

The mission of The College of Education at Northern Arizona University is to prepare education professionals to create the schools of tomorrow.

EDF 677: EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

Dr. Frances Julia Riemer
COE room 162
NAU, Flagstaff campus

Telephone: 928/523-0352
e-mail: Frances.Riemer@nau.edu
fax: 928/523-1929

Course description

EDF 677, The Sociology of Education, is designed to be an introduction to the sociology of education. Drawing upon social theory, the sociology of organizations, the sociology of work and professions, the sociology of knowledge, and the study of class, race, and gender, we will jointly explore both sociological issues related to public education in the United States and the relationship between schools and broader society.

Learning Expectations

In this course, you will:

- examine social theory and the ways it has framed and explained educational institutions;
- discuss underlying values and norms of various educational contexts;
- explore the complex relations between schooling and society, and in particular, the demands placed upon schooling in a democratic, pluralistic, and multicultural society;
- reflect on the status of teachers, administrators, and other school professionals, and the rights, responsibilities, ethics and standards of practice for the teaching profession;
- explore current research on the relationship of ethnicity, social class, and gender to the schooling process;
- investigate the social and cultural worlds of children and young people, and the intersection of those worlds in school settings;
- arrive at some basic conclusions about the role of education in society and the implications in the larger social context.

Course structure/approach

Offered in WebCT format, the class is composed completely of on-line activities geared to help you understand and apply basic sociological concepts to the study of learning and teaching.

Textbook and required materials

The two books for this class are available at the NAU Bookstore.† Affordable used copies are also available through online booksellers.

Bennett deMarrais, K.P., & LeCompte, M. (1999). *The Way Schools Work† A Sociological Analysis of Education..* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Addison Wesley Publishers. ISBN 0801319560 (WSW)

Arum, R., & Beattie, I.R. (Eds.). (2000). *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education.* Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company. ISBN 076741070X (SOS)

Additional required articles are on reserve in the Cline library course reserves.

<http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>

Ground Rules

Given the course content and the likely potential for discussion to become heated, and perhaps even inflamed, we need to establish ground rules for class interactions.† At the most minimum, they must include:

- we will acknowledge and respect the diverse cultural experiences and backgrounds present in the class;
- we will respect diverse opinions, even if we do not always agree;
- we will neither demean nor insult any individuals or groups of individuals;
- we will participate in the critical analysis of belief structures (including our own), and acknowledge systems of inequality.
- we will create a safe environment, conducive to open and honest conversation.† If a class member requests that a comment not be repeated outside the WebCT classroom, we will respect their confidentiality.

Reading Suggestions

While a few of the assigned articles are rather dense, I assure you they are not inappropriate for a graduate class. However, I do understand that some of the texts may frustrate the reader. Bourdieu for one, has been known to aggravate the neophyte. Just in case then, I've noted some suggestions for reading difficult texts that I hope will help you through the semester.

When you read, first preview the text. Take 60 seconds to look over the title, headings, subheadings, pictures, illustrations, and charts.

Then skim the passage, reading the first and last paragraph and glancing at the first sentence of every other paragraph. Stop and ask yourself: What is the main idea? What is the author's purpose?

Then read the text slowly, in a questioning manner, as though you are searching for something.

Course Outline and Assignments

As a WebCT class, the activities indicated below require various combinations of individual, pair, and small group interactions. Assignments are listed on the Assignment Summary. Use that Summary to keep track of dates and possible point allotments.

UNIT 1: What do Sociologists of Education Do?

Unit 1 Topic 1: Sociology as lens

Reading (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)

- ❖ ASA, “What is sociology”
- ❖ Peter L. Berger, “Sociology as an individual pastime”
- ❖ C Wright Mills, “The sociological imagination”

Exercises

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ Common sense vs. sociology
- ❖ Developing our sociological imagination

Unit 1 Topic 2: Introduction of Terms

(No additional reading)

Exercises

- ❖ Cultural terms
- ❖ Description of self
- ❖ Modification of description
- ❖ Media and core values

Paper

- ❖ Edu-cultural autobiography

One minute response

UNIT 2: How does Society Organize School?

Unit 2 Topic 1:† Educators as Labor Force

Reading

- ❖ Chapter 4, *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Anthony Bryk et al, “Classroom life” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ Michael Apple, “Teaching and women’s work,” *The Structure of Schooling*

Exercise

- ❖ The construction of teacher in popular media

Unit 2 Topic 2: Curriculum and the Stratification of Knowledge

Reading

- ❖ Chapter 6, *The Way Schools Work*

- ❖ Jeannie Oakes, “The distribution of knowledge,” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ E.D. Hirsch, Jr. “Why core knowledge promotes social justice,” on the web at: <http://www.coreknowledge.org/CKproto2/about/articles/socialJustice.htm>

Exercises

- ❖ Your experience with official knowledge

Paper

- ❖ Textbook analysis
- ❖ Text book discussion

One minute response

UNIT 3: How Do Sociologists Explain Schooling?

Unit 3 Topic 1: Explaining the Purpose of Schooling

Reading

- ❖ pp. 1 - 20 (Chapter 1) *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Emile Durkheim, “The first element of morality: The spirit of discipline,” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ Max Weber, “The rationalization of education and training,” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, “The long shadow of work: Education, the family, and the reproduction of the social division of labor,” *The Structure of Schooling*

Exercises

- ❖ Decoding cultural norms
- ❖ Group contract
- ❖ Decoding cultural norms through functionalist and conflict theory lenses

Unit 3 Topic 2: Interpretive Theory and Labeling Students

Reading

- ❖ pp. 20 = 26 (Chapter 1), pp. 218-221 (Chapter 5), *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Ray McDermott and Herve Varenne, “Adam, Adam, Adam, and Adam: The cultural construction of a learning disability,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)
- ❖ Ray C. Rist, “Student social class and teacher expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy in ghetto education,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)

Exercise

- ❖ Public postings
- ❖ Interpretive theory

Unit 3 Topic 3: Education as Transformation

Reading

- ❖ pp. 26-42 (Chapter 1), *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Lois Weis and Michelle Fine, “Extraordinary conversations in public schools,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)
- ❖ Dorothy Smith, “Schooling for inequality,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)
- ❖ Lisa Delpit, “The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people’s children,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)

Exercises

- ❖ Transformative Intellectuals
- ❖ Placing yourself as a social theorist
- ❖ Society is Like

Mid Term

- ❖ Social theory Review

One minute response

UNIT 4: How Does School Reflect and Shape Society?

Unit 4 Topic 1: Social Class and Schooling

Reading

- ❖ Chapter 5, *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Pierre Bourdieu, “Forms of capital” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)
- ❖ Annette Lareau, “Social class differences in family-school relationships: The importance of cultural capital,” *The Structure of Schooling*

Exercises

- ❖ Multicultural awareness quiz
- ❖ Chintz or shag?
- ❖ The Importance of Social Mobility
- ❖ My Social Mobility

Unit 4 Topic 2: Ethnicity, Race, and Schooling

Reading

- ❖ Chapter 7, *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ James Coleman et al, “The Coleman report,” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ John Ogbu, “Understanding cultural diversity and learning,” (e-reserve: <http://www.nau.edu/library/courses/EverGreen/edf677-riemer/>)
- ❖ Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu, “Black students’ school success: Coping with the burden of acting white,” *The Structure of Schooling*

Exercises

- ❖ Differentiations
- ❖ Race Literacy Quiz
- ❖ Bogardus Social Distance Exercise
- ❖ Facts and Figures on Ethnicity

Unit 4 Topic 3: Feminism, Gender and the Study of Schooling

Reading

- ❖ Review chapter 1, pp 34-38, read chapter 8, *The Way Schools Work*
- ❖ Barrie Thorne, “Boys and girls together, But mostly apart,” *The Structure of Schooling*
- ❖ Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, “Why does Jane read and write so well?” *The Structure of Schooling*

Exercise

- ❖ Rating your school on gender equity

Paper

- ❖ Gender socialization

Unit 4 Topic 4: Deconstructing Privilege

Reading

- ❖ Peggy McIntosh, “White privilege and male privilege,” Cline e-reserve
- ❖ Christine Sleeter, “Diversity vs. white pluralism,” Cline e-reserve

Exercises

- ❖ Implicit assumptions
- ❖ Privilege exercise
- ❖ Privilege and Disadvantage

One minute response

Final Exam

Course policies

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~dgs2/Policy%20Statements.htm>

Safe Environment, Students with Disabilities, Institutional Review Board, Academic Integrity

Assessments and Evaluation

Final evaluation of class work will be a result of your effort in three areas: class engagement (i.e. on-line learning activities), written products (an edu-cultural autobiography of learning and teaching and two short papers), a mid term and a final exam.

Class Engagement (total of 33 on-line exercises across four units = 190 points)

Unit 1: 8 exercises	35 points
Unit 2: 3 exercises	20 points
Unit 3: 9 exercises	65 points
Unit 4: 13 exercises	70 points

Written products (total = 110)

Edu-cultural autobiography	65 points
Textbook analysis	25 points
Gender Socialization paper	20 points†

Exams (total = 125 points)

Mid term	25 points
Final =	100 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS 425 points

Grading

383 - 425 = A

340 - 382 = B

298 - 339 = C

255 – 297 = D

below 254 = F

DESCRIPTION/CRITERIA FOR INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP PROJECTS

On-line mini quizzes

11 self-checking mini quizzes, one for each topic, are available on-line. The quizzes act as gates to each topic's web-based exercises. You **must score 100%** on the quiz in order to move from the topic quiz to the topic activities. However you may take each quiz an unlimited number of times until you are successful in obtaining 100% correct.

On-line exercises

A series of on-line exercises, some to be completed individually, others in pairs, others by what will become your small group, are assigned for each topic. Located on WebCT, they are designed as scaffolds to help you understand and apply basic sociological concepts to the study of learning and teaching.

Each exercise has a completion due date and maximum point value. The activity summary lists all the exercises, due dates, and maximum point values.

Papers

Three papers are assigned. A description of the **Edu-Cultural Autobiography** is located in Unit One Topic One. (The draft is due to assigned editing buddies on **June 11** and the final text on **June 18**.) A description of the **Textbook Analysis** is located in Unit Two Topic Two and is due **June 10**. A description of the **Gender Socialization paper** is located in Unit Four Topic Three, and is due **June 29**.

Exams

Midterm exam

The **midterm**, a review of terms related to a range of social theories, is to be completed with your small group. Directions for the midterm are located in Unit Three Topic Three. The midterm is to be submitted by **June 20**.

Final exam

The **final exam** is to be completed in your small group. The exam is open book, and is designed to review and integrate the concepts we explored throughout our weeks together. You will have one day to complete and submit this final activity. **One final** can be submitted by the entire group, **or each member** can submit his or her own final. The final will be made available on **July 2** and is due **July 3**.

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Evaluation Criteria for Student Work

Critical discussion, reflection, and exploration of ideas, theories, actions and practices are necessary and integral parts of one's learning and educational development, both on an individual basis and as part of a group effort. From a professional viewpoint, the concern arises as to the correlation between the nature of the evaluation and the quality of performance. Thus the question, "How am I going to be graded on this?" is a natural one to ask. The following list is an attempt to explain some of the criteria used in grading student papers.

Focal Point/Clarity

- _____ Insightful; develops clear, concise, accurate points in addressing issues
- _____ Clear; presents clear, concise and accurate points in addressing issues
- _____ General observation evident; addresses one or more points with too many or too few words
- _____ Vague, or difficult to grasp; includes unclear, inaccurate, or inappropriately overextended points

Specificity/Evidence from Original Source

- _____ Effectively substantiates point; develops and uses details that demonstrate an understanding of the material in addressing main issue under concern
- _____ Defines or illustrates point; presents details that demonstrate a good understanding of the material by supporting the majority of points and conclusions
- _____ Generally relates to point; relies on generalizations to support the majority of the points and conclusions
- _____ Relationship to point uncertain; includes unclear, inaccurate, or inappropriately overextended comments that do not support the issue under study

Text Integration/Evidence from other Sources

- _____ Illuminates point effectively; includes specific and accurate references to illustrate and explicate findings, points, connections and conclusions
- _____ Substantiates point; includes specific and accurate text references to illustrate findings, points, connections, and conclusions
- _____ Supports point in a general way; refers to some general findings, points, connections and conclusions in the text to illustrate the narrative
- _____ Contributes little, or detracts from point; uses text references inappropriately