

Politics of Urban Education
UCLA - Urban Schooling Division
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Schools operate in a complex web of political relationships, both within and outside the school. The issues confronting public schools are inextricably connected to the political conditions of the environments in which they are embedded. Too often, educational reform policy overlook these connections and educational innovations fail because of a lack of attention to the macro level context. The goal of this course is to explore a range of policy issues in the American public educational system and the political forces that shape them.

In this course we will analyze the politics of elementary and secondary education at the local, state and federal level with an emphasis on urban schools. Contemporary issues such as school choice, the influence of interest group politics and the politics of race, class and gender will be explored. Additionally, the role of policy and the development of policy as they relate to politics will also be explored.

In this course, there will be no attempt to canvass everything that is important, or everything there is to know about the politics of education. Rather there are three principal objectives that will guide our discussions and activities:

1. To provide students with a theoretical understanding of the politics and policies confronting urban public schools- systematic knowledge about the political environment of schools;
2. To make links between theory, research, and practice in order to positively influence the performance of students and schools in urban areas. Understanding the fact that political institutions just don't happen, but develop out of conflict and compromise among individual and groups with competing interests, the course explores the skills and strategies necessary to transform urban education;
3. To provide students with experience conducting "field work" in an urban school setting.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Grades in the course will consist of the following assignments / activities:

1. Class attendance / participation (15%)

Students are expected to come to class having read the material and being prepared for discussion; this course is designed as a seminar, not a lecture class. Your preparation, in terms of careful and thoughtful reading of the material, writing down questions of your own for discussion, and reviewing your notes

before class, will directly influence how much you can contribute to the discussion and how much you can expect to get out of it.

2. Weekly writing assignments (10%)

Students will be expected to write a 1-2 page reflection a selected article or a group of articles assigned each week. These reflections are intended to focus your thinking about the article(s) and prepare you to participate actively in the discussion.

3. Midterm, 3 to 5 page paper (20%) Due October 16th.

4. Policy Analysis paper, 5 to 7 pages (30%). Due November 27th.

5. School Inquiry Project (25%). Presentations November 27th and December 4th.

In addition, students will be asked to take turns moderating class discussion. During the course students will be asked to plan and lead small group discussions. The faculty will also be prepared with material, of course, but this structure is intended to establish the idea that this class is a community of inquiry, in which all participants have valuable and significant contributions to the learning process.

Another aspect of creating a sense of community in the class will be an electronic-mail (e-mail) bulletin board for class participation outside the formal constraints of the classroom. Students will be encouraged to participate as a way of sharing reactions to the readings, questions, new sources or ideas we might come across, and funny jokes in a more interactive and informal context.

Required Text for the course:

Engel, M. (2000). The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology vs. Democratic Values (2000). Philadelphia: Temple University Press and other supplemental readings as assigned.

WEEK 0 - September 25th, 2001
Schools as Political Institutions

Readings:

1. Mile, M., & Huberman, M. (1994). "Focusing and bounding the collection of data" in Qualitative Data Analysis, (pp. 16-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

WEEK 1 - October 2nd, 2001

Developing a Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Politics of Urban Education

Readings:

2. Chapters 1 & 23 in James Q. Wilson's American Government (Pp. 3-15 & 647-670).
3. Wong, K. (1994). "The politics of education: From political science to interdisciplinary inquiry", pg. 21-38, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
4. Stout, R.T., Telluric, M. Scibner, J.P. (1994). "Values: The what of the politics of education", pg. 5-20, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
5. Oakes, J., Welner, K., Yonezawa, S. & Allen, R. (1998). "Norms and Politics of Equity-Minded Change: Researching the 'Zone of Mediation'", Pp. 952-975, in Hargreaves, A. et al. (eds), International Handbook of Educational Change. Great Britain. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
6. Wong, K. (1991). "The politics of urban education as a field of study: An interpretive analysis". Politics of Education Association Yearbook, 1991, Pp. 3-26.

WEEK 2 - October 9th, 2001

Understanding the "Urban" in Urban Education

Readings:

7. Chapters 1, 2, 3 in Engel's The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology vs. Democratic Values, (Pp. 1- 67).
8. "The Changing Urban Scene", Chapter 1 & 2, Pp. 1-72, in J. Kretovics and E. Nussel's Transforming Urban Education. New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon.
9. Portz, J., Stein, L., & Jones, R. (1999). "Cities, Schools, and Civil Capacity", Chapters 1 & 2, Pp.1-38, in J. Portz, L. Stein & R. Jones' City Schools and City Politics: Institutions and Leadership in Pittsburgh, Boston and St. Louis. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.
10. Comer, J. (1999). "Creating successful urban schools", Pp. 327-370. Brookings Papers on Educational Policy, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute.
11. Wilson, W.J. (1996). Introduction.", Pp. Xii-xxiii, in W.J. Wilson's (Ed.) When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor.
12. Knops, A. (1996). "From Institutional to Jobless Ghettos," in W.J. Wilson's (Ed.) When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor.
13. Anyon, J. (1997). Cities, urban schools, and current visions of educational reform, pg. 3-13, in J. Anyon's Ghetto Schooling: A political economy of Urban Educational Reform. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

WEEK 3 - October 16th, 2001

American Politics and Education - The Role of the Federal, State and Local Government

Readings:

14. Chapters 3, and 15 in James Q. Wilson's American Government.
15. Lusi, S.F. (1997). The role of state departments of education in complex school reform, Chapter 1 & 2, Pg. 1-23. New York: Teachers College Press.
16. Mazzoni, T.L. (1994). "State policy-making and school reform: Influence and influentials", Pp. 53-74, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
17. Stoufe, G. (1994). Politics of education at the federal level, pg. 75-88, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
18. Bush, G. W. (2000). Leave no child behind.
19. Hill, P. (2000). "The federal role in education." Brookings Papers on Educational Policy, 371-405. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute.

WEEK 4 - October 23rd, 2001

Title One: The Federal Government's Largest Investment in Education

Readings:

20. Jennings, J. (2001). "Title 1: Its legislative history and its promise", Pp. 1-24, in G. Borman, S. Stringfield, & R. Slavin's Title 1 Compensatory Education at the Crossroads. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
21. Slavin, R. (2001). How Title 1 can become the engine of reform in America's schools, Pp. 235-260, in G. Borman, S. Stringfield, & R. Slavin's Title 1 Compensatory Education at the Crossroads. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
22. Farkas, G. & Hall, L. (2000). Can Title 1 attain it's goals?" Brookings Papers on Educational Policy, 59-123. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute.

WEEK 5 - October 30th, 2001

The Politics of School Choice

Readings:

23. Chapters 4 in Engel's The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology vs. Democratic Values, Pp. 68- 92.
24. Perterson, P. (1999). Top ten questions asked about school choice. Brookings Papers on Educational Policy, 371-405. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute.
25. Weeres, J. Cooper, B. (1991). "Public choice perspective on urban education, Pg. 57-69. Politics of Education Association Yearbook, 1991.
26. Fusarelli, L (2001). The political construction of accountability: When rhetoric meets reality." Education and Urban Society, 33(2), 157-169.
27. Wells, A., Grutzik, C., Carnochan, S., Slayotn, J., Vasudeva, A., (1999). Underlying policy assumptions of charter school reform: The multiple meaning of movement. Teacher College Record, 100(3), 513-535.

WEEK 6 – November 6th, 2001
Interest Group Politics and the Schooling Process

Readings:

28. James Q. Wilson's American Government Chapter 9, "Interest Groups"
29. Wells, A. & Serna, I (1996). "The politics of culture: understanding local political resistance to detracking in racially mixed schools". Harvard Educational Review, 66(1), 93-118.
30. Kerchner, C.T. & Cauffman, K.D. (1995). Lurching towards professionalism. The sage of teacher unionism. Elementary School Journal, 95(1), 107-122.
31. Mawhinney, H. & Lugg, C. (2001). Interest groups in United States education." Educational Policy, 15(1), Pp3-11.
32. Lugg, C. (2001). "The Christian right: A cultivated collection of interest groups." Educational Policy, 15(1), Pp. 41-57.
33. Opfer, D. (2001). Beyond self-interest: Educational interest groups and congressional influence." Educational Policy, 15(1), Pp. 135-152.
34. Mawhinney, H. (2001). "Theoretical approaches to understanding interest groups". Educational Policy, 15(1), Pp. 187-214.

WEEK 7 – November 13th, 2001
Politics of Institutional Culture: A Micro-political Perspective

Readings:

35. High, C., Scribner, J. & Clark, C. (2001). The Micro politics of a faculty-led school reform. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle.
36. Marshall, C. & Scribner, J. (1991). "It's all political: Inquiry into the micropolitics of education". Education and Urban Society, 23 (4), pp. 347-355.
37. Blasé, J (1991). The micropolitical perspective, chapter 1, in Blasé, J. (Ed.) The Politics of Life in Schools: Power, Conflict, and Cooperation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
38. Corbett, H (1991). Community influence and school micropolitics: A case study example, Pg. 73-95, in Blasé, J. (Ed.) The Politics of Life in Schools: Power, Conflict, and Cooperation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
39. Malen, B. (1994). "The micropolitics of education: mapping the multiple dimensions of power relations in school politics", Pp. 147-167, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
40. Johnson, B. (2001). "Micropolitical Dynamics of Education Interest: A view from within." Educational Policy, 15(1), 115-134.
41. Blasé, J. (1998). The Micropolitics of Educational Change", Pp. 544-557, in Andy Hargreaves, Ann Lieberman, Michael Fullan, & David Hopkins' International Handbook of Educational Change. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

WEEK 8 - November 20th, 2001
NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving
Politics of Knowledge and the Curriculum

Readings:

42. Anyon J, (1981). Social Class and School Knowledge. Curriculum Inquiry Journal, 11 (1), 3-41.
43. Oakes, J., Wells, A. & Datnow, A. (1997). "Detracking: The social Construction of ability, cultural politics, and resistance to reform". Teachers College Record, 98 (3), 483-510.
44. Peter Cookson, Jr. and Caroline Hodges Persell, Preparing for Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools (New York: Basic Books, 1985), "What is Taught and What is Learned," pp. 19-21; "Cultural Capital: Curricula and Teachers," pp. 73-93.
45. Chapters 7,8, & 9 in Engel's The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology vs. Democratic Values, Pp. 148- 219.
46. Taxel, J. (1997). "Multicultural literature and the politics of reaction". Teachers College Record, 98(3).

WEEK 9 - November 27th, 2001

The Politics of Difference: Race, Class and Gender in Education

Readings:

Politics of Difference:

47. Minow, M. (19xx). "Sources of differences", Pp. 49-78, in M. Minow's Making All the Difference: Inclusion, Exclusion, and American Law. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
48. Willie, C. (2000). "Excellence, Equity and Diversity", Pp. 40-53, in F Reimers' Unequal Schools, Unequal Chances. The challenges to equal opportunity in the Americas. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press.

Politics of Race:

49. Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1993). "On the theoretical status of the concept of race.", Pp. 3-10, in Race Identity and Representation in Education. New York, NY: Routledge.
50. House, E. (1999). Race and Policy. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 7 (6). <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v7n6.html>.
51. Nieto, S. (1998). Cultural difference and educational change in a sociopolitical context (Pp. 418-439), in Andy Hargreaves, Ann Lieberman, Michael Fullan, & David Hopkins' International Handbook of Educational Change. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
52. Pena, R. (1997). Cultural difference and the construction of meaning: Implications for the leadership and organizational context of schools. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 5 (10). <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v5n10.html>.
53. Sleeter, C.E. (1993). "How White Teachers Construct Race", (Chapter 12, pp. 157-171) in Race Identity and Representation in Education New York, NY: Routledge.
54. Talbert-Johnson, C. (2000). "The political context of school desegregation: Equity, school improvement and accountability". Education and Urban Society, 33(1), 3-16.

Politics of Social Class:

55. Anyon, J. (1995). Race, social class, and educational reform in the inner-city school. Teachers College Record, 97 (1).
56. Schheurich, J. (1998). "Highly successful and loving public elementary schools populated mainly by low SES children of color: Core beliefs and cultural characteristics". Urban Education, 33(4).

Politics of Gender:

57. Blackmore, J. (1998). The politics of gender and educational change: Managing gender or changing gender relations, Pp. 445-481, in Hargreaves, A. et al. (eds), International Handbook of Educational Change. Great Britain. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
58. Datnow, A. (1997). Using gender to preserve tracking's status hierarchy: The defensive strategy of entrenched teachers. Anthropology & Administration Quarterly, 28 (2).
59. Jordan, W. & Cooper, R (In press). Cultural Issues Related to Comprehensive High School Reform: Deciphering the Case of Black Males. (Urban Education).
60. Marshal, C. & Anderson, G. (1994). Rethinking the public and private sphere: feminist and cultural studies perspectives on the politics of education, 169-184, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
61. Salomone, R. (1999). Single-sex schooling: Law, policy, and research. Brookings Papers on Educational Policy, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute.

WEEK 10 – December 4th, 2001 The Politics of Urban School Reform
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Readings:

62. Cooper, R., Slavin, R.E. & Madden, N. (Under review). "Urban school reform: Changing schools one at a time with Success for all". Social Psychology of Education.
63. Williams, B. (1996). "A social vision for urban education: Focused, comprehensive and integrated change", (pp. 148-160), in Closing the achievement gap: A vision for changing beliefs and practice. Alexandria, VI: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
64. Chapters 6 in Engel's The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology vs. Democratic Values, Pp.120- 147.
65. Cibulka, J. (1994). Policy analysis and the study of the politics of education, pg. 105-126, in J. Scribner and D. Layton's The Study of Educational Politics: The 1994 Commemorative Yearbook of the Politics of Education Association (1969-1994). Washington, DC: Falmer.
66. Kirchenbaum, H. & Reagan, C. (2001). University and urban school partnerships: An analysis of 57 collaborations between a university and a big school district, Urban Education, 36(4), 461-478.
67. Orfield, G. (2000). Policy and Equity: Lessons of a third of a century of educational reform in the U.S., Pp400-429, in F Reimers' Unequal Schools, Unequal Chances. The challenges to equal opportunity in the Americas. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press.
68. Wang, M.C., Kovach, J.A. (1996). "Bridging the Achievement Gap in Urban Schools: Reducing Educational Segregation and Advancing Resilience-Promoting Strategies." Closing the Achievement Gap (Chapter 2, pp.10-36). Danvers, MA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.