

Education 160: Foundations of Education Reform Summer 2014

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Time: M/W 9:00-12:30

Location: Soc Sci 1 Rm 149

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-2

Introduction

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of the origins, concerns and goals of education reform. We will explore the relationship between purposes of public education and the focus of reform. In addition to examining the breadth of strategies that reformers have employed, we will go beneath the surface to explore the assumptions, or theories of action, in which educational reform is rooted. We will study the assumptions and the theories of action on which specific reform strategies are based and assess the evidence of their effectiveness.

Guiding questions:

1. What is the purpose of public education?
2. What is educational reform and why is it needed?
3. What needs to be reformed and why?
4. What is the relationship between social conceptions of the purpose of education and the focus of educational reform?
5. What are the advantages of markets over government agencies for distributing educational services and vice versa?
6. What specific reform strategies have been advanced?
7. What evidence do we have that these strategies work?
8. What is the relationship between what we spend on education and student achievement?
9. Who controls education and how are reforms brought about?

Readings

Most readings will be posted on eCommons. There is one required text that can be purchased at The Literary Guillotine 204 Locust Street, Santa Cruz, CA

Assignments and Grading

Your grade will be weighted according to these parameters:

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| 15% | Attendance & Participation |
| 35% | Reading Responses & Group Presentation |
| 50% | Written Work |

1. Class attendance, preparation and participation (15%) As we have so few class periods together, your attendance at, preparation for, and participation in every class are vital. We will discuss material in pairs, small groups and as a whole class, so please be fully prepared. Missing more than one class (including excused absences) will result in a lower grade. If you

do miss class, it is your responsibility to get information that you missed from a classmate and complete all assignments on time. NOTE: If you miss more than 2 classes, your course standing will come under review and may result in a non-passing final grade.

2. Reading Responses and Class Presentations (35%)

Reading Response Blog: You will keep a reading response blog on eCommons and post responses for all the readings we do in class. The reading responses are intended to give you a chance to grapple with the readings and prepare you for class discussion. Please post your responses by 7pm, the night before class **and** read the responses of at least one other member of your group. Guidelines for the reading responses will be provided.

Class Presentations: In a small group, you will present on a topic that relates to the readings/topic for the class. Topics have been assigned but your group can propose something else, as long as it relates to the focus of the class. Your task is to research the topic, prepare a short presentation and lead a discussion that links the topic to the week's reading (30 minutes total). **You do not need to post a reading response for the class you are facilitating.**

3. Written Work (50%) You will write 3 papers: 2 short papers (3-4 pages, double spaced) and 1 longer paper (6-8 pages, double spaced).

Paper 1: What is/was the purpose of public education? (25%) You may draw on your own K-12 educational experience in answering this question or discuss the question historically from the readings/films/discussions. You do not need to list every conceivable purpose but should focus on a purpose or set of purposes or evaluate a particular experience using purpose as a lens. This paper is intended as an opportunity for you to 1) connect the readings to your own experience of schooling and to explore the implications from a personal perspective or 2) consider it historically. In both cases you must anchor your discussion to purpose and draw extensively from Labaree (and/or Goodlad) for this paper.

Due Friday June 27th 5:00pm

Paper 2: Reform document analysis (25%)

You have three options:

a) Analyze one of the five reform documents read in class. Please do not offer a summary of the report's contents but rather an analysis of its position in regards to the purpose of education and its vision for reform. What are the implications of this vision for education? Please provide context as appropriate. You may analyze the report your group studied or you may select another.

b) Compare the vision and implications of any two reports. Make sure you have a solid sense of why a comparison of any two would be interesting and relevant.

c) Trace a theme through several reform documents: how has the vision of secondary schools evolved? How has the tension between vocational and academic goals for education played out over the last 100 years of educational reform?

Due Friday July 4th 5:00pm

Paper 3: Position Paper (50%)

Pick a particular educational reform, past, present, or future and make a case for adopting this reform. You may draw from one of the reform strategies we studied in class or you can propose a new reform. Your paper should be persuasive and include counterarguments (in other words, address the arguments or concerns of the reform's opponents). In making your case you should consider the following points:

- a. What is the purpose of education inherent to the strategy? What are the intended outcomes?
- b. Describe in detail the theory of action. What are the underlying assumptions on which the strategy is based?
- c. Present your rationale for using this strategy to reach your intended outcomes. What evidence would indicate that the reform were a success? What unintended consequences might result from the reform?

Possible reform topics not covered in class (not an exhaustive list – be creative!):

Dual Immersion Bilingual Education
Expeditionary Learning
Environmental Education
Service Learning
Progressive Education
Civic Education
Restorative Justice (reforming discipline policy)
Detracking

Due Friday July 25th 5:00pm

Evaluation of Written Work

Papers will be graded based on clarity of ideas, complete answers to questions, connection of analysis to course readings and quality of writing. Well-expressed writing that answers the question/addresses the issue in an articulate way and with reference to the readings will receive top marks. You must have a thesis idea and you must support and prove your thesis with evidence from the course material. Drawing on additional references and materials appropriately and effectively may boost your marks but omitting the course readings will negatively influence your grade. In all papers - please be clear on what your point is – make sure you make a point and that you support it with evidence and analysis from the reports and readings. Plan your papers well. Please note: late papers will be marked down.

A – Excellent. The paper is well written and persuasively draws on class readings and discussions to frame your analysis and provides clear and complete answers to the question/issue. There is a clearly stated thesis that the paper thoroughly develops.

B – Good. The paper provides clear and generally complete answers to the questions. The paper draws from course readings but not in a particularly compelling or convincing way. There is a thesis but it is not clearly stated and would benefit from more development.

C – Adequate. The paper provides basic answers to the questions. References to course readings are superficial or cursory. The thesis is not clear.

D/F Inadequate. The paper does not provide clear answers that are drawn from the course readings and class discussion.

All papers should have bibliographies in APA style – please cite class readings as well as outside readings. Please do not cite the reader as the source.

Class Meeting Schedule:

Week 1-2 Foundations of Education Reform

Mon. June 23

1. What is education reform?
2. What are the basic aims of reform?
3. How can historical trends in reform inform our thinking of current reform?

READING DUE:

Tyak (1990) *Restructuring in Historical Perspective: Tinkering Towards Utopia*

In class:

Episode 2 *American Schooling – As American as Public School 1890 – 1950*

Wed. June 25

READING DUE:

1. What is the purpose of public education and how is purpose implicated in education reform?
2. What does the public expect of its schools?

David Labaree, "Private Goods, Public Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals." *American Educational Research Journal* 34 (1) Spring 1997.

John Goodlad, *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future* (1984). Chapter 2 "We Want it All."

Paper 1 due Friday June 27 (uploaded to eCommons by 5:00pm)

Mon. June 30

1. Who should decide the purpose, goals and emphasis of public education?
2. How much education is enough?
3. What should be learned?
4. How is success determined?

READING DUE:

Wisconsin v. Yoder et al., 406 US 205 (1972)

Summary of Massachusetts education reform act and timeline of reform.

Rose v. Council for Better Education, 790 S.W. 2d 186/60 Ed Law Rep. 1289 (1989)

"Court reverses Financial Ruling on City School" New York Times, June 26, 2002

Wed. July 2

1. What is the purpose of high school? How should it be structured to fulfill that purpose?
2. How have shifts in purpose resulted in shifts of structure of high school?

You will read one reform document and come to class prepared to create a presentation in a small group. Take notes and be prepared to discuss the reform's theory of action.

Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies

Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education

Second to None

What Work Requires of Schools: A Scans Report for America 2000

A Nation at Risk

Paper 2 due Friday July 4 (uploaded to eCommons by 5:00pm)

Week 3-5 Reform Models

Mon. July 7

Education reform today

1. What is the difference between adequacy and equality in education reform?
2. How should schools be funded? Who should decide how funding is allocated?

READING DUE:

Koski & Reich (2006) When "Adequate" Isn't: The Retreat from Equity in Educational Law and Policy

In class:

Group Presentations: Serrano vs. Priest & San Antonio ISD vs. Rodriguez

Wed. July 9

Teacher Professionalization

1. Is teaching a profession? Are teachers professionals? What markers of professionalism are evident in the teaching profession? Who controls teachers' work?
2. How have reforms aimed to professionalize teaching and what obstacles have these reforms encountered?
3. Are teachers sufficiently compensated for their work? What is the role of unions and teacher tenure in educational reform?

READING DUE:

Ingersoll Introduction in *Who Controls Teachers' Work? Power and Accountability in America's Schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University press (2003).

In class:

Guest speaker and discussion on Vergara decision and teacher tenure

Group Presentation – Teacher status and pay in different countries

Mon. July 14

Teacher Professionalization (cont.)

1. What is the importance of teacher preparation and what role has it played in professionalization reform?
2. How should we define and measure teacher quality?

READING DUE:

Darling-Hammond, L. Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis* Vol. 8, No. 1.

Darling-Hammond: Teach for America: Who Will Speak for the Children

In class:

Group presentation – Teach for America

Kopp and Ravitch What Does Real Reform Require

Wed. July 16

Standards and Accountability

1. Who should decide what students learn? Should standards be centralized or decentralized? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
2. All reform has consequences – anticipated and unintended. What are the unintended consequences of accountability reform? Do the benefits outweigh the consequences?

READING DUE:

Meir (2000) Educating a Democracy – Chapter 1 in *Will Standards Save Public Education?*

Selected Chapters from *Will Standards Save Public Education?* and *Tested: One American School Struggles to Make the Grade*

In class:

The Battle of City Springs

Group Presentation: Valenzuela vs. O’Connell (case brought against the California High School Exit Exam)

Mon. July 21

Markets & Choice

1. What are the underlying assumptions of school choice reforms?
2. How should we approach accountability and governance with public charter schools? Is it appropriate to let markets exclusively determine whether schools are adequately performing?

READING DUE

Common Reading:

Orfield (2012) Choice Theories and the Schools in *Educational Delusions?: Why Choice Can Deepen Inequality and how to Make Schools Fair.*

Shared Readings:

Chubb & Moe (1988) Politics, Markets and the Organization of Schools

Tweedie & Riley (1990) Should Market Forces Control Education Decision Making?

In Class:

Waiting for Superman

Group Presentation: Charter schools and Post-Katrina New Orleans

Wed. July 23**Community-based Education Reform (& Closure)**

1. What is the role of parents and the community in education reform?
2. When considering the trajectory of education reform, what underlying principles, values, or tensions have remained constant?

READING DUE

Common Reading:

Oakes, J., & Rogers, J. (2007). Radical change through radical means: Learning power. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8(3), 193-206.

In class:

Group Presentation – Parent Trigger Laws (via Huff Post)

Ed Reform Journey Maps

Final paper due Friday July 25, 2014

Suggested format for Reading Response

1. Key arguments/claims: What are the central claims or arguments advanced in the reading? What kinds of positions are being taken?
2. Connections: Can you connect the text to personal experience? Other readings? Issues or current debates in education?
3. Issues, problems, questions, doubts, and criticisms: Note any problems or concerns, questions or criticisms that you have about the reading this week.

Theory of Action

All reform aims to improve education and is guided by a theory of action. Understanding the sequence of logic provides a means to evaluate the reform. Sound evaluation of reform involves disrupting the logic to understand the theory of action.

1. How does the reform frame the problem?
 - a. What assumptions are embedded in the framing?
 - b. Are their competing “problems?” What evidence is there that this is, in fact, the problem?
2. What does it offer as the solution?
 - a. What assumptions are embedded in the proposed solution?
 - b. Are their competing “solutions?” What evidence is there that this, in fact, is the best solution?
3. How does the proposed solution aim to solve the problem?
4. What evidence will verify that the reform was successful?
5. What are possible unintended consequences?