COURSE SYLLABUS

Division: Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations

Program Area: Educational Sociology

Course: EDS9620

Course Title: Doctoral Seminar in Educational Sociology

Section Number: 001 (31310)

Term/Year: Spring 2015

Course Location: 200 EDUC

Day/Time: Monday/Wednesday, 4:30-7:15

Office: Room 373, College of Education

Course Credits: 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Monte Piliawsky

Mailbox Location: Third Floor, Education Building, TBF side or AOS sides

Office Hours: 3:00-4:30 Monday and Wednesday or by appointment. My secretary, Lei Juan Stewart-Walker, can be reached at 313-577-1613.

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The core problem facing our schools is a moral one. All the other problems derive from it. Hence, all of the various attempts at school reform are unlikely to succeed unless character education is put at the top of the agenda.

--William K. Kilpatrick

*Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong*

With few exceptions, discussions of school reform have ignored the consequences of poverty and racial isolation on attempts to improve America's inner city schools. One consequence of this silence, I believe, is that the restructuring and other educational reforms have not significantly improved most central city schools or classrooms.

--Jean Anyon, *Ghetto Schooling*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The purpose of this course is to help to produce urban educators who are reflective and innovative professionals. The classroom will function as a social laboratory in which students analyze the sociological aspects of American education by studying and conducting scientific research on contemporary educational issues.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

It is logical that school teachers, principals, counselors, and central administrators both at the P-12 level and in higher education possess expertise in the following four areas: (1) academic subjects, (2) psychological nature of students, (3) teaching methodology, and (4) the social and political forces that impact on the educational process. This course focuses on the last of these subjects, the sociological context of education.

The specific objectives of this course are:

1. Examine critically societal factors associated with class stratification, racial discrimination, and gender inequity that affect American public education, resulting in segregated school districts, unequal funding, culturally biased tests, and disparate educational outcomes.

2. Understand the impact of the political process on American education, in which citizens and the business community struggle to determine whether public schools promote liberty—equality of opportunity through the democratic empowerment of individuals, or order—reproducing existing social class divisions.

3. Evaluate contemporary proposals for reforming and restructuring U.S. schools in the areas of finances, governance, administrative organization, curriculum, instructional methods, and testing.
4. Develop “scholar-teachers” and “scholar-administrators” by conducting empirical research on major contemporary educational issues.

REQUIRED READING:

The two required textbooks for the course are:


Periodically, I will hand out to you various supplemental required reading material.

COURSE PROCEDURES:

I expect that as you enter this capstone course in educational sociology, you have seriously reflected on the current state of American education. In your roles as longtime student, teacher, administrator, and/or education analyst, you undoubtedly have identified some components of the schooling process that cry out for improvement.

This seminar provides you with a forum to try out some major proposals to improve American urban education. Your task is to develop substantive arguments--as powerful as possible--to support your proposals for educational reform. At the end of the semester, you will present your recommendations to your classmates in the form of a position paper. You will clarify your understanding of an area of education that is important to you. Perhaps your findings will be worthy of publication.

The range of topics for your research is extensive. The two epigrams at the start of this syllabus illustrate the contrast between the conservative advocacy of character development and the liberal focus on the environmental factors of economic stratification and racial discrimination that directly influence educational outcomes. This contrasting ideological perspective exists on most current controversies in education.

The methodology for this seminar combines a collaborative approach with independent study. Students will develop and substantiate positions on educational issues that will be challenged by the thinking of other students. In other words, each participant will help develop her/his own investigation and serve as a helpful critic for the work of other seminar members.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

PART ONE: READINGS AND CLASS DISCUSSION
Course Reading and Class Discussion: Students will read both demarrais and LeCompte's book, The Way Schools Work, and Spring's book, American Education. We will discuss the reading material in the class periods throughout the entire semester.

This overview will guide you in selecting a topic related to educational sociology that excites you and which is a broader version of the subject of your more intensive, semester-long research project.

Following the first two topics, this course covers the eight major subjects (3-10) that parallel the topics covered in the titles of chapters 2-8 in the demarrais and LeCompte book and chapter 8 of the Spring book, as follows:

1. Overview of Educational Sociology and Public School "Reform"
2. Theoretical Foundations of American Schooling
3. Schools as Social Organizations
4. Youth Culture and Student Peer Groups
5. The Teaching Profession
6. Social Class and Education
7. The School Curriculum
8. People of Color and Educational Opportunity
9. Gender Equity in Schools
10. Government Power and Control of Education

I will lecture on the first two topics in the course: (1) overview of educational sociology and public school "reform," and (2) theoretical foundations of American schooling. Thereafter, each class participant will select one of the remaining eight topics. The designated student will lead a class discussion on their topic during their respective class periods. I will supplement the class discussion by lecturing on areas that deserve further amplification.

For students, leading a class discussion involves (1) insuring that major points raised in the reading material are considered in the class deliberation, (2) probing other students in class for their viewpoints, (3) presenting your own conclusion, and perhaps (4) doing limited ancillary reading. You might want to hand out some material to your classmates, such as an outline of your presentation, a chart, and/or some valuable article, present a clip of an appropriate video, or make a power point presentation.
PART TWO: STUDENT RESEARCH TERM PAPER

(A) Research Paper: Prospectus: You will submit a SHORT prospectus (or research design) of your term research project. The prospectus should include: (1) a statement of your thesis or argument, (2) an outline of your research plan, and (3) an initial bibliography of the scholarly literature that you intend to read. The prospectus should be turned into me for feedback no later than Wednesday, May 20.

Your investigation will utilize secondary sources which consist of existing published works. For some students, your research also will use primary sources. Primary material refers to first-hand observations, data from government documents, school board meetings, survey research based upon questionnaires to a sample of respondents, or personal interviews.

(B) Development and Refinement: During this stage of the course, you will be far along in your reading and conducting research. Part of the seminar sessions will be devoted to assisting you with any problems you encounter in data collection and sharpening the rigor of your analysis and arguments.

(C) Presentation of Results: Time permitting, on the final class meeting on Wednesday, June 24, each student will present her/his term paper. The final draft of the paper will be turned in to me on the last class meeting.

COURSE REGULATIONS:

Standards for Research Papers: Papers must be double-spaced and be computer-printed. The length should be approximately 12-15 pages, including bibliography. The research paper should apply a standard form for citations, footnotes or endnotes, and bibliography, relying on the American Psychological Association Publication manual.

Class Participation: I encourage an open class in which students earnestly participate in dialogue. The success of a seminar depends upon active classroom involvement by all participants.

Reading Assignments: Students are responsible for completing all reading assignments. Obviously, you can contribute effectively to class discussion only by reading the assignments in advance of the appropriate class meeting.

NOTE: THERE IS NO CLASS ON MONDAY, MAY 25, WHICH IS MEMORIAL DAY.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism includes copying material (any more than 5 consecutive words) from outside
Texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own by not crediting authors through citations. It can be deliberate or unintentional. If you're in doubt about the use of a source, cite it. Students caught plagiarizing information from other sources will receive a failing grade in the course. University policy states that students can be subject to multiple sanctions, from reprimand to expulsion as a consequence of academic dishonesty. To enforce this policy, all outside references must be submitted with assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The criteria for your final course grade are:

1. Leading Assigned Class Discussion 40%
2. Regular Semester-long Classroom Participation 10%
3. Research Term Paper 50%

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Educational Sociology and Public School "Reform"


2. Theoretical Foundations of American Schooling

   Spring, Chapter 1
   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter I

3. Social Organization of Schools

   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 2

4. Youth Culture and Student Peer Groups

   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 3
   Spring, Chapter 2

5. The Teaching Profession

   Spring, Chapter 10
   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 4

6. Social Class and Education

   Spring, Chapters 3 and 4
   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 5

7. The School Curriculum

   Spring, pp. 118-127; Chapters 9 and 11
   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 6

8. People of Color and Educational Opportunity

   Spring, pp. 105-116; 157-169; 174-186
   demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 7
9. Gender Equity in Schools

Spring, pp. 116-118; 169-173
demarrais and LeCompte, Chapter 8

10. Government Power and Control of Education

Spring, Chapter 8

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Beginning in Fall 2011, students must add classes no later than the first week of classes. This includes online classes. Students may continue to drop classes (with full tuition cancellation) through the first two weeks of the term.

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of the class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN.

. WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.

. WF will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on work to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.

. WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade.

Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line through Pipeline. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via e-mail that the withdrawal has been approved. Beginning in Fall 2011, the last day to withdraw will be the end of the 10th full week of classes. The withdrawal date for courses longer or shorter than the full 15-week term will be adjusted proportionately.

ATTENTION STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodation in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services'
mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provisions for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternate arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.