



**College of Education and Human Development
Graduate School of Education**

**EDLE 813
Social and Political Forces in Education Leadership**

**W. 4:30-7:10
Thompson Hall 2022
Fall 2012**

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Course Description

Examines the social and political forces that shape education in the United States and the effect of these forces on school leadership. Examines the social and political functions of schooling in the past and present.

Course Overview

The nation's schools exist within and are shaped by a complex nexus of social and political forces. In various ways, administrators, teachers, parents and even students behave as political actors at the local, state and federal levels. Schools socialize the nation's youth, affirming and imparting important lessons about citizenship and power. Fundamentally and inextricably, school leadership is a political act. In today's political milieu, debates surrounding school choice, teachers, and accountability assume center stage. However, these are not new issues. The American public has grappled with various incarnations of similar questions since the rise of the common schools in the mid-nineteenth century. This course examines the social and political forces that travel through the schools and shape school leadership.

This course begins with a consideration of education as a social institution as well as the ways in which education and politics intertwine. In what ways are the schools political? How and in what ways do economic, social and cultural transformations unfolding beyond the schools' doors shape education and school leadership? Where and in what ways is power exercised? The course is divided into four units – Choice: Bureaucracy and the School-Community Connection; Teachers: Training, Recruitment and

Evaluation; Equity, Equality and Accountability; and The Government and the Public Schools.

Nature of Course Delivery

Each session will consist of some combination of lecture, large and small group discussions and workshops. Students will work with a variety of primary sources in class, both individually and in small groups. The creation of knowledge is a collaborative endeavor. For this reason, it is essential that you read the assigned materials carefully and come prepared to participate in discussion.

Student Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Gain an understanding of the development and structure of American schooling.
2. Understand the political contexts of schooling.
3. Consider the ways in which school leadership is a political act.
4. Understand the variety of ways in which social forces shape schooling and school leadership.
5. Develop a broad framework that will support and help shape future research.
6. Learn to evaluate and engage with secondary source materials.
7. Hone critical thinking skills and the craft of academic writing

Course Materials

Readings

All readings are available on electronic reserve as pdf files.

Outside-of-Class Resources

All students are required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts. Please check your Mason email regularly; this is how I will communicate with you.

All students are required to use <http://www.taskstream.com> as part of this course. This is an Internet site where I will post information for the course and through which you will submit your assignments.

Course Requirements

Class participation (10%)

Students are expected to come to every class prepared to participate in an active discussion. In order to do this, students must have read and taken notes on the assigned readings *and* have the readings with them (either paper or electronic).

If you must be absent, please notify me by e-mail or phone. More than one absence may

result in a reduction in participation points. Arriving at class more than 30 minutes late or leaving more than 30 minutes before the end of class may result in loss of points.

Presentation of Readings (10%)

Students will prepare and deliver a presentation pertaining to the day's assigned readings. You may prepare a lecture, organize a class activity or lead a discussion. Students must meet with the professor to discuss their plans.

Topic Proposal (10%)

Students will submit a **3-4** page essay that offers an overview of their selected issue. The goal of this assignment is to highlight the details of a precise and particular education debate or issue. Where is this issue visible? Who is involved? What are the competing perspectives surrounding this issue? What is at stake? Students will then move beyond the details of the current issue and raise their own research questions. What do you want to learn more about? What do you want to figure out? As you write this proposal keep in mind the following important questions: Why is this issue contentious? How can it be solved? In what ways is this issue informed by the larger social and political context? Students must use at least 4 articles (popular press, newspaper, education periodical, etc.) to ground their presentation of the debate/issue.

Literature Review (15%)

All successful academic writing hinges from the careful reading of secondary source literature. Rather than summarizing the key points and arguments of a variety of authors, the goal of this exercise is to synthesize a body of scholarship. In **6-7** pages, students will engage the following questions in a well-crafted, compelling essay. How has thinking on your chosen topic developed over time? How do you account for these shifts? In what ways do disciplinary conventions shape authors' analyses? What are the main points of agreement and disagreement? Where do you see authors engaging one another in scholarly discourse? What future research questions arise from this collection of literature? You must discuss and cite at least 10 peer-reviewed sources.

Research Essay

Students will write a **12-15** page essay in which they examine the social and political forces that shape a current educational debate or issue. The goal of this essay is to cast fresh light on a critical issue. How does an understanding of the broader social and political context shape your view of the issue? How does this analytical framework shape how you might attempt to resolve this issue?

In an endeavor to hone the craft of academic writing and position students to submit their work to scholarly journals, this assignment is broken down into four critical pieces:

1. *Draft of Research Essay*: Replicating the journal submission process, you will submit your essay to a "blind" panel of peers. While perhaps not yet perfect, this version of your essay should be logical, clean and compelling. Anything less than that might lead the journal to reject your work. (10%)
2. *Critical Evaluation of Essay*: You will write a 1-2 page single-spaced evaluation of the

essay. In your response, you will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the essay and make recommendations for publication. (10%)

3. *Response to Evaluation*: When you submit an article to a journal, you will most likely receive a revise and resubmit – this is good news! You will then take some time considering the reviewers’ comments and revising your work accordingly. When you are ready to resubmit your work to the journal, you will also submit a cover letter to the editor that outlines the major critiques, as you understood them, and how you attended to them. (10%)
4. *Final Draft of Research Essay*: This version of your essay must be responsive to the critiques and ready for review by the editor. (25%)

Late work: I expect all students to submit their work on time. Unless prior arrangements are made, late work will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade for each 12-hour period past the deadline (i.e.: an A will become an A-).

Grading Scale

A+	=	100 percent
A	=	95 – 99 percent
A-	=	90 – 94 percent
B+	=	86 – 89 percent
B	=	83 – 85 percent
B-	=	80 – 82 percent
C	=	75 – 79 percent
F	=	74 percent or below

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- a. Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b. Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
- c. Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- d. Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- e. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- f. The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- g. University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignment
W. Aug. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction • Conceiving of public schooling as a social and political institution • The role of school leaders • Thinking about reform and change 	Tyack & Tobin, “The ‘Grammar’ of Schooling: Why Has it Been so Hard to Change,” <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> .
I. CHOICE: BUREAUCRACY AND THE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY CONNECTION		
W. Sept. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roots of modern schooling 	<p>Katz, “The Origins of Public Education: A Reassessment,” <i>History of Education Quarterly</i>.</p> <p>Tyack, “Pilgrim’s Progress: Toward a Social History of the School Superintendency, 1860-1960,” <i>History of Education Quarterly</i>.</p>
W. Sept. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice and Privatization 	<p>Chubb and Moe, “Politics, Markets, and the Organization of Schools,” <i>The American Political Science Review</i>.</p> <p>Noguera, “More Democracy Not Less: Confronting the Challenge of Privatization in Public Education,” <i>Journal of Negro Education</i>.</p>
Sat. Sept. 15	Topic Proposal Due - Midnight	
W. Sept. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter Schools 	<p>Finn and Kanstroroom, “Do Charter Schools Do It Differently?,” <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i>.</p> <p>Buckley and Schneider, “Making the Grade: Comparing DC Charter Schools to Other DC Public Schools,” <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>.</p> <p>Weiher and Tedin, “Does Choice Lead to Racially Distinctive Schools?: Charter Schools and Household Preference,” <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i>.</p>
II. TEACHERS: TRAINING, RECRUITMENT & EVALUATION		
W. Sept. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and Teaching in Historical Perspective 	Bernard and Vinovskis, “The Female School Teacher in Antebellum Massachusetts,” <i>The Journal of Social History</i> .

		Tyack and Strober, "Why do Men Manage and Women Teach? A Report on Research in Schools," <i>Signs</i> .
Sat. Sept. 29	Literature Review Due - Midnight	
W. Oct. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Training: Competing Models 	<p>Cochran-Smith, "The Problem of Teacher Education," <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>.</p> <p>Labaree, "Life on the margins," <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>.</p> <p>Darling-Hammond, "Does Teacher Preparation Matter? Evidence about Teacher Certification, Teach for America, and Teacher Effectiveness," <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i></p>
W. Oct. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining "Quality" and Evaluating "Effectiveness" FCPS and DCPS Case Studies 	<p>NCLB Statement on "Highly Qualified Teachers"</p> <p>Corchoran, "Women, the Labor Market, and the Declining Relative Quality of Teachers," <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i>.</p> <p>Special Issue, "The Key to Changing the Teaching Profession," <i>Educational Leadership</i>.</p>
W. Oct. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop: Construction of Research & the Architecture of an essay 	
III. EQUITY, EQUALITY & ACCOUNTABILITY		
W. Oct. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Social Justice: The History of African American Education 	<p>Siddle Walker, "Valued Segregated Schools for African American Children in the South, 1935-1969: A Review of Common Themes and Characteristics," <i>Review of Educational Research</i>.</p> <p>Ravitch, "A Different Kind of Education for Black Children," <i>Journal of Blacks in Higher Education</i>.</p> <p>Dougherty, "Shopping for Schools: How Public Education and Private Housing Shaped Suburban Connecticut," <i>Journal of Urban History</i>.</p>

		<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>
Sat. Oct. 27	Research Essay (v.1) Due- Midnight	
W. Oct. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Peer Evaluation 	
Sat. Nov. 3	Peer Comments Due - Midnight	
W. Nov. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race, Measurement and Achievement • Case study: TJHS 	<p>Phillips, Crouse and Ralph, “Does the Black-White Test Score Gap Widen after Children Enter School?,” in <i>The Black-White Test Score Gap</i>.</p> <p>Special Issue, “Closing the Achievement Gap,” <i>Educational Leadership</i>.</p>
IV. THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS		
W. Nov. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Federal Role in Public Schooling 	<i>Making the Grade</i> , pp 61-105.
W. Nov 21	No Class: Thanksgiving Happy Holidays!	
W. Nov. 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating NCLB 	<p>United States Department of Education, “Executive Summary of the <i>No Child Left Behind Act of 2001</i>.”</p> <p>Moe, “Politics, Control, and the Future of School Accountability,” <i>No Child Left Behind?</i></p> <p>Kohn, “NCLB and the Effort to Privatize Public Education,” <i>Many Children Left Behind</i>.</p>
W. Dec. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Wrap-Up • Sharing Findings • Moving Forward: Using this research to think about your dissertation 	
Sat. Dec. 8	Final Version of Research Essay & Response Cover Letter Due - Midnight	

Assessment Rubric for Topic Proposal

Rationale

The goal of this assignment is to highlight the details of a precise and particular education debate. This debate will form the foundation for your individualized scholarly inquiry this term. Before you can generate your own research questions, you need to demonstrate an understanding of the key issues. Before you can insert your voice into and inform current educational debates and policies, you need to have a clear understanding of the current state of these debates and policies.

Tasks

1. Students will submit a **3-4** page essay that offers an overview of their selected issue.
2. Begin by addressing the following questions:
 - a. Where is this issue visible?
 - b. Who is involved?
 - c. What are the competing perspectives surrounding this issue?
 - d. What is at stake?
3. Once you have addressed the above questions, begin to move beyond the details of the current issue and raise your own research questions.
 - a. What do you want to learn more about?
 - b. What do you want to figure out?
 - c. Develop a set of at least three questions that pertain to the larger social and political context that will drive your research over the course of this semester.
4. Using at least 4 sources, this essay will focus *only* on the current incarnation of this debate.
5. In addition, students will submit a proposed bibliography of 10 sources.

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Statement of Topic (25%)	Offers a clear statement of issue of interest. Focuses on a specific component of a larger debate. Describes topic in clear and accurate terms.	Offers a clear statement of topic, but lacks focus. Author attempts to cover too much ground.	Does not offer a clear and specific statement of interest. Author discusses a large topic in vague terms.	Does not offer a clear and specific statement of interest. Author makes claims that are inaccurate.
Exploration of Debate (25%)	Offers a clear exploration of a specific issue or debate of interest. Refers to relevant texts to ground characterizations. Presents topic overview in a clear,	Offers a clear exploration of a specific issue or debate of interest. Refers to relevant texts to ground overview. Author reveals clear bias, choosing sides or	Exploration of issue is vague or too broad. Author takes sides. Uses less than 4 sources, or cites 4 sources but does not make significant use of them.	Exploration of issue is unclear or inaccurate. Author does not refer to specific texts to ground overview and writes with clear bias. Does not cite or make use of

	accurate, and bias-free manner. Cites and makes use of 4 sources.	offering policy prescriptions. Cites and makes use of 4 sources.		appropriate sources.
Statement of Research Questions (25%)	Moves beyond the issue at hand and raises at least 3 meaningful questions that pertain to the social and political context.	Raises two meaningful questions to guide future inquiry.	Raises fewer than 2 meaningful questions.	Raises questions that do not stem from the readings or hold potential of generating future research or does not pose any questions.
Proposed Bibliography (15%)	Correctly cites 10 sources.	Lists 10 sources, but has a few citation errors.	Lists 10 sources with several citation errors.	Lists less than 10 sources; frequent citation errors.
Mechanics (10%)	The essay is nearly error free.	The paper has some errors.	The paper has numerous errors.	The paper is sloppy and appears not to have been proofread.

Assessment Rubric for Literature Review

Rationale

All successful academic writing hinges from the careful reading of secondary source literature. Rather than summarizing the key points and arguments of a variety of authors, the goal of this exercise is to synthesize a body of scholarship.

Tasks

1. In **6-7** pages, students will engage the following questions in a well-crafted, compelling essay.
 - a. How has thinking on your chosen topic developed over time?
 - b. How do you account for these shifts?
 - c. In what ways do disciplinary conventions shape authors' analyses?
 - d. What are the main points of agreement and disagreement?
 - e. Where do you see authors engaging one another in scholarly discourse?
2. Drawing upon this body of literature, pose at least three questions that will motivate your future inquiry. Examine these questions, explicating how they grow out of the examined literature and exploring their larger significance.
 - a. What will these questions help you figure out that we do not already know?
3. You must discuss and cite at least 10 approved sources.

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Presentation of Literature and Idea Development (60%)	Examines and properly cites 10 sources. Author creates conversations across texts, thinking about the works as a cohesive body of literature. Rather than summarizing each work one by one, the author finds meaningful ways to group the readings. Incorporates specific evidence from texts and offers an analysis. Considers the role of disciplinary conventions and links these observations to	Examines and properly cites 10 sources. The author attempts to generate a larger, original idea but this idea is not substantiated all the way throughout the essay or is separate from a discussion of the texts. Considers disciplinary conventions, but does not link these observations to larger idea. Uses some quotes, but may not offer thorough analysis.	Examines 10 sources. Citations may be incorrect. Rather than generating a larger idea and moving beyond the texts, the author summarizes each work. Does not consider the role of disciplinary conventions. Provides some evidence, but offers little analysis.	Examines less than 10 sources. Citations may be incorrect. Author offers only summaries. Presentation of authors' views may be inaccurate or incorrect. Does not consider the role of disciplinary conventions. Does not provide significant evidence to support claims. Does not provide analysis.

	essay's larger idea. Through an exploration of this body of literature, the author generates a cohesive, logical, and compelling idea that is woven throughout the review.			
Future Research Questions (30%)	Clearly states and explicates three specific questions to motivate further research. The questions are a clear outgrowth of the literature discussed.	States three questions. Questions are too broad and are not fully explicated. Questions flow from previous discussion of literature.	Offers three vague questions. Does not clearly or fully explicate significance or implications of questions. Questions only partially flow from discussion of scholarship.	Offers less than three questions. Questions are vague and may not be explicated. Questions do not flow from discussion of scholarship.
Mechanics (10%)	The essay is nearly error free.	The paper has some errors.	The paper has numerous errors.	The paper is sloppy and appears not to have been proofread.

Assessment Rubric for Final Paper

Rationale

Educational issues assume center stage in the political arena, animating the Left and the Right. Questions surrounding accountability, teacher quality, measurement, standards and many others shape today’s educational policy discourse. Far more than insular buildings, the schools represent the nation’s most important and powerful social institutions. They at once reflect and attend to social dynamics that unfold far beyond the school’s doors. In this culminating assignment, students will offer a social and political analysis of a current educational debate. The goal of this essay is to use this analysis to cast fresh light on the problem and uncover a new pathway toward school improvement.

Tasks

1. Students will write a **12-15** page essay in which they examine the social and political context surrounding a current educational debate or issue.
2. Begin with a sharp and concise 150-200 word abstract of the essay.
3. Offer a clear and succinct picture of a current educational issue.
 - a. Where does this debate unfold?
 - b. Who is involved?
 - c. What is at stake?
4. What are the social and political forces that shape this issue or debate?
 - a. Where do these forces exist? Why?
 - b. In what ways do they shape the issue?
 - c. In what ways do these larger forces shape reform around the issue?
5. Consider the ways in which your social and political analysis casts fresh light on the current debate.
 - a. In what ways does this analysis recast the debate or illuminate enduring underlying tensions?
 - b. What do you learn about the social and political functions of schooling from this inquiry?
6. Given what you have uncovered through your social and political analysis, how would you solve or resolve this issue? What sort of policy or intervention would you propose?

****The draft of your research essay will be graded on a 4 point scale and receive comments.****

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Abstract (15%)	Provides a sharp and clear abstract of 150-200 words that concisely states the essay’s primary argument and findings.	Provides a 150-200 word abstract. May be vague or too general.	Abstract is either too long or too short. May not offer a sense of the essay’s argument or contribution.	Does not provide an abstract.
Argument and Idea	Presents a clear and specific educational issue to explore.	Presents a clear and specific educational issue to explore.	Presents an overarching topic to explore, but issue is	Topic of essay is vague or unclear. Author offers

<p>Development (25%)</p>	<p>Makes a compelling case for examining the social and political context. Generates a clear and compelling idea throughout the essay. The paper moves from one point to the next logically.</p>	<p>While the author examines the social and political context, he/she does not make a clear case for doing so. Essay follows a logic, but it may weaken in certain sections of the essay. Author crafts a general idea, but does not develop it fully.</p>	<p>vague or too large. Unclear why author turns to social or political forces or what he/she thinks an exploration of that nature can reveal. Essay lacks a clear logic. Author offers claims but fails to generate an overarching idea.</p>	<p>summaries of events and texts but does not provide an analysis or craft an original idea. Essay lacks a discernable logic.</p>
<p>Social and Political Analysis (25%)</p>	<p>Accurately examines the social and political forces that impact the issue at hand through the use of evidence. Offers a careful analysis of evidence, moving beyond summary. Uses at least 10 sources; sources are correctly cited. Uses quotes from other scholarship to develop and shade the essay's idea.</p>	<p>Examines social and political forces. Uses at least 10 sources; sources are correctly cited. Provides evidence, but does not fully analyze all pieces introduced. Larger idea of the essay is only tangentially related to evidence introduced.</p>	<p>Offers a partial or incomplete exploration of social and political forces. Uses some evidence, but leaves it largely unexamined. Does not use and/or incorrectly cites 10 sources. Relies on summary rather than analysis.</p>	<p>Examination of social and political forces is partial or inaccurate. Does not use evidence to substantiate claims. Does not use and/or incorrectly cites 10 sources.</p>
<p>Conclusions: Using your analysis to guide educational improvement (25%)</p>	<p>Considers the ways in which social and political forces inform policy surrounding a particular educational issue. Uses the analysis to offer fresh insights surrounding a current educational issue. Examines the significance of the essay's idea in compelling and meaningful ways. Proposes a specific policy or intervention to attend to the issue</p>	<p>Considers social and political forces but does not consider implications of such forces. Attempts to use the social and political analysis to cast fresh light on policy, but claims need to be developed more fully to be compelling or clear. Needs to link these observations to larger idea with greater care. Proposes a general policy or intervention to attend</p>	<p>Considers social and political forces but does not consider larger implications. Considers social and political forces. Proposes a vague policy or intervention to attend to the issue; the policy does not clearly stem from the previous analysis.</p>	<p>Does not consider the significance of social and political forces. Does not use the previous analysis to make fresh observations about current issue. Does not generate a larger idea and examine its significance. Does not propose a policy or intervention to attend to the issue.</p>

	that stems directly from the previous analysis.	to the issue that stems directly from the previous analysis.		
Mechanics (10%)	The essay is nearly error free.	The paper has some errors.	The paper has numerous errors.	The paper is sloppy and appears not to have been proofread.