

EDTE 150 Urban Education
Teacher Education Department, CSUS
Fall 2006 Tuesdays 4:30-7:20 Brighton Hall 214
Kim Bancroft, Ph.D.

Contact: bancroft@csus.edu (916) 278-4587 Office: Benicia Hall 1026
Office Hours: Mon, Wed 12:00-1:00, Tue 3:15-4:15 and by appointment

Catalog Description

This survey course is designed to enhance students' knowledge of urban schooling, especially as related to dynamics of race, class, and culture. Along with a Service Learning component in urban schools, the course provides analysis of the following: historical, socioeconomic, and political factors influencing urban education; the distribution of opportunity in cities and their schools; and effective instructional and organizational practices that close the achievement gap, including multicultural education, the development of positive school cultures, and the use of community services and resources.

Description of the Course

The problems confronting urban schools are bound to the social, economic, and political conditions of the urban environments in which schools reside. Many education reform efforts focus on changing instruction and organizational structures within schools. Yet educators often fail to address factors in the larger social context that affect schooling. Thus, this course will explore social, economic, and political issues, with an emphasis on issues of race and class as they have affected the distribution of equal educational opportunities in urban schools.

The class has four major themes:

First, the course begins with a macro-level, historical overview of demographic and economic changes that have affected both the growth of cities and decline within urban areas. One initial focus will be on patterns of African American migration and subsequent effects of long time segregation and institutionalized racism on urban communities. Students will then bring an understanding of principles of migration, immigration, and the distribution of socioeconomic opportunity to an examination of local urban development in Sacramento.

Second, on this foundational knowledge of urban development, the course explores how schools as institutions have both reflected and reproduced inequalities of opportunity along race and class lines represented in their surrounding communities. This part of the course includes historical and sociological analysis of factors such as the impact of *de facto* segregation, the roles of intelligence testing and student tracking, and disparities in resources available to schools.

A third focus of the course is on home-school connections, including how cultural and class differences between the home and school can potentially foment a mismatch between students and teachers. In particular, the course will look at the experience of cultural minority students, and especially girls, as they seek academic achievement in the school environment.

Finally, the course will examine how schools overcome obstacles in helping meet the varied needs of students within urban environments. Readings and guest speakers will highlight models of positive schooling in which educators utilize principles of parent engagement, multicultural education, and small school reform in order to create more responsive instruction, build community within schools, and narrow the achievement gap.

Service Learning is an important component of this course. Students will benefit from observing and working with exemplary teachers and their students in local urban schools in order to gain first-hand experience with ways in which teachers and schools address these issues. Students will volunteer at least 20 hours of Service Learning (including drive time) at a designated urban school and prepare and present a report on their experiences as a culminating project for the course.

Note: This course helps students fulfill the following GE requirements: 1) Area D2 Major Social Issues of the Contemporary Era; 2) Writing Intensive; and 3) Race and Ethnicity. **Prerequisite:** Passing score on the WPE.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) demonstrate an understanding of socioeconomic contexts that affect urban schooling and urban communities, principally in relation to issues of race, class, and the distribution of opportunity.
- 2) show how issues of race, ethnicity, language and culture are interwoven with relationships in urban schools, especially in terms of teacher-student interactions and issues of curriculum and instruction.
- 3) demonstrate an understanding of how urban schools and their staffs can develop positive reforms that address the needs of urban youth and families.
- 4) demonstrate critical analysis, showing various perspectives, on controversial issues relating to urban education, including historical access to resources, social and racial divisions, and efforts to reform schools.
- 5) depict their own experiences serving in an urban school in light of knowledge gained in the course about urban education.
- 6) show improvement in their research and writing skills through intensive writing assignments.

Major Assignments

Note: Good writing depends on rewriting. Students will be expected to rewrite the first essay and reflections to utilize the professor's commentary to improve their compositions.

1) *Essay #1* Personal Analytical Narrative: My Own K-12 Schooling in a Socioeconomic Context

Students will write a 1000 word essay, due in the 5th week of the course, analyzing their own educational upbringing. Using concepts learned in the course relating to socioeconomic context of education, students will examine how issues of race and class affected their own K-12 experience, whether it was urban, suburban or rural. Students will use at least 3 references to class readings as points of comparison and contrast in analyzing educational opportunity in their own communities and in their personal experience.

2) *Midterm Exam:* Analysis of the Reproduction of Inequality in Schooling

Students will write short answer questions for a midterm exam in class during the 8th week of the course, analyzing a sub-topic on the theme of reproduction of inequality. Essays should include references to at least 4 course readings. Possible topics include: the role of tracking in schools; legal issues in relation to school desegregation; funding disparities between urban and suburban schools; racial discrimination in schooling; and the impact of urban decline on families and schools.

3) *Essay #2* The School-Home Connection

This 1000 word essay analyzes issues of race, class, culture, ethnicity, language, and/or nationality as they affect the connections between families and their students with schools and their teachers. Essays should include references to at least 3 course readings and 2 other sources researched independently by students. Students should not only focus on problems in building home-school connections, but essays should also include an examination of curriculum and instruction that provide positive academic and social experiences for urban youth.

4) *Presentation on Reading*

Students will make a 30-minute presentation analyzing a readings of their choice and lead class discussion or activity on it. These presentations are semi-informal, requiring leaders 1) provide insights into the main themes and supporting information in the reading under study; and 2) encourage thoughtful discussion or interaction on the piece. No written work is required.

5) *Final Presentation* on Service Learning

Students will give a brief report in class on the site at which they did their service learning. Using concepts and readings from the course analysis of urban education, students will use an audiovisual aid to present how their work at an urban school compared to what we have learned about the possibilities for and constraints on urban education.

6) *Essay #3* Analysis of School Experience

Students will write a 1000 word essay analyzing their experience observing and serving in an urban school. They will apply a critical analysis of the school's socioeconomic context as it affects school organization, relationships between staff, students, and families, and curriculum and instruction. Students will use course readings, research, and artifacts and data from their service in an urban school to think critically about the challenges that schools and families face in improving urban education.

7) *Reflections*: Students will write shorter Reflections throughout the semester (of 100-200 words amounting to 1000 words), on both the readings and on their Service Learning experiences.

8) *Attendance & Participation*: Developing a community of learners and teachers within our class is vital to the success of the course and individual students. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be punctual. Students are permitted one absence; every absence after that will result in a lowering of points. Active participation in course discussions is also required as part of the participation grade.

Texts

Students will purchase Savage Inequalities by Jonathan Kozol.

Other readings are listed and compiled in a course reader that will be available at:

University Copy & Print, 446 Howe Ave. (next to the Safeway at the corner of University Ave. and Howe (929-6147) www.universitycopyprint.com. Open M-F 8-6, Sat 10-4.

Grading system

Students will be graded on a point system based on the assignments listed above.

Essay #1-3 are 100 points each:	300
Essay #4	125
Reflections (total)	100
Presentation on Reading	25
Final Presentation	25
Attendance and Participation	<u>25</u>
<i>Total points possible:</i>	600

Urban Education: Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Sept. 5 Week 1. Introduction to the Course

What kind of schooling experience do you bring to this course?

What defines “urban”?

Overview of how cities develop and the place of schools within them

Sept. 12 Week 2. The Effect of Changing U.S. Demographics on the Urban Environment

Review of key terms and concepts to study throughout the course: socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, culture, institutional and interpersonal racism.

Reflection #1 Due

Reading:

- **The Philadelphia Negro** by W.E.B. Dubois (1899):

Chapter II “The Problem” (p.5-8);

Ch. IV, Section 12 “1820-1896: The Influx of the Freedmen” (p.39-45);

Ch. XVI, Section 47 “Color Prejudice”, (p.322-336, 347-355).

Dubois analyzes the dilemma of late 19th century African American migrants from the South as they confronted waves of European immigrants, all competing over scarce resources in the new urban expansion. His examination of “color prejudice” points to a legacy of struggle.

- Chapter 1, “From Institutional to Jobless Ghetto” From **When Work Disappears** by William Julius Wilson (1996, p.3-24)

Wilson investigates the late 20th century decline of cities in relation to forces of institutional racism, the loss of blue-color work and the flight of the middle class to suburbs, leading to the erosion of financial and social stability among those left behind.

Sept. 19 Week 3. The Decline of the City and the Effects on Urban Schools

Reflection #2 Due

Reading:

- Ch.1, “Cities, Urban Schools, and Current Visions of Educational Reform,” from **Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform** by Jean Anyon (1997, p.3-13)

Anyon shows how historical conditions of white flight and institutional racism have led to decline in Newark and subsequently the decline of its schools.

- Ch. 2 “Seguin High School in Historical Perspective: Mexican Americans’ Struggle for Equal Educational Opportunity in Houston” from **Subtractive Schooling: US-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring** by Angela Valenzuela (1999, p. 33-61)

Valenzuela shows the impact of urban assimilationist practices on immigrant and Mexican-American youth, taking from them connection to their culture and language.

- Ch. 1 “The Beginning,” Ch.2 “The ‘Hood,” Ch. 3 “School” from **Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago** by Lealan Jones and Lloyd Newman (1997, p.29-46)

Two 13-year-old boys tell the story of living in violence riddled public housing and attending the school that serves their neighborhood.

Sept. 26 Week 4. Urban Development in Sacramento and a Look at Its High Schools

- Chapters 5-7 in **Sacramento: Indomitable City** by Steven Avella (2003, 35 pp.)
[Note: Some sections have been cut out.] In reading this history, think about how economic, political, and social forces have shaped the Sacramento area and its people, and how those forces, in turn, shaped schooling.
- **Sacramento's Oak Park**, Ed. Lee Simpson (2004, p. 7-8, 53, 119)
- **"The History of Del Paso Heights"** (3 pages in reader)
- **"Rating the High Schools,"** by Andrea Todd, Sacramento Magazine, May 2006 (p.132-149). Note: As you read about the different schools and their scores, think about anything you know about their socioeconomic context.

Essay #1 Due: Personal Analytical Narrative: My Own K-12 Schooling in a Socioeconomic Context

Oct. 3 Week 5. Reproducing Inequality: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Reading Reflection #3 Due:

- Ch.7 "Corporate Capital and Progressive Education," from **Schooling in Capitalist America** by Bowles and Gintis (1977, p.180-200)
The authors describe the rise of schooling as part of an effort to foment better workers in the rising industrialization, with disparities in opportunities institutionalized in the new education system, often based on new scientific notions of genetic differences associated with class origin.
- Ch. 2 "Social Structure and Daily Life," from **Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life** by Annette Lareau (2003, p.14-32)
Taking a social structural view, Lareau examines the ways in which middle class families "cultivate" their children—and have the resources to do so, while working class families rely on "natural growth" in childrearing.
- Ch.1 "Tracking," from **Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality** by Jeannie Oakes (1986, p.1-14)
Tracking has come to define differential educational opportunity for students within and across schools. Olsen explains the various ways tracking operates and how it leads to unequal outcomes for students.
- **"Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work"** by Jean Anyon in Rereading America (1997, p.45-60)
Anyon shows how the quality of teaching often reflects the social class background of students, from creative and challenging teaching for the elite to repetitive and authoritarian for the working class.

Oct. 10 Week 6. Reproducing Inequality

Reflection #4 Due

- Ch. 1-2, **Savage Inequalities** by Jonathan Kozol (1991, p.1-88)
With an eye on public policies that have affected schooling over decades, Kozol examines the disparities in resources between urban and suburban schools, and the de facto segregation that has come to define public education.

Oct. 17 Week 7. Reproducing Inequality

Reflection #5 Due

- Ch. 3-4, **Savage Inequalities** by Jonathan Kozol (1991, p.83-174)

Film: **School Colors** on tracking and internal segregation at Berkeley High

Oct. 24 Week 8. Reproducing Inequality

- Ch. 6 **Savage Inequalities** by Jonathan Kozol (1991, p.175-233)

In Class Essay #2: Analysis of problems contributing to the reproduction of inequality in education

Oct. 31 Week 9. The Culture of Home, the Culture of School

Reflection #6 Due

- **“Understanding Cultural Diversity and Learning”** by John Ogbu, Educational Researcher (Nov. 1992, p.5-14)

Ogbu theorizes that minority groups that were “involuntary immigrants” to this nation and faced profoundly deep-rooted racism respond differently to educational institutions and authority than “voluntary immigrants” who see the US as a land of opportunity.

- **“The Home Environment and Academic Achievement of Black American Children and Youth: An Overview”** by Diana Slaughter and Edgar Epps, from The Journal of Negro Education, 56 (1): 3-20 (1987).

The authors review recent research on approaches to parenting and the relationship to academic outcomes among black families and communities.

- Ch.7 “School Context” **Con Respeto: Bridging the Distance Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools** by Guadalupe Valdes (1996, p.140-168)

Valdes examines the conflict in expectations of the schooling process between Mexican American parents and the often white teachers of their children.

Nov. 7 Election Day

Week 10. The Culture of Home, the Culture of School: Changing Definitions for Girls

Reflection #7 Due

- Ch. 5, “Love and Marriage: How Young Immigrant Women Negotiate the Terrain Between Cultures,” from **Made in America: Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools** by Laurie Olsen (1997, p.121-149)

Olsen’s interviews with Latin American and Asian immigrant students reveal the pressures they feel as young women to uphold home country traditions while juggling new American identities.

- Ch.8, “Split Loyalties: Homegirl vs. Schoolgirl,” from **Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap** by Peggy Orenstein (1994, p.155-174)

Young African American women who are serious about school struggle with issues of self-esteem as they negotiate negative peer values and their desire to succeed academically.

Nov. 14 Week 11. Overcoming Race and Class Barriers in Teaching

Reflection #8 Due

- “The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People’s Children” by Lisa Delpit, from **Other People’s Children** (1995, p.21-47)

Delpit analyzes ways that educators of color have felt silenced by white educators who do not value their insights; she also questions pedagogies that do not enhance poor children’s access to the “culture of power.”

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- Ch.6, “Culturally Relevant Teaching,” from **The Dreamkeepers** by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994, p.102-126)

The author provides visits into three teachers’ classrooms, showing how adept teachers connect to students’ cultural orientations to build on their strengths.

Nov. 21 [Thanksgiving Week] Week 12. The Promise of Multiculturalism

Reflection #9 Due

- Ch. 9 “Multicultural Education and School Reform” and 3 Case Studies (Linda Howard, a young African American and white woman; Marisol Martinez, Puerto Rican; and James Karam, Lebanese American) from **Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education** by Sonia Nieto (2003, p. 303-322, p.50-62, p.154-171)

Nieto examines the benefits of multicultural education for children on personal, social, and academic levels. The case studies of 3 youths show their perspectives on the need for multicultural education.

Nov. 28 Week 13. School Reforms That Challenge Race and Class Barriers

- “Promoting the Success of Latino Language-Minority Students: An Exploratory Study of Six High Schools,” by Tamara Lucas, Rosemary Henze & Ruben Donato, **Harvard Education Review**, (1990, p.315-340)

The researchers found schools that succeeded in helping Latino students achieve academically and feel integrated into school culture by reinforcing home culture.

- Ch. 3 “The School at Work,” from **The Power of Their Ideas: Lessons for American from a Small School in Harlem** by Deborah Meier (1995, p.47-66)

The small school movement was inspired in part by the work of this educator who used a model of schooling that connects to students personally and culturally in order to promote student success.

Essay #3: Analyze home-school connections that can promote and/or detract from students’ successful urban schools

Dec. 5 Week 14. What Schools Are Up Against: Resources for Public Education

Reflection #10 Due

- Chapter 5, “Segregation, Poverty, and Limits of Local Control: Oakland as a Case Study” and Chapter 7, “Conclusion: What It Will Take to Improve American’s Urban Public Schools” from **City Schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education** by Pedro Noguera (2003, pp.82-102, 142-157)

Noguera presents not only a critique of the roles of race and class as they impact the different kinds of education available to different communities, but he also presents policy analysis regarding how to make public education a vital institution for urban development.

Dec. 12 Week 15. Presentations of Projects

Students present analysis of their Service Learning, incorporating course materials and research.

Dec. 19 Week 16. Final Exam: Presentations of Projects & Essay #4 Due