**TCHL-GE-2512**

**Searching for Equity: Research on Urban and Minority Education**

**Spring 2017**

**Wednesdays, 3:00-4:40pm**

**25 West 4th St., Room C-1**

**Instructor**

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Office hours by appointment

**About this Course**

*Course Catalogue Description:*

Examination of research on urban education and minority student. Emphasis on prevailing views for improving teaching and learning in urban areas and the impact of minority communities on schools. Effecting change in the classroom and the school is a central concern of the course.

*Course Overview:*

This course examines the questions: “What are the root causes of educational inequity?  How is inequity made manifest in schools? What are some ways to increase educational equity?  And what is equity and why does it matter, anyway?”  We will draw from readings in social and critical theory, school ethnographies, and policy and discourse analyses to develop new answers to these questions.  We will also observe and analyze schools and other educational settings with these questions in mind.

The central aim of this course is to better understand why education frequently does not contribute to the creation of a more just and equitable society – and why schools frequently struggle in their attempts to serve children of color and low-income children well. We will examine the strengths and limitations of various analytic frameworks that attempt to explain the nature of educational inequality. We will then explore the discourse, policies, and practices at the heart of how the American school system structures and manages notions of “equity,” “difference,” and “normality.” We will also consider the ways in which teachers, students, parents, and their allies have used educational settings as a focal point for resistance to various forms of oppression.

*Learning Objectives*

* To engage in structural and cultural analyses of inequity in the context of schooling and educational policy
* To contextualize and compare theoretical frameworks that attempt to explain contemporary educational inequity
* To examine the inequitable implications of common educational discourses, policies, and practices
* To critically reflect upon the meaning of educational justice and apply original analyses of educational inequity to students’ own research projects and/or professional work

**Course Assignments:**

**Weekly Reading Responses (due by 9am on the Classes website every Monday, 50% of your grade)**

You will write a 1-2 page response to each week’s reading. (All papers and peer responses, see below, are required for a passing grade in this course.) You will use this writing to explore key arguments, raise questions, and ponder new ideas. Your responses should directly address and synthesize the readings for the week. In order to do this, you must consider how the texts talk to each other, point out weaknesses in arguments, identify areas that need clarification, raise questions, and draw these texts into conversation with your personal and professional educational experiences. If you are not sure how to focus your writing, one useful strategy is to select a quotation that puzzled, intrigued, or resonated with you and read it closely by examining how it relates to the author’s argument overall, how it engages with ideas discussed in other readings, and how it relates to the essential questions guiding our course.

These responses are intended to give you a chance to think deeply about the readings before

you come to class, to offer me insight into your understanding of the readings, and to

initiate a conversation with your peers. In order to further these goals, you will be assigned to reading and writing groups. **Before our class, you will read the other papers in your group and respond to them on a discussion board. In order to give your colleagues enough time to respond before class meets on Wednesday, your response papers are due by 9am Monday morning on the Classes website.** Since the aim of these papers is to help me address your questions and to begin our discussion before class, late papers will not be accepted. **You** **are required to post responses to your writing group at least 7 times over the course of the semester.** **These responses can be short (1-2 paragraphs) and must be posted by 9pm on Tuesdays.**

In these papers and discussions, I will be looking for evidence that you are grappling with the readings (not just skimming introductions and conclusions) and thinking critically about connections across texts. This does not mean that I expect you to understand the texts completely the first time around. These writing groups are exploratory by nature and are the place for you to raise questions, ask for clarification, and/or be speculative about the texts. The weekly papers need to be understandable but not finely polished (i.e., remember this is an academic forum, not Snapchat).

Early in the semester, I will give you feedback on one of these papers to be sure you are on the right track. **Instead of a midterm exam, I expect you to revisit one of these papers following Spring Break. You will annotate your work to reflect changes in your thinking about the texts over time.** How have your ideas changed or become more complex? Do you have new evidence to back up your assertions – or do you want to change those assertions? Where can you make new connections between this text and readings assigned in later weeks? Use track changes and marginal comments to show the development of your thought.

**Final Project** (**Due Thursday, May 10, 40% of your grade)**

This project will be about 20 pages and will include a theoretical framework based on the topics and themes covered in the course. Ideally, the project will be useful to your work as a student and/or professional, either on its own or as part of a larger project, such as a research proposal, a school ethnography, a book review, a literature review, or a professional development plan. We will discuss these and other options in greater depth in class. You must submit an initial project description, update your plan, and get your revisions approved by me well before the final project is due. **Deadlines for portions of the final project are indicated on class dates**. Be prepared to discuss your questions, progress, and challenges in class throughout the semester.

**Class participation (Ongoing, 10% of your grade)**

Class participation is a central feature of the learning experience in this course. Students are expected to come to class having closely read the material listed for the particular week and prepared to engage in a critical discussion of the texts. Reading responses (see above) are intended to help you think about prepare you for the discussion ahead of class time. There are many ways to participate in class. Listening actively, asking questions, commenting on the thoughts of others, or discussing tentative, speculative ideas are as valuable as stating original, completely formed thoughts. Students are expected to attend all classes and to be responsible and constructive participants in class.

**Course Expectations:**

* **Because it is important to build off the interests and questions of the class, I may adjust readings and assignments based on how the group discussion progresses.** Please check your NYU email regularly for updates. I will send messages out via our “Classes” website.
* **Our success will depend on every member of the class being actively engaged as both learners and teachers.** Each of us has valuable experiences and perspectives that will inform our collective knowledge. It is very important that you let me know if you have questions about the concepts being discussed during the course. Please email or schedule a meeting with me if asking questions in class is difficult.
* **Class attendance is required**. If, for extraordinary reasons, you are unable to attend class one week, please let me know. (Please refer to NYU policy for excused absences.) In general, late or inconsistent attendance will result in a lower grade.
* **All assignments are required to pass this course. An “A” grade will be awarded to students who have exceeded, not simply met, the course requirements.** All written work is graded on thoroughness, quality of analysis, level of support from data and/or research literature, organization and clarity. Students are expected to turn in all work on time. Final project extensions will only be granted for legitimate reasons, and last-minute extensions (less than 48 hours) for emergency reasons will only be granted if you already have a draft of your paper. Late papers for which you have not been granted an extension will be subject to a grade penalty.
* **Please turn off all cell phones at the beginning of class.** Students are expected act professionally and refrain from checking email, surfing the Internet, and so forth during our class.
* **Students with Disabilities:** Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 726 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. **If you have a learning difference and need accommodations of any kind, please talk with me directly as soon as possible.**
* **Academic Integrity:** Breaches of academic integrity are very serious and I will take action in the case of a violation. All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. See the end of this syllabus for an overview of these policies, or go here for a full description: https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html

**Weekly Assignments**

Week 1: Introductions (January 24)

* Alexie, S. “Superman and Me.” *Los Angeles Times.* April 19, 1999.
* Baldwin, J. (1996). A Talk to Teachers. In *City Kids, City Teachers: Reports from the Front Row*. New York: The New Press.

Week 2: The Problem of the Problem (January 31)

* Labaree, D. F. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, *34*(1), 39–81.
* Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools. *Educational Researcher*, *35*(7), 3–12. http://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X035007003
* Dumas, M. J. (2009). Theorizing Redistribution and Recognition in Urban Education Research: How Do We Get Dictionaries at Cleveland? In J. Anyon (Ed.), *Theory and Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Explanation* (pp. 82–107). New York City: Routledge.
* Noguera, P. A. (2003). *City Schools and the American Dream*. New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapter 1)

Week 3: Theories of Racial Construction (February 7)

* Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge. (Chapters 4 and 5)
* Lipsitz, G. (2011). *How Racism Takes Place*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. (Introduction)
* Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what’s it doing in a nice field like education? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *11*(1), 7–24. http://doi.org/10.1080/095183998236863

*Recommended:* Melamed, J. (2011). *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Week 4: Theories of Social Reproduction (February 14)

* Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. Chicago: Haymarket Books. (Chapter 1 and 2)
* Anyon, J. (1980). Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work. *Journal of Education*, *162*(1).
* Giroux, H. (1983). Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis. *Harvard Educational Review*, *53*(3), 257–294.

*Recommended*: Willis, P. (1981). Cultural Production is Different from Cultural Reproduction is Different from Social Reproduction is Different from Reproduction. *Interchange*, *12*(2–3), 48–67.

Week 5: Theories of Cultural Reproduction (February 21)

* Bourdieu, P. (1997). The Forms of Capital. In A. H. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown, & A. S. Wells (Eds.), *Education: Culture, Economy and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
* Lareau, A., & Horvat, E. M. (1999). Moments of Social Inclusion and Exclusion: Race, Class, and Cultural Capital in Family-School Relationships. *Sociology of Education*, *72*(1), 37–53.
* Khan, S. R. (2011). *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St Paul’s School*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Introduction and Chapter 3)

*Recommended:* Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* (Second Ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Week 6: Racialization in Schools (February 28)

* Lee, S. J., Park, E., & Wong, J.-H. S. (2016). Racialization, Schooling, and Becoming American: Asian American Experiences. *Educational Studies*, 492–510. http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004
* Pollock, M. (2005). *Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School*. Princeton University Press. (Chapters 2 and 3)
* Lewis, A. E. (2003). *Race in the Schoolyard: Negotiating the Color Line in Classrooms and Communities*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. (Chapter 4)

Week 7: Unpacking Deficit Narratives (March 7)

* McDermott, R., & Varenne, H. (1995). Culture as Disability. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *26*(3), 324–348. http://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1995.26.3.05x0936z
* Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Albany: State University of New York Press. (Chapter 1 and Chapter 3)
* Abu El-Haj, T. R. (2006). *Elusive Justice: Wrestling with Difference and Educational Equity in Everyday Practice*. New York: Routledge. (Introduction)
* Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *32*(3), 465–491. http://doi.org/10.3102/00028312032003465

*Recommended:* Louie, N. L. (2017). Culture and ideology in mathematics teacher noticing. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 1–15. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10649-017-9775-2

Spring Break (March 14)

Week 8: Discourse, Policies, and Practices: School Segregation (March 21)

**Final project plans due**: email me 2-3 paragraphs describing your topic, the format and components of your project, and a preliminary list of at least 5 references (may be drawn from class readings)

* DuBois, W. E. B. (1935). Does the Negro Need Separate Schools? *The Journal of Negro Education*, *4*(3), 328–335. http://doi.org/10.2307/2291871
* Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
* Dumas, M. J. (2014). Contesting White Accumulation in Seattle: Toward a Materialist Antiracist Analysis of School Desegregation. In K. L. Bowman (Ed.), *The Pursuit of Racial and Ethnic Equality in American Public Schools* (pp. 291–311). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.
* Hannah-Jones, N. (2016, June 9). Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City. *The New York Times Magazine*. New York. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/12/magazine/choosing-a-school-for-my-daughter-in-a-segregated-city.html
* Carter, P. L. (2010). Race and Cultural Flexibility among Students in Different Multiracial Schools. *Teachers College Record*, *112*(6), 1529–1574.

*In Class Reading:* New York City Department of Education. *Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools*. (2017). New York. (Please bring a hard copy with you to class, but no need to read ahead of time.)

Week 9: Discourse, Policies, and Practices: Academic Tracking (March 28)

* Tyson, K. (2011). *Integration Interrupted: Tracking, Black Students, and Acting White after Brown*. New York City: Oxford University Press. (Intro, Ch. 1, and Ch. 2)
* Oakes, J., Wells, A. S., Jones, M., & Datnow, A. (1997). Detracking: The Social Construction of Ability, Cultural Politics, and Resistance to Reform. *Teachers College Record*, *98*(3), 482–510.
* Rubin, B. C. (2003). Unpacking Detracking: When Progressive Pedagogy Meets Students’ Social Worlds. *American Educational Research Journal*, *40*(2), 539–573. http://doi.org/10.3102/0002831204000253
* Ferri, B. A., & Connor, D. J. (2005). Tools of Exclusion: Race, Disability, and (Re)segregated Education. *Teachers College Record*, *107*(3), 453–474.

*Recommended:* Oakes, J. (2005). *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* (2nd ed.). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 10: Film Study (April 4)

**Annotated reading response paper due**

* View *The Class/Entre Les Murs* (available on Amazon, YouTube, and via NYU EZ Borrow). In your response, please focus on how school and classroom interactions, policies, and practices connect to some of the theories we have read so far.

Week 11: Discourse, Policies, and Practices: School and Classroom Discipline (April 11)

**Final project plan revisions due**

* Shalaby, C. (2017). *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School.* New York: The New Press. (Preface and pgs. 3-39)
* Ferguson, A. A. (2001). *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. (Pgs. 1-133) (available electronically through NYU library system)

Week 12: Discourse, Policies, and Practices: The School to Prison Pipeline (April 18)

*Book Clubs:* You will read one of the books below. We will discuss the options together in advance.

* Nolan, K. (2011). *Police in the Hallways: Discipline in an Urban High School*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (available electronically through NYU library system)
* Morris, M. W. (2016). *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools.* New York: The New Press.

*In Class Reading:* Katch, D. (2018). NYC students get metal detectors expelled. Retrieved January 19, 2018, from https://socialistworker.org/2018/01/19/nyc-students-get-metal-detectors-expelled

*Recommended:* Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.

Week 13: Discourse, Policies, and Practices: School Choice (April 25)

* Lipman, P. (2011). *The New Political Economy of Urban Education: Neoliberalism, Race, and the Right to the City.* New York: Routledge. (Introduction and Chapter 6)
* Cucchiara, M. B. (2013). *Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities: Who Wins and Who Loses when Schools Become Urban Amenities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 1 and Chapter 5)
* Pattillo, M. (2015). Everyday Politics of School Choice in the Black Community. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *12*(1), 41–71. http://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X15000016
* Lareau, A., Evans, S., & Yee, A. (2016). The Rules of the Game and the Uncertain Transmission of Advantage: Middle-class Parents Search for an Urban Kindergarten. *Sociology of Education*, *89*(4), 279–299. http://doi.org/10.1177/0038040716669568

*Recommended:* Roda, A., & Wells, A. S. (2013). School Choice Policies and Racial Segregation: Where White Parents’ Good Intentions, Anxiety, and Privilege Collide. *American Journal of Education*, *119*(2), 261–293. http://doi.org/10.1086/668753

Week 14: Final Project Workshop (May 2)

* Bring a draft of your final project draft to class. Be prepared to discuss what you’ve learned to date and questions you have.

**Final Papers are due by 5pm on Thursday, May 10**

**Academic Integrity:**

The following statement is adapted from the NYU Steinhardt Policies and Procedures (available in full at https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic\_integrity):

The relationship between students and faculty is the keystone of the educational experience in

the Steinhardt School 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 also to 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 or more different courses without the knowledge and the permission of all professors involved;

• receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work;

• “collaborate” with other students who then submit the same paper under their individual

names.

• give permission to another student to use your work for a class.

• 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 others’ 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.

*Student Complaint Procedure:*

The procedure to address academic and non-academic complaints is listed in the Academic

Policies & Procedures section of the Student Handbook and can be accessed here:

https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/procedures#Student%20Complaint%20Procedure