

Syllabus

New York University
Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Program in Sociology of Education

E20.2002 An Introduction to the Sociology of Education
Fall, 2012 Tuesdays 4:55-6:35pm. Silver 506

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Office Hours; Tuesdays, 11-noon; Wednesdays, 4-5pm

The purposes of this course are to provide class members with a thorough and detailed introduction to the development and state of sociological theory and research on education. In particular, we will trace the history of sociological work on education through to the present. Along the way, we will explore the relation of sociology of education with other sociological specialties and with the scholarship on education in other fields, especially in the area known as “the foundations of education.”

Required Texts

Alan R. Sadovnik, Ed. 2011. *Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader, 2nd edition*. New York: Routledge.

Floyd M. Hammack, Ed. 2004. *The Comprehensive High School Today*. New York: Teachers College Press. Available on Blackboard.

Other readings available at the course Blackboard site.

Requirements and Assignments

The most important aspects of this course will be, first, reading the assigned texts and articles, and second, actively participating in class discussions. To facilitate these activities, students will be required to post questions and reactions to the assigned readings each week. These postings will be made to the Blackboard site and must be made by 6pm the day before the class meeting at which the readings will be discussed. For each class meeting, students will be assigned the responsibility to review and summarize the articles for that class and initiate the class discussion using the student postings and their own assessments of the work.

In addition, students will prepare 3 short papers of 5 to 6 pages in length, which engage one or more selections in a more thorough and critical manner. The choice of texts and/or

articles providing the basis for these essays is up to the individual student, but should be drawn from the assigned readings covered to date.

Finally a take home essay examination will be distributed the last regular day of class to be prepared according to the instructions accompanying it—and turned in by the date and time indicated.

The weekly postings will not be graded, but if a student misses more than one week's posting, a grade of incomplete will be recorded until the missing posting(s) is made. The three short essays will each be worth 20% of the class grade each, for a total of 60% and the take home examination will count for 40% of the grade. See the end of syllabus for Steinhardt's policy on academic integrity. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Moses Center

for Students with Disabilities, 719 Broadway, 2nd Floor, (212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation.

Course Calendar and Readings

Sept 4. Introductions

Sept 11. Historical Accounts of Educational Development. Sadovnik, Part 1, Readings 1, 2, 3. From Blackboard, Collins, "Comparative and Historical Perspectives on Ed."

Sept 18. Theoretical and Historical Accounts Continued. Sadovnik, Part 1, Readings 4, 5, 6, 7. From Blackboard, Rubinson; Archer.

Sept 25. Theoretical and Historical Perspectives. Sadovnik, Part 1, 8, 9. From Blackboard, Dreeben; Bidwell; Baker; Davies. DUE: First Paper

Oct. 2. School Organization and Processes. Sadovnik, Part 2, Readings 10, 11, 12; From Hammack, Introduction and Chapter 1; Rury and Oakes and Wells

Oct 9. Education and Inequality. Sadovnik, Part 5, Readings 19, 20; from Blackboard, Rosenbaum, "If Tracking is Bad...".

Oct. 16. Fall Break

Oct 23. The "Burden of Acting White." Sadovnik, Part 5, Reading 21, 22. From Blackboard, Harris, Downey, O'Connor et al., Narratives of Opportunity.

Oct. 30. Seasons of Learning. From Blackboard, Heyns; Alexander, et al.; and Downey, von Hippel and Broh. DUE: Second Paper.

Nov 6. Class and Schooling. Wells and Surna; Hatcher; Blau and Duncan.

Nov 13. Place and Education. From Blackboard. Kahlenberg, Reardon et. al and Steinberg ("Confronting") and Kreutzman, Rosenbaum, Reynolds and Deluca, and Steinberg ("Myth"). There are two sets of readings here; the first 3 are about desegregation by social class and the second 3, about "moving to opportunity."

Nov 20. International Education. Sadovnik, Part 3, Readings 13, 14, 15. From Blackboard, Kerckhoff.

Nov 27. Education and Outcomes. From Blackboard, Bills, Carnevale, Rothstein. DUE Third Paper

Dec. 4. Issues in Secondary Education. Sadovnik, Part 4 reading 16; from Blackboard, Attewell and Lavin, *Passing the Torch*, ch. 7. From Hammack, McDonald, "The Core Dilemma;" and Hammack, "Future?"

Dec.11. Issues in Higher Education. Sadovnik, Part 4, Readings 17 ; From Blackboard, Davies and Hammack; "Who Benefits Most from College?"

Tough, "What it Takes to be a Student," HCZ Evaluations, Sweating the Small Stuff, Hammack's "Schools for Social Mobility," and Inner City Prep.

Guidelines for Critical Response Papers

In each of these three papers you should provide a brief critical response to some significant issue encountered in the readings assigned during the previous weeks. You are not being asked to summarize the argument of individual readings, although your discussion should reveal that you have understood what the argument is. Instead you should react to the readings(s) as a critical observer with a specific frame of reference (derived from the course, from your readings elsewhere, and/or your own experience). Pick one major issue from the reading that interests you and briefly develop it. A focused discussion of one issue is better in a short paper than covering a number of different issues. Make connections with things other things you know, but be sure that you draw on the readings for a substantial part of your evidence or ideas or examples. It's OK for you to draw on your experience as long as you use this experience as a case in point in an analytical argument that is related to the readings. This paper can be more informal in

style than a term paper, but don't neglect to use references and if you directly quote from the readings, make sure the proper citations are provided. You will be evaluated on the basis of thoughtfulness, depth of understanding, and analytical insight that is reflected in your paper. These papers should be about 5 to 6 pages of text each.

Guidelines for critical reading and writing (from David Labaree)

As a critical reader of a particular text, you need to use the following questions as a framework to guide you as you read:

1. What is the point? This is the analysis issue: What is the author's angle
2. Who says? This is the validity issue: On what (data, literature) are the claims based?
3. What's new? This is the value-added issue: What does the author contribute that we don't already know?
4. Who cares? This is the significance issue, the most important issue of all, the one that subsumes all the others: Is this work worth doing? Is the text worth reading? Does it contribute something important?

If this is the way critical readers are going to approach a text, then as an analytical writer you need to guide readers toward the desired answers to each of these questions.

Guidelines for analytical writing

1. Pick an important issue. Make sure that your analysis meets the "so what" test. Why should anyone care about this topic? Pick an issue that matters and that you care about.
2. Keep focused: Don't lose track of the point you are trying to make and make sure the reader knows where you are heading and why.

3. Aim for clarity: Don't assume that the reader knows what you are talking about; it's your job to make your points clearly. In part this means keeping focused and avoiding distracting clutter. But in part it means that you need to make more than elliptical references to concepts and sources or to professional experience. When referring to readings (from the course or elsewhere), explain who said what and why this point is pertinent to the issue at hand. When drawing on your own experiences or observations, set the context so the reader can understand what you mean. Proceed as though you were writing for an educated person who is not familiar with the material.

4. Provide analysis: A good paper is more than a catalogue of facts, concepts, experiences, or references; it is more than a description of the content of a set of readings; it is more than an expression of your educational values or an announcement of your prescription for what ails education. A good paper is a logical and coherent analysis of the issues raised within your chosen area of focus. This means that your paper should aim to explain rather than to describe. If you give examples, be sure to tell the reader what they mean in the context of your analysis. Make sure the reader understands the connection between various points in your paper.

5. Provide depth, insight, and connections: The best papers are ones that beyond making obvious points, superficial comparisons, and simplistic assertions. They dig below the surface of the issue at hand, demonstrating a deeper level of understanding and an ability to make interesting and useful connections.

6. Support your analysis with evidence: You need to do more than simply state your ideas, however informed and useful these may be. You also need to provide evidence that reassures the reader that you know what you are talking about, thus providing a foundation for your argument. Evidence comes in part from the academic literature. Evidence also can come from your own experience. Remember that you are trying to accomplish two things with the use of evidence. First, you are saying that it is not just you making this assertion but that authoritative sources and solid evidence are backing you up. Second, you are supplying a degree of specificity and detail, which helps to flesh out an otherwise skeletal argument.

7. Draw on course materials. Your paper should give evidence that you are taking this course. You do not need to agree with any of the readings or presentations, but your paper should show you have considered course materials thoughtfully.

8. Recognize complexity and acknowledge multiple viewpoints. The issues in the history and sociology of American education are not simple, and your paper should not propose simple solutions to complex problems. It should not reduce issues to either/or, black/white, good/bad. Your paper should give evidence that you understand and appreciate more than one perspective on an issue. This does not mean you should be wishy-washy. Instead, you should aim to make a clear point by showing that you have considered alternative views.

9. Challenge assumptions: The paper should show that you have learned something by doing this paper. There should be evidence that you have been open to changing your mind.

10. In a short paper, long quotations (more than a sentence for two) are not appropriate. Even in longer papers, quotations should be used sparingly unless they constitute a primary form of data for your analysis. In general, your paper is more effective if written in your own words, using ideas from the literature but framing them your own way in order to serve your own analytical purposes.

11. Cite your sources: You need to identify for the reader where particular ideas or examples come from. Use a citation system that is common in your field; become familiar with it.

12. Take care in the quality of your prose. A paper that is written in a clear and effective style makes a more convincing argument than one written in a murky manner. Writing that is confusing usually signals confusing in thinking. After all, one key purpose of writing is to put down your ideas in a way that permits you and others to reflect on them critically, to see if they stand up to analysis. Revision after reflection is a key to good writing.

Statement on Academic Integrity

"Your degree should represent genuine learning"

The relationship between students and faculty is the keystone of the educational experience in The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New York University. This relationship takes an honor code for granted. Mutual trust, respect and responsibility are foundational requirements. Thus, how you learn is as important as what you learn. A university education aims not only to produce high quality scholars, but to also cultivate honorable citizens.

Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do; from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours.

You violate the principle of academic integrity when you:

- Cheat on an exam;
- Submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors;
- Receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work;
- Plagiarize.

Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated.

Plagiarism is failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score and/or other materials, which are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following:

- Copy verbatim from a book, an article or other media;
- Download documents from the Internet;
- Purchase documents;
- Report from other's oral work;
- Paraphrase or restate someone else's facts, analysis and/or conclusions;
- Copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you.

Your professors are responsible for helping you to understand other people's ideas, to use resources and conscientiously acknowledge them, and to develop and clarify your own thinking. You should know what constitutes good and honest scholarship, style guide preferences, and formats for assignments for each of your courses. Consult your

professors for help with problems related to fulfilling course assignments, including questions related to attribution of sources.

Through reading, writing, and discussion, you will undoubtedly acquire ideas from others, and exchange ideas and opinions with others, including your classmates and professors. You will be expected, and often required, to build your own work on that of other people. In so doing, you are expected to credit those sources that have contributed to the development of your ideas.

Avoiding Academic Dishonesty

- Organize your time appropriately to avoid undue pressure, and acquire good study habits, including note taking.
- Learn proper forms of citation. Always check with your professors of record for their preferred style guides. Directly copied material must always be in quotes; paraphrased material must be acknowledged; even ideas and organization derived from your own previous work or another's work need to be acknowledged.
- Always proofread your finished work to be sure that quotation marks, footnotes and other references were not inadvertently omitted. Know the source of each citation.
- Do not submit the same work for more than one class without first obtaining the permission of both professors even if you believe that work you have already completed satisfies the requirements of another assignment.
- Save your notes and drafts of your papers as evidence of your original work.

Disciplinary Sanctions

When a professor suspects cheating, plagiarism, and/or other forms of academic dishonesty, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken following the department procedure or through referral to the Committee on Student Discipline.

Departmental Procedure

- The Professor will meet with the student to discuss, and present evidence for the particular violation, giving the student opportunity to refute or deny the charge(s).
- If the Professor confirms the violation(s), he/she, in consultation with the Program Director and Department Chair may take any of the following actions:
 - Allow the student to redo the assignment
 - Lower the grade for the work in question
 - Assign a grade of F for the work in question
 - Assign a grade of F for the course
 - Recommend dismissal

Once an action(s) is taken, the Professor will inform the Program Director and Department Chair, and inform the student in writing, instructing the student to schedule an appointment with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, as a final step. Copies of the letter will be sent to the Department Chair for his/her confidential student file and the

Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The student has the right to appeal the action taken in accordance with the School's Student Complaint Procedure as outlined in The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development Student's Guide.

Referral to the Steinhardt Committee on Student Discipline

In cases when dismissal is recommended, and in cases of repeated violations and/or unusual circumstances, faculty may choose to refer the issue to the Committee on Student Discipline for resolution, which they may do through the Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

The Steinhardt School Statement on Academic Integrity is consistent with the New York University Policy on Student Conduct, published in the NYU Student Guide.