

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy

PPHA 39330

Spring 2015

Tuesdays, 6:00 pm to 8:50 pm

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Office Hours: By Appointment

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP, POLICY, AND PHILANTHROPY

Overview:

This course examines the contemporary issues of school reform and the various and competing theories driving change within the Chicago Public Schools, and beyond. Students will gain a breadth of theoretical perspectives that will be used to understand and debate the real-time events that are most likely to unfold during the term.

Topics:

1. Purpose: What is the purpose of public education?
2. Theories of Reform: What are the various theories driving policy and practice?
3. International Standards and Benchmarking: What do students need to know and be able to do to succeed in the 21st century? What is good enough?
4. Assessment: How do we know what students know?
5. Financing Public Education: What is adequate funding to deliver on the promise of public education for all students?
6. Equity and Excellence: How do we reconcile or optimize both?
7. Diversity and Inclusion: What role do race, ethnicity, and class play in education?
8. Teaching and Learning: What does good instruction look like, and how do we prepare teachers?
9. Models of Change: How do we improve public schools?
10. Organizing for Change: What is the purpose of the school district and how do we organize for change?
11. Leadership: What does it take to improve schools, improve school systems?
12. Philanthropy: Can philanthropy make a difference?

Course Texts

Most reading assignments will consist of articles and chapters, supplemented with current reports and news articles. Three books will be assigned:

Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2014).

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008).

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

Methods of Instruction: Lecture, class discussion, small group discussion, student presentations, observation of video clips, small and large group activities, small group projects.

Requirements: Because this course is dense with reading, we need to make the best possible use of our time in class together. It is expected that students will attend every session and arrive at every class well prepared to discuss the reading; the reading demand is considerable and falling behind allows little opportunity to catch up. This course places a premium on reading, thinking, in-class discussion, teamwork, and writing. Writing will be emphasized because high quality writing skills are foundational to your development as a professional, strengthening thinking and communications.

Student participation will be evaluated on the basis of three criteria. In order of importance, those criteria are: (a) the individual student's contribution to other students' learning; (b) clarity and originality of student's contribution; and (c) the student's willingness to assume responsibility for making the class discussion work. Students will not be evaluated on the basis of the number or length of comments in class. I expect each of you to be actively engaged and strong contributors during each class session. Substantive contributions to class discussions are ones that draw from what you have read (this means that I am seeking contributions that are grounded in readings and evidence rather than contributions that are presented only as personal opinions). **This class needs to become a space for critical discourse and the "healthy" challenge of ideas and practices.**

Students are expected to participate in and complete all assignments posted on Chalk as indicated by the instructor.

Each student will offer the class a 10-minute (maximum!) presentation on a required or recommended reading for the course. Each presentation will be followed by 20-30 minutes of peer feedback on such criteria as clarity, strength of argument, success at compelling interest, and learning value.

Mid-Term: For the mid-term project each student will select one of the following three topics to produce a 3-5 page analysis of the issue:

1. National Policy
Discuss and analyze the national policies proposed to improve our nation's schools and provide an argument for which national policies will be most effective.
2. The Role of Philanthropy
Research a national or local foundation, discuss its theory of action and grant strategy, and critique the efficacy of its strategy.
3. Chicago Public Schools Policy
Research a current or proposed CPS policy, discuss its theory of action, and critique the efficacy of this strategy.

Students will be allowed to revise the mid-term and raise the grade of the mid-term by one letter grade maximum.

Team Project: Students will work in teams of 3-4 to develop an education plan to improve the Chicago Public Schools based on an assessment of context and reform strategies. The teams will present their education plan in class.

Final: Building on the team project, each student will write a final paper (10-12 pages, not including references) that builds on the theoretical perspectives gained from this course to the formulation of an education plan for the Chicago Public Schools, or for another relevant school system. Specifically, the paper should address how you would improve the Chicago Public Schools:

Statement of the Problem

Definition of Success

Theory of Action

Research/Evidence Base

Policy Recommendations: What policies are required to make this change?

Policy Implementation: What steps must be taken to implement this policy?

Grading

The course grade is based on five components:

In-class participation (10%)

In-class presentation of a reading (10%)

Mid-term Paper (25%)

Team Presentation (25%)

Final Paper (30%)

Syllabus

March 31, 2015 (Class #1)

Topic: Purpose: What is the purpose of public education?

Readings:

Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987). Chapter 2 (pp. 48-70).

Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2014). Chapters 1- 4 (pp. 1-52)

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapter 1 (pp. 1-14)

Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schoen, *Theory In Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1974). Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3-34)

Excerpt from Singleton and Linton, *Courageous Conversations About Race*; (Corwin Press, 2006)

April 7, 2015 (Class #2)

Topics: Equity and Excellence: How do we reconcile or optimize both?

Financing Public Education: What is adequate funding to deliver on the promise of public education for all students?

Readings:

Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane, "Introduction: The American Dream, Then and Now" in *Whither Opportunity?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2011).

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008). Chapter 1 (pp. 17-48).

U.S. Department of Education, *For Each and Every Child—A Strategy for Education Equity and Excellence*, (Washington, D.C., 2013).

April 14, 2015 (Class #3)

Topic: Theories of Reform: What are the various theories driving policy and practice?

Readings:

George W. Noblit, “Unpacking the Meaning of School Reform” in *Handbook of Research in the Social Foundations of Education*, edited by Steven E. Tozer et al (New York: Routledge, 2011). Chapter 49 (pp. 621-631).

Harry Brighouse and Gina Schouten, “Understanding the Context for Existing Reform and Research Proposals” in *Whither Opportunity?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2011).

Fullen, Michael, “Choosing the Wrong Drivers for Whole System Reform” *Seminar Series Paper Number 204* (Victoria: Centre For Strategic Education, 2011).

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapter 2 (pp. 15-30)

April 21, 2015 (Class #4)

1. **Topics:** Teaching and Learning: What does good instruction look like, and how do we prepare teachers? Diversity and Inclusion: What role do race, ethnicity, and class play in education?

Readings:

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapters 8 and 9 (pp. 149-194)

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008). Chapters 3 and 4 (pp. 67-120).

Pauline Lipman, *High Stakes Education*, Chapters 1 and 2 (Routledge, 2004)

Frances E. Kendall, *Understanding White Privilege*, Chapters 3 and 4 (Routledge, 2006)

April 28, 2015 (Class #5)

Topic: Theories of Reform: What are the various theories driving policy and practice?

Readings:

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapters 3 and 6 (pp. 31-46; 93-112)

Seymour B. Sarason, *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990) Chapters 1, 2, and 7 (pp. 1-31; 117-134)

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008). Chapter 7 (pp. 191-206).

Gary Orfield et al, *E Pluribus ... Separation*, (The Civil Rights Project 2012).

May 5, 2015 (Class #6)

Topics: International Standards and Benchmarking: What do students need to know and be able to do to succeed in the 21st century? What is good enough?

Assessment: How do we know what students know?

Readings:

Marc S. Tucker, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2011)

Steven L. Paine and Andreas Schleicher, *What The U.S. Can Learn from the World's Most Successful School Reform Efforts* (McGraw-Hill Research Foundation, Policy Paper: Lessons from PISA, 2011).

Midterm Paper Due

May 12, 2015 (Class #7)

Topic: Models of Change: How do we improve public schools?

Readings:

Anthony S. Bryk, et al, *Organizing Schools for Improvement* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010) Chapter 2 (pp. 42-78)

Brian Rowan, “Intervening to Improve the Educational Outcomes of Students in Poverty: Lessons from Recent Work in High Poverty Schools” in *Whither Opportunity?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2011)

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapter 11 (pp. 223-242)

Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2014). Chapters 5- 7 (pp. 53 - 108)

Team Presentations

May 19, 2015 (Class #8)

Topic: Organizing for Change: What is the purpose of the school district and how do we organize for change?

Readings:

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapters 4 and 5 (pp. 47--92)

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008). Chapter 5 (pp. 121-152).

Jonathan Supovitz, “Why We Need District-Based Reform”, in *Education Week* (November 28, 2007)

James P. Spillane and Charles L. Thompson, “Looking at Local Districts’ Capacity for Ambitious Reform” in *CPRE Policy Bulletin*

Elevating Our Vision For Learning: Improving Schools for All (Chicago Public Schools, 2011)

Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2014). Chapters 8-9 (pp. 109 - 144)

Team Presentations

May 26, 2015 (Class #9)

Topic: Leadership: What does it take to improve schools, improve school systems?

Readings:

Stacey Childress et al, “How to Manage Urban School Districts” in *Harvard Business Review* (November 2006)

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapter 7 (pp. 113-148)

Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform So Little Change* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008). Chapter 6 (pp. 153-190).

James P. Spillane, *Distributed Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006). Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1-51)

Paul Tough, *Whatever It Takes*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008) Chapters 1, 2, and 4 (pp. 1-52; 98-125).

Sir Michael Barber, *et al*, *Capturing the Leadership Premium—How the World's Top School Systems are Building Leadership Capacity for the Future* (McKinsey & Company, 2010)

Team Presentations

June 2, 2015 (Class #10)

Topic: Philanthropy: Can philanthropy make a difference?

Readings:

Joel L. Fleishman, *The Foundation* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007). Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1-31)

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Chapter 10 (pp. 195-222)

June 9, 2015

Final Papers Due