Planned Change in Organizational Settings (E20.2090)

This course provides a sociological examination of change in complex organizations with specific focus on the analysis of schools as organizations. The course begins by examining theoretical work in the sociology of organizations as well as conceptualization of the role of leaders and other actors within these organizations. The course then provides in depth examination of five areas of recent educational policy and practice where change has occurred. We first look at the role of law in school desegregation and school discipline; next we explore change in a large urban school district that has served as a model for contemporary school reform efforts; finally, we consider elements of administrative progressive reform focusing on accountability, assessment and “next generation” data systems in both contemporary K-12 and higher education systems.

REQUIRED BOOKS:


*Other readings will be made available on NYU’s Classes system.*
REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and participation in the course is required. All students will be responsible for weekly one-page response memos due Tuesday in lecture every week (other than the first class, last class and the week that the midterm assignment is due). In addition to the weekly response memos, students are responsible for one of the following two options:

Option I (recommended for MA students taking the course): Two additional paper assignments will require students to demonstrate synthesis and application of organizational theory. A 10 page midterm assignment on the concept of “planned organizational change” will be due on March 9. A 15 page final paper applying organizational theory to a comparative analysis of assessment and accountability in K-12 and higher education will be due on May 11 in either of my departmental mailboxes. 30 percent of the grade will be assigned to weekly memos and course participation, 30 percent to the midterm, and 40 percent to the final paper assignment.

Option II (recommended for PhD students taking the course): A final paper will be due on May 11 that requires students to apply organizational theory to their own research agendas. The final paper must apply organizational theory and can either propose future empirical work or be based on empirical findings from ongoing original empirical research. Approximately 25 pages. A one page memo identifying your direction on this final assignment is due on March 9; the final paper will be due on May 19 in either of my departmental mailboxes. 30 percent of the grade will be assigned to weekly memos and course participation, and 70 percent to the final paper assignment.

1/26 (Week 1) – Introduction to Course.

2/2 (Week 2): Classic Works on Organizations, Education and Society

2/9 (Week 3): Organizational Theory I: Rationality and Organizational Adaptation
2/23 (Week 4): Organizational Theory II: Power and Resources in Organizations


3/9 (Week 6): Organizational Theory IV: Neo-Institutionalism
→ Midterm assignment (due 3/9 at noon in one of my department mailboxes)

3/23 (Week 7): Leadership Models, Other Organizational Actors and Implementation Issues
A. Charles Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Harvard University Press, 1938); pp. 82-95, 165-71.

3/30 (Week 8): Schools as Organizations

4/6 – NO CLASS (RESCHEDULED FOR 5/18.

4/13 (Week 9): Case Study I – School Desegregation

4/20 (Week 10): Case Study II – Student Rights and School Discipline
B. Richard Arum and Doreet Priess, Education Next (Fall 2009); pp. 58-66.

4/27 (Week 11): Case Study III: (Collaborative) Urban School Reform
Anthony Bryk, Penny Bender Sebring, Elaine Allensworth, Stuart Luppescu and John Easton, Organizing Schools for Improvements: Lessons from Chicago (University of Chicago Press, 2010).

5/4 (Week 12): Administrative Progressive Models - Assessment, Accountability and Next Generation Data Systems
A. David Labaree, “The Education School’s Romance with Progressivism,” The Trouble with Education Schools (Yale University Press, 2004); pp. 129-
169.


5/11 (Week 13): Case Study IV: No Child Left Behind and (Managerial) Urban School Reform

A. Linda Darling-Hammond, “From Separate but Equal’ to ‘No Child Left Behind: The Collision of New Standards and Old Inequities,” in Deborah Meier and George Woods, eds., Many Children Left Behind: How the No Child Left Behind Act is Damaging our Children and Our Schools (Boston: Beacon 2004); pp. 3-32.


5/18 (Week 14): Case Study V: Higher Education Assessment

A. Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses (University of Chicago Press, 2011); pp. 1-32; 121-144.


→ May 19. Final papers due at noon in one of my department mailboxes.
Additional References/Resources for Planned Organizational Change:


