

**EDUCATION 708, SECTION 1: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF
EDUCATION
3 credits**

Quality public education is essential to our prosperity as a nation. Our nation is a pluralistic democracy with a capitalist economy driven by innovation, and with a heritage of honoring difference and protecting human rights. We should advocate for quality public education through illumination and persuasion. (cf Kym Buchanan, 2016)

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" – Nelson Mandela

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." – Nelson Mandela

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

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Instructor Information

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Welcome to *EDUC 708 Social and Cultural Foundations of Education*. This course is entirely online. There are no required class meetings. There is no Final Exam. The Syllabus, along with this document, includes everything you need to do to complete this course. **BEING A WORK IN PROGRESS DOCUMENT, I ASK THAT YOU CHECK IN WEEKLY FOR ADDITIONAL CONTENT. DO SEND AN EMAIL IF QS ARISE. Thank you for your understanding.**

Enduring Understanding: Learners will understand that

- For a nation to advance itself, it must provide high Quality Education to ALL its citizens – regardless of race, income, where you live, religion, and other defining labels;

- EDUCATION must be perceived as a process, a journey that is open and accessible to all regardless of when you start or stop;

- To serve its purpose in a global economy, the American System of Education must look to those directly affected in the classroom – teachers, students/learners, for questions, answers, & guidance.

MAJOR TEXT: Ravitch, D. (2016). *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice are Undermining Education*. New York: Basic Books.

Other Readings: A variety of carefully chosen articles to reflect the trajectory, purpose, and challenges of Education (from KDP magazine - KAPPAN & other sources). These will be stored and available on Canvas. **(ONGOING)**

Student Learning Outcomes: SACFOE

- Participants will review, analyze, and prepare personal interpretations from course readings on SACFOE
- Participants will prepare and design a Public AD on an Issue of Interest in Education

- Participants will design a Framework /Template that they believe strongly should be an essential component of Public Education; one that is easily accessible to learners, teachers, families, and community.

I. Purpose and Description of Course:

Welcome to EDUC 708 Social and Cultural Foundations of Education. In this course we will explore the relationship between our schools and our nations. We will consider why we invest in education, the challenges of helping every student feel welcome and be successful, and some controversies in education.

II. Course Objectives:

If you bring sufficient ability and apply reasonable effort to this course, you will improve your demonstrable knowledge, skills, and dispositions in how you:

1. Approach controversial issues in education and other complex domains by applying multiple perspectives in a nuanced, flexible manner.
2. Articulate a vision for the value of funding quality public education.
3. Construct compelling arguments that merge shared values with beliefs about causality to build towards consensus on education policies.
4. Construct creative, compelling messages about education issues, aimed at public audiences with wide-ranging backgrounds and literacies.

Weekly Outline [Subject to Change]

Dates	Tentative Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due by <u>11.59 pm</u> of the Deadline
Unit 1 1/21 - 2/1	Starting out	Syllabus. Under Construction. Built Weekly to provide materials for the next UNIT of Work (Content)	1/31 /20 i. Early School Experience ii. Now & Then – DISCUSSION threads
Unit 2 2/3 - 2/15	Beginning with Issues	Ravitch text: Prologue Start with Journal 1	= <u>Journal 1</u> - Which two issues were raised by the author in the Prologue <u>Weekly Finds</u> - Find an article that mentions the Issues you identified. Include in your Journal
Unit 3 2/17 - 2/29	Learning about school Reform-	i-Ravitch - Chap 1 <i>What I learned about School Reform</i> ii-Berliner, D (2005) <i>Our Impoverished View of Educational Reform</i> https://nepc.colorado.edu/author/berliner-david-c iii-Payne C & Knowles T (2016). <i>Promise and Peril: Charter Schools, Urban School Reform, and the Obama</i>	Short Thought Paper 1-3 pgs Ravitch writes, "Government-run schools, said a new generation of reformers, are ineffective because they are a monopoly; as such, they have no incentive to do better, and they serve the interests of

		<p><i>Administration</i>. In <i>Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader</i>. Sadovnik & Coughlan (Ed) (p.459 -467)</p> <p>Short Thought Paper on Reform: Perspectives & Evaluation (see assignment description at the end of the OUTLINE)</p>	<p>adults who work in the system, not children." (p. 9). Evaluate the reformers' assertion: how much is it true and not true?</p> <p>What are your perspective(s) about Berlner's claim about viewing school reform?</p> <p>If at all, identify and discuss any connection(s) between these authors' take on school reform(s)</p>
<p>Unit 3 (2/24 – 2/29)</p> <p><i>Public Schools Week</i></p>	<p>The major Movements – Standards & Testing</p> <p>Action Research: Hands-On exploration and data sharing on a topic or issue of interest to you. For e.g.</p> <p>-Parent's goal for their children's education (what is their goal for sending their children to public schools)</p> <p><i>Essentials of Curriculum in my classroom.</i></p> <p><i>Assessment of Learning in my classroom.</i></p> <p>(Detail forthcoming)</p>	<p>Ravitch – i. Chap2 <i>How the Standards Movement Turned into the Testing Movement</i>. ii. Chap 6 – <i>NCLB- Measure & Punish</i></p> <p>-<i>High-Stakes Testing and Student Achievement: Problems for the No Child Left Behind Act</i>. Sharon L. Nichols. Gene V Glass & <u>David C. Berliner</u> (2005) access – website below</p> <p>https://nepc.colorado.edu/author/berliner-david-c</p>	<p><u>Journal 2</u> – Personal Perspective on Public Education & its main players</p> <p>Study Question (Ravitch, Ch 2). Ravitch writes, "A well-educated person has a well-furnished mind, shaped by reading and thinking about history, science, literature, the arts, and politics. The well-educated person has learned how to explain ideas and listen respectfully to others." (p. 18) Then she writes, "Whatever could not be measured did not count." (p. 24) Consider our ultimate collective goal in education. Describe some additional traits of a well-educated person and describe how we could or couldn't measure those traits.</p> <p><u>Weekly Finds</u> – Find an article that mentions the Issues you identified. Include in your Journal</p>

<p>Unit 4 3/2 – 3/13</p>	<p>The Politics of Education – Private or Public Gain</p> <p>Public Good vs Private Investment</p> <p>A Nation at Risk (ANAR)</p>	<p>Ravitch – Chap2 <i>How the Standards Movement Turned into the Testing Movement</i>. Consider ANAR</p> <p>- Article on Canvas -Public schools for private gain: <i>The declining American commitment to serving the public good – Labaree, 2018</i></p>	<p>Journal 3 – Considering the alarm raised by the ANAR report (see p. 28-34- Ravitch), identify & discuss two benefits and two challenges of the report. Argue the connections or disconnections between ANAR & the Public good or private gain of public education</p> <p><u>Weekly Finds</u> – Find an article that discussed your stand on the connection or otherwise. Include in your Journal</p>
<p><u>(3/16 – 3/21) Spring Break</u></p>	<p><u>(3/16 – 3/21) Spring Break</u></p>	<p><u>(3/16 – 3/21) Spring Break</u></p>	
<p>Unit 5 3/23 – 4/4</p>	<p>How do we perceive teachers /teacher educators?</p>	<p>Ravitch – Chap 9</p>	
<p>Unit 6 4/6 – 4/18</p>	<p>Segregation & More: Achievement Gap</p> <p>When will it end?</p>	<p>Articles by Reardon & Owens (2016) <i>60 years after Brown: Trends and Consequences of school segregation</i>. In <i>Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader</i>. Sadovnik & Coughlan (Ed) (p 423 – 438)</p>	
<p>Unit 7 4/20 – 5/8</p>		<p><i>A conversation between Diane Ravitch and Mike rose</i> (pub May 12, 2010)</p> <p>- Article on Canvas -i. <i>Telling new stories about school</i> (Stitzlein& Abowitz, 2019)</p>	<p>Final Project</p>

ASSIGNMENTS: TITLE, POINTS, DESCRIPTIONS & DUE DATES (Tentative)

Assignment & Points	Description	Due
Starting out: i. School Experience; ii. Now & Then 20 points	A brief paper that describes your earliest memories of going to school; (details on Canvas) ===== <i>Now & Then: describe two issues or practices that you observe today and wish you had during your early school experience. Why these specific issues? What were their benefits? How will you maximize these issues in your classroom</i>	1/31;
Journals – response to Readings, and More (5 in TOTAL) 30 points	This assignment enables you to document those issues, matters, & ideas that resonate (or do not). It is a response to readings, observations, & personal experience or discoveries. There will be five in all	Journal # 1 = Journal #2 = Journal #3 = Journal #4 = Journal # 5
Weekly Finds – (5 in TOTAL) 20 points	These Finds refer to articles, newspaper clips, short essays, book quotes, that can be used to enrich Journal Entries . Please cite Finds in full at the end of journal entries. Total = 5 Finds	Will accompany Journals
Hands- On Action Research on an Issue in Public Education 30 points	Hands on preparation & presentation on an issue of interest. For e.g. Parental goals, Assessment, Curriculum	(2/24 – 2/29) Public Schools Week
*Short Thought Paper on School Reform 20 points	Special short papers on specific topics in Education (See Below) <i>Short Thought Paper 1. <u>On School Reform: Authors' Perspectives and My Take</u></i>	DUE 2/17 - 2/29
Final Project: 50 points	A paper & Artefacts that underscore how an issue or idea can be integrated in education. YOU CHOOSE	Last week of school – May 2020
	TOTAL =170	

***Short Thought Paper – Detailed Description**

Ravitch writes, "Government-run schools, said a new generation of reformers, are ineffective because they are a monopoly; as such, they have no incentive to do better, and they serve the interests of adults who work in the system, not children." (p. 9). =Evaluate the reformers' assertion: how much is it true and not true?

Berliner, 2005; Payne C & Knowles T (2016) also shared invaluable insights about school reforms, specifically, emergence of Charter schools etc.

Qs: Describe your perspective(s) about these authors' views or claims about school reform. What if any, are the similarities or otherwise among these claims?. Give your own OPINION on school reform. Feel free to cite other resources- books or journal articles etc.

Optional Sites to Consult on Issues in Education

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U&feature=share>

https://www.ted.com/talks/olympia_della_flora_creative_ways_to_get_kids_to_thrive_in_school

https://www.ted.com/talks/kandice_sumner_how_america_s_public_schools_keep_kids_in_poverty

<https://fee.org/articles/schooling-is-not-a-public-good/>

<https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/public-schooling-not-public-good>

<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/criminalizing-kids-the-overlooked-reason-for-failing-schools>

<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/author/ansleyerickson> The Rhetoric of Choice: Segregation, Desegregation, and Charter Schools (Ansley T. Erickson Fall 2011) (DISSENT)