

Stanford University
Graduate School of Education

(Beyond) Equity and Schooling, EDUC 299A
Elementary Course Syllabus
Summer 2020

INSTRUCTORS

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Office Hours: Generally, you can reach out to us anytime as needed and we can set up a time to talk by phone or Zoom. There may be weeks when we set up office hours during specific time slots and these will be announced ahead of time.

COURSE SCHEDULE

August 25 - September 10: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays, 1:30 - 3:15 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Discussions focused on equity in education are both profoundly important and at times highly limited. These discussions are profoundly important insofar as they push us to consider how mainstream schools are structured in ways that systematically (re)produce disparity; they are highly limited in that they often center on broadening access to existing institutions rather than seeking to fundamentally transform or dismantle those institutions and the broader societies in which they are situated. This course approaches issues of equity in teacher education by simultaneously cultivating conceptual and pedagogical tools for existing *within* and *beyond* current institutions. To do so, we will engage in the work of developing our lenses on four levels of systemic oppression: individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural. Through this process, we will take an ethnographic perspective on our personal identity and consider how the local educational contexts in which we work relate to wider cultural, political, economic, social, and historical power structures. The argument is that in order to ethically serve communities, and particularly communities which have been historically marginalized, educators must humbly learn to honor multiple perspectives, interrogate existing sense-making schema, and envision possible worlds. Practically, this work involves learning to perceive skills, wisdom, and educational opportunities in contexts that are often framed as problematic, pathological, and endemically deficient. Thus, we will use the notion of equity as a placeholder for the envisioning and enactment of radically alternative educational realities.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

The course is designed to support you as you engage with questions including the following:

1. How are your personal experiences positioned in relation to wider cultural, political, economic, social, and historical power structures? How does your identity shape your lens on yourself as a human and your role as an educator?
2. How are we conditioned to perceive our students? What are the alternatives? How might we be in community with our students?
3. What types of institutional and structural oppressions (around race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship, ability status, language, religion and more) impact U.S. schools - now and historically? What role might educators play in either perpetuating, dismantling or abolishing such systems of oppression - now and in the future?
4. What does it mean to be a transformative force in schools and beyond?

A NOTE ABOUT READINGS AND PARTICIPATION

This class depends on you preparing for text-based discussions in advance. It is to your personal and our collective benefit that you come to class prepared to share your thoughts on the texts for each day. Recognizing the rigorous demands of STEP on your time, in addition to the unique contexts you are each experiencing during this time of crisis, we have tried our hardest to limit the length/volume of readings and incorporate some multimodal formats. Finally, we recognize that some of these texts are challenging (intellectually and emotionally) and may warrant multiple readings -- a natural part of becoming a lifelong learner and teacher for equity and justice. To that end, we will also offer several **optional texts and resources** for you to explore beyond this course. These are not listed in the syllabus but will be posted on Canvas.

ASSIGNMENT: POSITIONALITY STATEMENT - DUE IN LAST CLASS, THURSDAY 9/10

"Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno) (Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005).

As a start to using autoethnography as a tool to understand your personally constructed way of understanding cultural, historical, and social experience, it is helpful to analyze your positionality. Positionality is a form of reflexivity that "involves a self-scrutiny on the part of the researcher; a self-conscious awareness of the relationship between the researcher and an 'other' (Chiseri-Stater, 1996; Pillow, 2003)"¹. As will be a large focus of this course, how you view and are viewed within classrooms

¹ See pg. 1-2 from Bourke, B. (2014). Positionality: Reflecting on the research process. *The qualitative report*, 19(33), 1-9.

shapes the kinds of work you do, how this work is interpreted, and the possibilities that extend from it. The core assignment for this class asks you to reflect deeply on your positionality. This is meant to be a “living document” and we’ll revisit and revise this document throughout the course.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To receive full credit for course participation, meet all of the following expectations: Attendance, promptness, preparation, participation, and professionalism. To receive full credit on the assignment, meet all of the following expectations:

- Prompt: Turn your work in on time as we will be using our assignment during our last class.
- Complete: Fulfill all stated expectations of the assignment.
- Thoughtful: Take the time and effort to carefully craft something meaningful and authentic.

Students may be expected to revise and resubmit work until it satisfies expectations for the course.

If something prevents you from attending a class session, please communicate with us in advance so we can come up with a plan together.

ACCESSIBILITY AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty. Unless the student has a temporary disability, accommodation letters are issued for the entire academic year. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations.

The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <https://oae.stanford.edu/>). We are also committed to working with students to address accessibility concerns that do not fit into the category of “documented disabilities”; please contact us as soon as possible to address any such concerns should they arise.

STANFORD HONOR CODE

All Stanford students are expected to follow the **Stanford Honor Code** and **Fundamental Standard**, as noted in the STEP Handbook and Stanford Student Guide. <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/vpsa/judicialaffairs/about/welcome.htm>

COURSE SCHEDULE

IMPORTANT NOTE: While there are predetermined course readings, in order to provide material that is responsive to the evolving contexts of our immediate community and the classroom communities you serve, readings will at times be subject to change. Any changes will be communicated in a timely manner so that you can be prepared for class. For the most up-to-date information, always check the Canvas site. Aforementioned **optional readings and resources** will be posted on Canvas.

WEEK 1: INDIVIDUAL LENS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are your personal experiences positioned in relation to wider cultural, political, economic, social, and historical power structures? • How does your identity shape your lens as a human and your role as an educator? 		
Session	Guiding Questions	Readings
Session 1 Tues 8/25	<p>How does your identity shape your lens on the world?</p> <p>How will this community engage around the multiple - sometimes diverging - lenses we bring?</p>	<p>Wheatley, M. J. (2009). Willing to be Disturbed. In <i>Turning to one another: Simple conversations to restore hope to the future</i>. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.</p> <p>The Lens of Systemic Oppression. Retrieved from https://www.nationalequityproject.org/frameworks/lens-of-systemic-oppression</p> <p>Lorde, A. (2007). The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action. In <i>Sister outsider: Essays and speeches (pp. 40-44)</i>.</p>
Session 2 Wed 8/26	<p>How are your personal experiences positioned in relation to wider cultural, political, economic, social, and historical power structures?</p>	<p>Lorde, A. (2007). Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference. In <i>Sister outsider: Essays and speeches (pp. 114-123)</i>.</p> <p>Assignment Overview: Positionality Statement</p>
Session 3 Thurs 8/27	<p>How do our identities shape our lens on our roles as educators for equity, justice and beyond?</p>	<p>Tuck, E. and Yang, K. Wayne (2018). Introduction: Born Under the Rising Sun of Social Justice. In <i>Toward what justice?: Describing diverse dreams of justice in education (pp. 1-11)</i>.</p>

WEEK 2: INTERPERSONAL LENS

- How are we conditioned to perceive students? What are the alternatives?
- How might we be in community with our students?

Session	Guiding Questions	Readings
Session 4 Tues 9/1	<p>How have normative approaches to education taken for granted a range of assumptions about the fundamental nature of learning and knowing, and how do these approaches reproduce oppression in the classroom?</p> <p>How might critical pedagogies offer alternative approaches to teaching and learning in the classroom?</p>	<p>hooks, b. (1994). Introduction. In <i>Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom</i> (pp. 1-12). New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Freire, P. (2018). Chapter 2. In <i>Pedagogy of the oppressed</i> (pp. 71-86). New York: Bloomsbury Academic.</p> <p>Keenan, H. B. (March 08, 2018). Unscripting Curriculum: Toward a Critical Trans Pedagogy. <i>Harvard Educational Review</i>, 87, 4, pp. 545 - 553.</p>
Session 5 Wed 9/2	<p>How are particular populations and communities systematically presumed to be educationally deficient and/or exceptional and in what ways do such biases cause harm?</p> <p>What asset-oriented educational approaches and critical forms of discourse are possible in our classrooms and schools?</p>	<p>Eubanks, E., Parish, R., & Smith, D. (2012). Chapter 6: Changing the discourse in schools. In P. M. Hall, (Ed.), <i>Race, Ethnicity, and Multiculturalism Policy and Practice</i>. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.</p> <p>Blackburn, S. (2019, March 21). What is the model minority myth? Retrieved from https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/what-is-the-model-minority-myth</p>
Session 6 Thurs 9/3	<p>What are some existing frameworks around teaching for equity and justice and how might they relate to, enhance or limit one another other?</p>	<p>National Equity Project. (2016, May 2). Calibrating Ideas about Culturally Responsive Teaching with Zaretta Hammond [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnMK1nepwvk (14:14 min)</p> <p>Love, B. & Culley-Love, C. (Host). (2020, July 24). Episode 1: Teaching to thrive. [Audio podcast episode]. In <i>Abolitionist Teaching Network - Teaching to Thrive</i>. https://open.spotify.com/episode/04FydURix5GX6Pf1hLoldY (19:33 min)</p>

WEEK 3: INSTITUTIONAL & STRUCTURAL LENS

- What types of institutional and structural oppressions (around race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship, ability status, language, religion and more) impact U.S. schools - now and historically?
- What roles might educators play in either perpetuating, dismantling or abolishing such systems of oppression - now and in the future?
- What does it mean to be a transformative force in schools and beyond?

Session	Guiding Questions	Readings
Session 7 Tues 9/8	<p>What are some policies and practices at the institutional level that perpetuate oppression within the classroom?</p> <p>How might we counteract and dismantle these?</p>	<p>Noguera, P. Race, equity, and the state of education: A conversation with Dr. Pedro Noguera [Webinar]. Facing History and Ourselves. https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/2514267/442B9BF919914C20B43A45BFC76EAF7C (6:03 - 45:05)</p> <p>Truss, J. (2019, July 18). What happened when my school started to dismantle white supremacy culture. <i>Education Week</i>.</p>
Session 8 Wed 9/9	<p>How do the effects of oppression show up in the classroom after interacting and accumulating across time and different societal structures beyond education?</p> <p>How might we bring our awareness of the socio-political context into our classrooms?</p>	TO BE POSTED ON CANVAS
Session 9 Thurs 9/10	<p>What forms of healing, sustainability and solidarity might characterize our work moving forward in search of realizing radical new educational visions?</p>	TO BE POSTED ON CANVAS