

Sociocultural Influences on Learning
ALD 327 (#09505) / AFR 372D (#30640)
Spring 2020

Course Information

Class meets: 1:00-4:00 PM, Tuesdays, George I. Sánchez Building (SZB) 424

Instructor: Julia Echternach

Office Location: SZB 528

Pronouns: She / Her

Office Hours: M 1:30-3:00, T 11:00-12:30, and by appt.

Email: echternach@utexas.edu

Phone: Shared in class & on Canvas

Course Description

In this course, we will collectively examine the sociocultural influences on us and on our teaching work as educators, counselors, social workers, coaches, community leaders, and present and future parents / other-parents / tíos tías tíxs. We will study the intersecting social structures of settler colonialism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism in order to better understand ourselves in relation to our communities and society, and in order to explore and imagine what kind of teaching work can meet the challenges of the world in which we presently live.

Course Objectives

Knowledge Objectives

- We will learn how to describe and analyze structures of power in school and society.

Skills Objectives

- We cannot possibly explore in full histories of education and schooling, social constructions of race, gender, and sexuality, theories of class inequality, and so on. Thus, we will learn how to ask questions about the histories and present experiences of marginalized communities in schools and society. We will learn how to ask questions about the construction and disruption of unequal power relations and how to imagine something different.

Disposition Objectives

- We will be open to seeking and hearing multiple narratives about our world and our roles within it. We will aspire to become “good at learning.”

Methods for Meeting Course Objectives

- Close Reading & Film Viewing
- Service Learning in our Local Communities
- Autoethnography – Study of Personal Experiences & Family History
- Writing & Online Discussion
- Creative and Collaborative In-Class Activities

Tips for Success in the Course

- We will all benefit from approaching the course with openness, humility, good-will, and vulnerability, and from making our best effort to be present and prepared. Becoming an educator is a personal and collective journey, not a list of finite tasks.
- Begin service learning as soon as possible.
- Plan ample time for reading. Mark your text with underlining/highlighting, questions, thoughts, connections, etc..
- When writing, focus first on clearly expressing your thoughts and questions, rather than on “sounding academic” or using “correct” grammar, spelling, or punctuation.
- Communicate with the instructor about challenges and concerns that arise.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

- Course Reader, purchased from Jenn’s Copies
- Amanda Lewis (2003), *Race in the Schoolyard* – Available free at lib.utexas.edu
- Gloria Ladson Billings (1994), *The Dreamkeepers* – Available free at lib.utexas.edu
- Elizabeth Acevedo (2018), *The Poet X*

Required Technology

- You will need access to a computer in order to post and reply on Canvas discussion boards.
- Personal computers and campus computers can sometimes fail or shut down at inconvenient times. To prevent the loss of your work-in-progress, it is recommended that you save your writing online so that you can access it from another computer / device if necessary. You have access to a free cloud service on Google Drive with your @utexas.edu e-mail account.

Course Outline

All essential information will be on the Canvas website at <https://utexas.instructure.com>. Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced.

Week	Date	Guiding Question	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1	1/21	What is the purpose of schooling?	No readings due	No assignments due
2	1/28	How does our mindset influence our teaching work?	.Weiner, “Challenging Deficit Thinking” .Geronimus & Thompson, “To Denigrate, Ignore, or Disrupt”	Week 2 Post
3	2/4	How do social structures influence our identities	.Ahmed, “Feminism is Sensational”	Week 3 Post & Replies

		and mindsets?	.McIntosh, “White Privilege”	
4	2/11	How does white supremacy work? How does it affect our lives?	.Harris, “Whiteness as Property”	Week 4 Post & Replies Finalize Service Learning Site
5	2/18	How does colonialism work? How does it affect our lives and affect schools?	.Orange, <i>There, There</i> , “Prologue” .Hall, “Navigating our own sea of islands” .Suina, “The Pueblo People and the Dominant Culture”	Week 5 Post & Replies Service Learning: Neighborhood Tour Due
6	2/25	How does capitalism work? How does it affect our lives and affect schools?	.Rogoff, “Firsthand Learning and Intent Participation” .Freire, “The Banking Concept of Education”	Week 6 Post & Replies
7	3/3	How is race constructed in “white” spaces? What are the consequences of color-blind racial ideology?	.Lewis, <i>Race in the Schoolyard</i> , Chs. 1-2 .Dumas, “Losing an Arm”	Week 7 Post & Replies
8	3/10	How is race constructed in “urban” spaces? What are the consequences of aesthetic caring?	.Lewis, <i>Race...</i> , Ch. 3 .Valenzuela, <i>Subtractive Schooling</i> excerpts	Week 8 Post & Replies
--	3/24	NO CLASS		
9	3/31	How is race constructed in “progressive” spaces? How does white supremacy persist “in spite of our best intentions”?	.Lewis, <i>Race...</i> , Chs. 4, 5, & 6	Week 9 Post & Replies Family History Paper Due
10	4/7	How are gender and sexuality constructed in schools? How does	.Renolds, “Coming Out” .García, “Now Why Do You Want to Know About	Week 10 Post & Replies

		intersectionality work?	That?"	
11	4/14	Literary bridge: What intersecting structures shape Xiomara's identity? Where does she find meaningful education? How does she engage in transformational resistance?	.Acevedo, <i>The Poet X</i> .Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, "Examining Transformational Resistance"	Week 11 Post & Replies Schooling Autobiography Due
12	4/21	How do we re-define effective teachers and authentic learning?	.Ladson-Billings, <i>Dreamkeepers</i> , Chs. 1-2 .Yosso, "Whose Culture Has Capital?"	Week 13 Post & Replies
13	4/28	What do effective teachers do? How do effective teachers address challenges?	.Ladson-Billings, <i>Dreamkeepers</i> , Chs. 3-5	Week 14 Post & Replies Service Learning: Self & Other Reflection Due – Modified Instructions
14	5/5	What future do we want to build?	.Simpson, "Land & Reconciliation" .Boggs, <i>The Next American Revolution</i> , "A New Paradigm in Education" .Gumbs, "Evidence"	Week 15 Post & Replies

Assignments

Service Learning

You are no longer required to complete additional service learning hours. Please submit documentation of any hours you have completed so far and do not worry about completing the rest.

This course requires a 15-hour service learning component. Over the course of the semester, you must complete 15 hours of service with a local university, community organization, or school that promotes social justice in education. A list of recommended local organizations will be provided in class and on Canvas, and you may only work with another organization with the instructor's permission. You may continue service with a relevant organization with which you

have previously worked, but you may not count paid work as your service learning. If you do not complete the service learning requirement, you will receive a failing grade in the class. Consequently, you must make contact with an organization and confirm a start date by **February 11th**. Please contact me early within the first one to two weeks of class if you are having difficulty finding a site that meets your schedule and transportation needs. You will not receive points for completing the service learning, but will complete two assignments, making up 25% of your final grade, related to your service learning site.

Assignments	Percent of Total Grade
Weekly Discussion Board Posts	40%
Service Learning: Neighborhood Tour Paper	12.5%
Family History Paper	12.5%
Schooling Autobiography Paper	12.5%
Service Learning: Self & Other Reflection Paper	12.5%
Preparation & Participation	10%

All papers should be typed double-spaced, in 12 pt. Times New Roman, with one-inch margins. All papers should have a heading/header that includes the student’s name and the name of the assignment on a single line. Attempts to artificially lengthen the paper by changing the spacing, margins, typeface, or length of header will result in a lowered grade at the instructor’s discretion.

Weekly Discussion Board Posts (40% of grade)

Each week, the instructor will post a series of questions about the assigned readings on the Canvas site. Students must read the assigned texts and write a response that is a **minimum of one page**. This response must be posted by **7 PM Saturday**. Then, students must read the responses of the other members of their assigned group, and respond to each with a personal connection, textual connection, or question, by **7 PM Monday**. Responses will be graded based on completion and punctuality. Late responses may be turned in up to 1 week late for 60% credit and up to 2 weeks late for 40% credit; responses will not be accepted more than 2 weeks late.

Service Learning: Neighborhood Tour Paper (12.5% of grade)

The purpose of this paper is to gain an appreciation of what the service learning site and its neighborhood mean for the community you are working with. For this paper, you will ask a person who is closely involved with the service learning site – such as a program leader, an involved teacher, or a parent – to either walk with you on a brief (30 min.) tour of the neighborhood, or to write down a brief list of places that you should visit on your own (3 to 4

spots) and explain their value and significance. Some service learning sites serve people across the city rather than people in the local area. In this case, please prioritize visiting the neighborhood that is meaningful to the person you ask, rather than the neighborhood immediately surrounding the site. *See Canvas for full assignment instructions.*

Family History Paper (12.5% of grade)

The purpose of this paper is to explore how immigration, race, gender, and class have influenced your family's educational experiences over the past several generations. For this paper, you will plan an interview with a family member who can share knowledge about the experiences of some of your great-grandparents or of a previous generation further back. If possible, you should audio-record the interview so that you can return and listen to key details and not have to worry about taking notes while listening to your interviewee. If possible and desirable, you may interview multiple family members. You will design your own interview questions.

Please communicate with the instructor if specific circumstances would make a family history paper uniquely difficult or impossible, and you will be given an alternative assignment.

See Canvas for full assignment instructions.

Schooling Autobiography Paper (12.5% of grade)

The purpose of this paper is to apply our readings of race, class, gender, and sexuality in schools in order to critically reflect on your own schooling. Rather than only stating where you went to school and how much you did or did not like school, use this paper to explore aspects of your schooling that you had not considered previously or to consider new interpretations of familiar memories. *See Canvas for full assignment instructions.*

Service Learning: Self & Other Reflection Paper (12.5% of grade)

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on your position, mindset, and decision-making as a teaching-worker by focusing on your experience at your service learning site **or your beliefs about teaching**. *See Canvas for full assignment instructions.*

How will papers be graded?

Weekly discussion board posts will be graded for completion. I will read all posts, but due to the volume, will not be able to provide individual feedback.

Rubrics for each paper are available on Canvas so that you can clearly understand the expectations in advance. I will assign a grade with the rubric and provide written feedback that highlights one valuable insight in the paper and one question that you could continue thinking about. If you would like more detailed feedback, please set up a phone or in-person meeting with me, as UT does not allow grades to be discussed via e-mail.

Course Policies

Attendance

Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. You are expected to arrive on time and to stay the full length of the class (1:00-3:45 PM).

- If you miss class for any reason, you are still expected to complete the assignments due that day, to review any materials covered in class, and to reach out to classmates or to the

instructor with specific questions about what was covered. If you will not be able to complete the assignments on time, see the late policy below.

- You may have no more than one excused absence (an absence that will not, on its own, impact your grade). Absences may be excused due to:
 - *Religious holidays*: Please provide two weeks' notice.
 - *Emergency*: Please provide relevant documentation as soon as you have an opportunity.
- If you have a *contagious illness* (e. g. influenza, strep throat, norovirus), you may attend one class via video chat (Google Hangouts, FaceTime, Zoom Meeting, etc.) so that you can take care of yourself at home and avoid spreading illness to others. Please send the instructor a text with your name *and* make a phone call at least two hours before class so that I can check out an extra laptop for the video call.
- Each unexcused absence will result in a deduction of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a letter grade (7.5 percentage points) from your final grade. More than three absences, excused or unexcused, will result in a failing grade in the class. Excessive tardies and early departures (more than 3) will be treated as equivalent to an unexcused absence.

Late Assignments

I have selected these course readings and assignments because I strongly believe that they will be worthwhile in your journey of becoming an educator. If you are not able to complete an assignment on time, you are still required to complete the assignment. However, it is important for certain assignments to be completed punctually.

- *Service learning* must be initiated as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester. You should begin contacting sites during the first week of classes. You need to have a site and a start date confirmed by the fourth week of classes (Tuesday, February 11). If you have not confirmed a site and start date by this time, it will be difficult to succeed in the remainder of the course and we will need to meet in person to make a plan. If you do not complete the service learning requirement by the end of the semester, you cannot receive a passing grade in the class, even if you have received 100% on all other assignments.
- *Discussion board posts* are shared with your small group and thus when you do not submit a discussion board post on time, you and your peers are not able to learn from each other. Additionally, if you do not catch up on readings, you will not be able to make as many connections between one week's readings and the next week's. As a result, complete posts that are submitted on time will receive a score of 100%; posts submitted within one week receive a score of 60%; and posts submitted within two weeks receive a score of 40%.
- *Papers* must be submitted on time unless you request an extension in advance. If you request an extension, we will agree on a later deadline by which the paper must be submitted. If the paper is not submitted by this later deadline, you will not be granted extensions on future papers.

Technological Devices Policy

Unless a specific activity requires it, we will not use cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. in class. This course does not require note-taking during class. Please speak with me if you need a device as an accommodation in order to have an equitable opportunity to succeed.

Parenting Students

I fully support parents and guardians attending school. Infants under 1 year are welcome in class as often as necessary. In cases of occasional non-contagious illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare, you are welcome to bring an older child to class, or participate in the class via video chat (see “Absences” above). When you bring your baby or child to class, I ask that you please sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention or is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met.

Grading Scale

For the following scale, decimals will be rounded down. For example, an 89.5 will be a B+.

93+	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
60-69	D
<60	F

Please note that continuation in the PDS requires a minimum grade of “C” in each of the PDS courses.

University Resources for Students

Services for Students with Disabilities

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. For more information, visit <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/>.

Counseling and Mental Health Center

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support.

<http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

The Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Other Resources

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

BeVocal

BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to: wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal.

Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit titleix.utexas.edu or contact the Title IX Office at titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you’ll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop>

