In this course we will investigate the contradictions and possibilities of education. Throughout the course, students will learn some basic facts of education and its organization in the United States, orienting perspectives and theories for understanding the way education works, and then a selection of specific issues in education.

The aim of these efforts is threefold. As one might imagine, one course aim is that students learn particular substantive facts about education. A second aim is that students learn a range of theoretical perspectives analysts have developed for considering education and society. A third aim is that students become adept at evaluating evidence bearing on the relation between substantive facts and theoretical perspectives. The first aim is important, but it is the second and third aim that sets our work apart and makes it a college-level course. Consequently, the point is not only to learn facts, but also and most important, to be able to marshall those facts to evaluate other claims, and to sensitively weigh evidence.

Assignments
There are three kinds of written assignments: Quizzes, Mid-terms, and a Fact Sheet.

Quizzes
Pop quizzes will be assigned throughout the term. A quiz may occur at any time during class. Further, a quiz may occur in parts during a single class or multiple classes—part 1 might be assigned at one point during the class period, while part 2 might be assigned at another point, and third, fourth, or additional parts might be assigned later. Part 1 one might occur in one class, and a subsequent part might be assigned in another class. Failure to complete all parts of a quiz result in a zero score for that quiz for the student. Further, continuing to work on the quiz when time is up is also reason for the grade on the quiz to be zero. Other rules to assure the fairness of the quiz for all students may be applied as the term unfolds.

Mid-terms
There are three mid-terms. They are September 24, October 22, and November 26.

Final Assignment: The Fact Sheet
The final assignment, due at 1:30pm on Monday, December 16, is a two-page Fact Sheet on an education issue of your choice. The Fact Sheet should convey facts and draw on selected theories and concepts from the course. In order to assure your topic is feasible, you must submit a (typed/word-processed) 1-paragraph statement of your topic in class on Thursday, November 21.
That paragraph will be graded pass/no pass. In order to do the Fact Sheet assignment you must pass this November 21 assignment.

Grade Percentages for each Type of Assignment
Each mid-term counts 20% for a total of 60%. Collectively the quizzes count 20%. The Fact Sheet counts 20%.

Lectures
Lectures will generally provide new information, and elaborate or extend the reading, not repeat it. Please complete the reading assignment for the date before class meets.

Books and Articles for the Course
Much of the reading material is available via JSTOR, Google Scholar, or via OskiCat, and some of the other material is available at specific web-sites (e.g., my web-site). After each paper its location will be noted in bold (e.g., JSTOR). JSTOR and OskiCat are accessible from university computers; if you prefer to access these sites from home you need follow library instructions for doing so. University web-sites contain information on how to do that for the different types of computers one might use.

Papers that are on publicly available web-sites have the url in the syllabus, while papers on JSTOR or OskiCat are noted in the syllabus with a bold JSTOR or OskiCat after the citation. For the JSTOR and OskiCat papers you’ll need to use the search tools of the site to find the paper. For JSTOR the author or title are needed. For OskiCat first find the journal, then find the appropriate electronic location of that issue, and then a search using some information from the citation (e.g., author, title) will be needed.

Some articles are not available electronically; those papers are in a Reader for purchase at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft. Papers that are in the Reader are noted in the syllabus with a bold READER after the citation. These articles are less common on the syllabus, but they are essential (or I would not assign them given the extra drudgery of making them available). Thus, I encourage you to obtain the Reader as it is likely by far the easiest way of obtaining access to these materials.

Please order the 3 books on the syllabus through whatever means you prefer (e.g., amazon):


PART I – INTRODUCTION

Week 1, Aug 29


PART II – FOUNDATIONAL RESOURCES

>> Week 2, Sep 3-5 – Schools as Rational Organizations and the Purpose(s) of Schooling

Sep 3 – Organizations as Rational Systems


Sep 5 – The Purpose(s) of Schooling


>> Week 3, Sep 10-12 – Effects of Organizations and Selected Organizational Explanations of “Failing” Schools

Sep 10 – Effects of Organizations Schools Debate


Sep 12 – Selected Organizational Explanations of “Failing” Schools


>> Week 4, Sep 17-19 – Selected Political Explanations of “Failing” Schools

Sep 17 – Public Confidence and Support


Sep 19 – The Political Returns to “Failing” Schools

>>Week 5, Sep 24-26 – Mid-Term 1 and Evaluation Processes

Sep 24 – Mid-Term 1

Sep 26 – Evaluation Processes


PART III – KEY ORIENTING PERSPECTIVES

>>Week 6, Oct 1-3 – A Structural Marxist Analysis of Schooling in the United States

Oct 1 – Historical Development of Schools in the U.S.


Oct 3 – Structures of Schools/Schooling and Determinants of Success


>>Week 7, Oct 8-10 – Human and Cultural Capital Theory

Oct 8 – Human Capital Theory


Oct 10 – Cultural Capital Theory


>> Week 8, Oct 15-17 – Social Capital Theory and A Cultural Marxist Account

Oct 15 – A Cultural Marxist Account


**Oct 17 – Social Capital Theory**


**>> Week 9, Oct 22-24 – Mid-term 2 and Grade Retention**

**Oct 22 – Mid-Term 2**

**Oct 24 – Grade Retention**


**PART IV – SELECTED ISSUES IN EDUCATION**

**>> Week 10, Oct 29-31 – Educational Attainment and Achievement**

**Oct 29 – Levels and Correlates of Educational Attainment**


**Oct 31 – Levels and Correlates of Measured Achievement**


**>> Week 11, Nov 5-7 – Tracking and Curricular Programs**

**Nov 5 – Dimensions of Curriculum Differentiation and Effects of Tracking**

Nov 7 – GATE and Special Education


>>Week 12, Nov 12-14 – Privatization and Charter Schools

Nov 12 – Privatization


Nov 14 – Charter Schools


>>Week 13, Nov 19-21 – Immigration and Education

Nov 19 – The Wider Context of Immigration


Nov 21 – Immigration and Education


–Fact Sheet Topic Due (1 paragraph)

>> Week 14, Nov 26 – Mid-Term and Holiday

Nov 26 – Mid-Term #3

Nov 28 – Thanksgiving

>> Week 15, Dec 3-5 – The Experience of Teaching and Selected Teacher Responses

Dec 3 – The Experience of Teaching


Apple, Michael W., and Susan Jungck. 1990. “‘You Don’t Have to Be a Teacher to Teach This Unit:’ Teaching, Technology, and Gender in the Classroom.” American Educational Research Journal 27: 227-251. Google Scholar

Dec 5 – Selected Teacher Responses


>> Week 16, Dec 10-12 – Review and Wrap-Up

Dec 10 – Review

No Reading

Dec 12 – Wrap-up

>> Final Assignment (Fact Sheet) due Monday, December 16, 1:30pm, 438 Barrows Hall