Basketball," in *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching about Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word*. (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 2000).

Recommended: Jeannie Oakes, John Rogers, Martin Lipton, "Limits of School Reform" and "Futures: Students Disrupting High School Inequality," *Learning Power: Organizing for Education and Justice* (TC Press, 2006).

Resources: Go to Ed Studies website and click on "Additional Resources":
Ed Studies Resource Center (books and videos for loan)
Ed 200 Curriculum Design Resources (web links)
Ed 200 Curriculum Projects (PDF and Powerpoint files from previous students)

In class: Orientation to print and digital curriculum resources

Paper topic #5 (proposal) assigned; DUE via Blackboard on Friday, April 17th at 2pm

Mon April 20 Curriculum Presentation Workshop and Individual Conferences
Sample curriculum project presentation and advice from TAs

Sign up for individual conferences with instructor for feedback on proposals

Day/time: _____

Distribute: Writing Exercise E

Overall evaluation of your experience at your school placement. Post on BlackBoard and bring printout to discuss at our last class.

Unit 6: Philosophy of Education

Questions: What is the purpose of education? What is worth learning? How should debates over these issues be resolved in a democratic society?

Mon April 27 Individual Freedom and Civic Virtue in Public Education and Competing Views on Liberatory / Progressive Education

Read: Amy Gutmann, "Democratic Education in Difficult Times." *Teachers College Record* 92 (Fall 1990): 7-20.

Video excerpt in class: *It's Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School* (Women's Educational Media, 1996). [Ed Resource Center]

"Why Address Gay Issues With Children" *It's Elementary* Viewing Guide, 1997

Read to prepare for a three-way debate in class:
Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (NY: Seabury Press, 1970), pp. 57-74.

bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (NY: Routledge, 1994), pp. 1-22.

Lisa Delpit, "Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Progressive Black Educator," reprinted in Delpit, *Other People's Children* (New York: New Press, 1995), pp. 11-20.

In class: Course wrap-up; preparing presentations; review for final

NOTE: Oral presentations of curriculum projects (5-8 minutes, with visuals) to be scheduled for a late afternoon session near end of the semester, with evaluations conducted by the Hartford school coordinators.

Must attend 1 of 2 presentation dates TBA, most likely to be scheduled 4-6 pm on days around last week of classes or review period

DATE TBA _____ Curriculum Project final draft DUE on Blackboard

Fri May 8th at 12 noon (or earlier during finals week, if consensus)

Final exam, short essay responses