UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development

ED 412: Sociology of Education
Spring 2011

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Class Sessions: Mon. 4:50 – 7:30 (Dewey 2-110C)

Course Description and Objectives
This course examines the relationship between education and society by reviewing major theoretical perspectives and issues relating to the sociology of education. Topics include educational stratification within and across schools (inequality relating to class, race, and gender), educational attainment, schools as social systems, social capital, and social networks.

The course objectives are:
- To increase students’ knowledge of how sociology can help us understand education;
- To provide students with the necessary skills and understanding to critically analyze schools and schooling, including ways that schools and our educational systems contribute to social inequality;
- To provide students with an understanding of current issues relating to the sociology of education;
- To provide students with the necessary skills and understanding so that they are able to advocate for more equitable policies.

Format
The course will be conducted in a seminar format, using readings, small group activities, and electronic media to guide discussion.

Student Expectations
1. All assignments are due when indicated. Late assignments will be penalized with lower grades. No incompletes will be granted, except in cases of serious illness or family emergency.
2. Please be sure to proofread your writing and use appropriate citations throughout your work.
For all assignments, you should follow APA guidelines for your references. The following cites provide further APA style guidelines:
http://umclibrary.crk.umn.edu/apa6thedition.pdf
http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm

Also, I highly recommend you review the following useful website regarding how to avoid plagiarism:
http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/roig_st_johns/index.html

Written assignments during the term receiving less than a B- may be revised and resubmitted after consultation with me.

3. If there were one right answer to these issues, then the task of research and policymaking would be relatively simple. However, this is not the case. Active discussion and thoughtful disagreement are essential for all of us to learn. Respect for others’ opinions and points of view is a fundamental ground rule for this class. One aspect of respect is meeting on equal terms; thus thoughtful reading and preparation before class discussion is expected.

4. Students must attend each class. Please notify me in advance at the above phone number should you have to miss a class. Missing class will result in a lower course grade (except in the case of serious illness or emergency).

5. I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations to enable you to fully participate.

Course Communication
This course will use Blackboard as a source of communication and information. Please make sure that you are able to access the system as soon as possible after the first class (and contact Kristine Mager immediately at kmager@warner.rochester.edu if you are having difficulty). You should check Blackboard regularly to be aware of announcements, handouts, or other course information. The Blackboard system can be accessed at: http://my.rochester.edu.

Requirements/Readings
There are four required books for this course:


In addition, each student is required to read one book that you select from a list of options (see Assignments).

Other required readings are available on Blackboard or will be handed out in class if they have not been posted. (Note: Additional readings may be posted and required beyond what is currently on this syllabus and Blackboard.)

Suggestions
1. Conversations regarding assignments and other course matters may be initiated at any time, either during class or during individual meetings.
2. In preparing for class, students are encouraged to write notes regarding the purpose, thesis, arguments, findings, and evidence of the readings and consider how the readings relate to the course and to your own experiences or research interests. These notes will be particularly useful to prepare you for class discussions and will enable you to incorporate course readings into written assignments.

Course Schedule: Topics by Week

Jan. 24: Introduction to Sociology/Sociological Theories

Background:
B&H – Ch. 1

Jan. 31: Introduction to Sociology/Sociological Theories

B&H – Ch. 2
Sadovnik – Ch. 1 & 3

Additional Reading:
Richardson, J. G. (Ed.) (1986). Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education. Greenwood Press. (Ch. 2)

Assignment: Log on to Ameregis website to choose your metro area: www.ameregis.com prior to coming to class. Submit this to me through Blackboard before you come to class. Sign up for book in class.
Feb. 7:  **Stratification/Inequality – Class, Race, Gender**

B&H – Ch. 3  

Additional Reading:  

Feb. 14:  **Stratification/Inequality – Class, Race, Gender**

Sadovnik – Ch. 20-23 (2nd edition – 21-24)

**Assignment:** Bring to class three maps from your chosen metropolitan area (avoid “change” maps).

Feb. 21:  **Book talk – meet in groups to discuss books**

As a group you must meet in person at the place of your choosing (coffee shop, library, bookstore, etc.) to discuss the main themes of the book and create a list of discussion questions that have the potential to create a rich discussion. You must submit these to me the Sunday before your assigned book talk day – include the place you met, the date you met, the time you met, and students’ names. Each book talk may be run a little differently depending upon the book and types of questions you develop.

Feb. 28:  **Stratification/Inequality - Across Schools**

Orfield - Ch 1-3, 7-8

Additional readings:  

Mar. 7: Stratification/Inequality and Segregation


Additional readings:


Mar. 14: School Org and Processes – rules and roles March 14

B&H - Ch. 5 & 8
Sadovnik – Ch. 9 (2nd edition - 10)

Assignment: Metro/City Case Study Due by midnight – submit through Blackboard.
Mar. 21: **School Processes**

Sadovnik – Ch. 5 (2nd edition – 5)
Richardson, J. G. (Ed.) (1986). *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education.* Greenwood Press. (Ch. 5 and 6)

Additional Readings:
B&H – Ch. 7

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Mar. 28 **Educational Attainment**

Sadovnik - Ch. 15-16 (2nd edition – 17-18)
B&H – Ch. 10


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Apr. 4: **Social Capital/Social networks**


Additional Readings:
Sadovnik – Ch. 6

Apr. 11: Social networks


Assignment: Bring to class Print outs of School district/school or college/university demographics and changes over time and other indicators for case studies.

Assignment: All Book Reviews Due.

Apr 18 –

Work on final papers

Apr 25 – Social Movements/Action


Assignment: Final Paper Due - April 29
Assignments

Attendance and Participation:  20 pts.
Book Review (individual):  20 pts.
Metro Case Study:  25 pts.
School/University Case Study:  35 pts.

Attendance and Participation:  20 pts.
◊  Due:  ongoing

Given the nature of ED 412, it is important that all students participate fully in the course. My expectation is that students will attend each class and be prepared by carefully reading all required readings. In addition, I expect that students will participate fully in classes, particularly during sessions with guest speakers, student presentations, or in-class group activities. Participation will be evaluated based on the contribution to the discussion and other students’ learning; it will not be evaluated based on the number or length of comments.

1. Reading Briefs: As part of your ongoing participation in this course, you are required to prepare a 1-2 page brief each week that emerged from your reading of the required articles/chapters/etc. The weekly briefs will serve as a basis for our class discussions. They should be informal reflections on the readings assigned for that particular week, not summaries of the readings. The brief should have a focus, picking a particular aspect of the reading(s) and reacting to it. You may incorporate your own experience with the topic or you might offer a more general reaction to the subjects under consideration. At the end of each brief, you must include at least 2 thoughtful questions for discussion based upon the readings.

These briefs are due no later than 9:00 p.m. every Sunday and should be emailed to me through Blackboard. Briefs submitted after the deadline will be recorded as received late. Students may choose not to submit briefs on any three weeks of the term without penalty. However, students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in every session. The briefs will not be graded, but will constitute a major criterion in judging class preparation and participation and in allowing me to gauge students’ understanding of these complex topics.

2. Book Talk: As part of your participation you must participate in two aspects of the book talk. The first, you must meet with all of the other people in the group at a time that you designate together. I am assuming that like a book club this would be a meeting that would occur for a couple of hours to allow you to discuss the book fully but this may vary slightly depending upon the number of people in the group. You also must be prepared to co-lead the discussion of the book during the assigned day. This does not need to be a formal presentation – but your work will be strengthened by drawing upon our other readings and creating questions that generate rich dialogue among those that have read the book or even those who have not in the class. See schedule for assigned date for each book talk.
**Book Review (Individual): 20 points**
◊ All papers are due April 11.

Each student must select one of the following books for this assignment. Each of you will individually write a short review of the book (max. 6 pages, double spaced).


This is a critique, and not just a summary of the author’s points. Please read over the additional materials that I provide before starting your book review.

**Midterm - Metro Case Study: 25 points**
◊ Due: March 14 (12-15 double spaced)

Students will be expected to conduct a case study of a major urban metropolitan area and its central city. Some portions of the case study will be due in installments over the course of the semester. The written case study will include an analysis of the area, including demographic changes over time. More details regarding this assignment will be handed out in class.

**Final - School/university case study within the metropolitan area: 35 pts**
◊ Due: April 29 (approximately 20 pages double spaced)

The final paper should be approximately 18-20 pages and consist of a case study of either a school district/school or a college/university/community college. More details will be handed out in class.
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<td>Session #1:</td>
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<td>Session #2:</td>
<td>Start weekly reading briefs (due Sun).  Choose metro area (before class) and book (during class)</td>
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<td>Session #4:</td>
<td>Bring maps to class</td>
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<td>Session #8:</td>
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<td>Bring demographics to class. Book reviews Due</td>
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