

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
PhD Education, Program in Education Policy/International Education

EDUC 873 001 - Education Policy: Comparative and International Perspectives
3.0 Credits, Fall 2016
Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10pm Thompson 2022

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

EDUC 870, and admission to PhD program

University Catalog Course Description

Advanced study of selected topics in education preparing students for doctoral studies or who have been admitted to the PhD program in education.
Notes: May be repeated for credit with GSED approval

Course Overview

This comparative and international education policy course will address education policy issues that transcend national boundaries and have implications for educators in fostering social justice and global awareness. The course explores theoretical approaches to understanding the role of education internationally and comparatively in diverse settings. Students will frame current debates in the fields of international and comparative education to understand how different theories of education and development influence policy, priorities, and programs of international, national and local institutions. Importantly, the course will expose students to the dynamics of globalization and the interconnectedness of individuals and nations, issues of equality and equity among those individuals and groups within society through a multi-theoretical lens. Finally, the course will provide students with the opportunity to develop deeper understanding of theoretical and methodological perspectives that impact their ability to be transformational global leaders.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture format, with access to Blackboard for online storage, retrieval, and submission materials.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Identify and analyze the salient social, political, cultural, economic, and other factors that affect education policies in selected countries;
2. Apply an interpretation of policy in other educational systems to a more enlightened understanding of American educational policy making;
3. Identify, distinguish, and apply theoretical and methodological approaches to the comparative study of national education policies;
4. Understand the formation of education policies as an ingredient of the planning process consistent with a value system and a country's overall development;
5. Appreciate the complexity of the issues which must be addressed in the promotion of social justice, human rights, and the creation of a sustainable global community and the role of education policies in pursuit of these goals.

Professional Standards

The course is a required course of the PhD in Education (Education Policy specialization) and is linked to the goals of the Graduate School of Education (GSE) and the mission of the Center for Education Policy and Evaluation (CEPE). Additionally, student outcomes are both linked to the mission and values of GSE and CEPE. Refer to the GSE website (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>) and the CEPE website (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/centers/edpolicy/home>) for more information about their goals, core values, and mission.

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:
Not Applicable

Required Texts

Arnové, R. F., Torres, C. A., & Franz, S. (Eds.) (2013). *Comparative education: The dialectic of the global and local*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Hopson, R.K., Yeakey, C.C., & Boakari, F.M. (Eds.) (2008). *Power, voice, and the public good: Schooling and education in global societies*. Bingley, UK: Emerald JAI.

Vavrus, F. & Bartlett, L. (Eds.) (2009). *Critical approaches to comparative education: Vertical case studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Recommended and additional texts and readings to be provided during course Blackboard site as needed.

Course Performance Evaluation (and Weighting)

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy). The assignments include a series of prompts or discussion board postings, course participation, a literature review paper and presentation. Each of the following is described briefly below, with more discussion and additional specifics as questions arise in class:

- **Assignments and Examinations**

1) Comparative chapter summaries/critique presentation. Compare two chapters in the course texts, one assigned for class and one not assigned for class. Consider theoretical, methodological, or general content of each chapter based on core topics of the class. Prepare a brief summary, review, and critique of the chapters in the form of an academic poster presentation. Consult appropriate sources in developing standard poster requirements. Presentations will take place during the course after the first month of the course.

2 and 3) Synthesis Paper and Presentation. You will be expected to prepare a synthesis paper about a topic on comparative and international education. The paper should be related to your developing dissertation topic and be incorporative of requirements your developing portfolios (one, two, or three). Every effort should be made to ensure that the literature review assignment for this class enhances chapter two of your dissertation.

The synthesis paper should do the following: i) set the problem and context of your study, ii) analyze previous research by highlighting the development of major concepts, theories, and terms, seminal or influential studies and focusing on areas of agreement, tensions and inadequacies, and narrowing the focus to studies closest to your study, iii) identify gaps where your own research fits, and iv) sum up and link your research to previous studies. The synthesis review paper should be prepared in the latest version of APA, be @ 20 – 25 pages (not including references and appendices or tables/figures), and turned prior to our break.

Smaller (ungraded) papers of 3-5 pages will be expected during the course to assess status of your synthesis paper for formative feedback and encouragement to maximize learning and grade and an (ungraded) outline will be expected at the midpoint of the course. Presentations will take place in the final two classes of the semester.

- **Other Requirements**

4) Course participation. Course participation is a critical aspect of the course and will be important in maintaining an informed and critical analysis of issues and material that arise in the course. At the end of the semester, you will be requested to provide a self-evaluation of your course grade based on criteria determined in class.

- **Course Performance Evaluation Weighting by course grade**

Comparative chapter summaries/critique presentation = 30%;

Synthesis papers = 40%;

Synthesis paper presentations =10%;

Course participation = 20%.

- **Grading Policies**

The following grading scale will be used for all class assignments:

A	94 - 100
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79
C	70 - 76
F	Below 70

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- 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/>).
- 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/>).
- The George Mason University Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

Class Schedule

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
August 29	Topic 1: Introduction to theoretical and methodological foundations of comparative, global, international education policy	Read Arnove, Hopson, et.al, and Vavrus & Bartlett Introductions;
September 12	<i>Setting the problem and context of your synthesis paper</i>	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch 1, 9; Hopson, et.al, Ch. 8 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 1 <i>HW: Selection of chapter and date for presentation</i>
September 19	Topic 2: Scientific dimension of comparative international education	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 4 Hopson et.al, Ch. 2 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 2 <i>HW: Setting problem and context of your synthesis paper</i>
September 26	<i>Analyzing previous research – overview</i>	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 3 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 4 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 3
October 3	Topic 3: Pragmatic dimension of comparative international education	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 10 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 11 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 4
October 10	<i>Analyzing previous research – identifying concepts, theories, terms</i>	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 7 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 15 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 5 <i>HW: Draft synthesis paper outline</i>
October 17	Topic 4: Global dimension of comparative international education	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 6 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 1 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 6 <i>HW: Presentation of analyzing previous research slides</i> <i>HW: Analyzing previous research paper</i>

October 24	<i>Identifying gaps – fitting current literature review research</i> [Guest Presentation]	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 12 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 9 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 7
October 31	Topic 5: Cases in comparative, international education [Guest Presentation]	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 13 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 2 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 8 <i>HW: Presentation of identifying gaps slides</i>
November 7	<i>Summing up literature review research</i> [Guest Presentation]	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 16 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 7 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 9 <i>HW: Identifying gaps paper due Sun, 15 Nov to Bb</i>
November 14	<i>Reading/writing day</i>	Read Arnove, et.al, Ch. 18 Hopson, et.al, Ch. 18 Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 10
November 21	<i>Student policy researcher panel</i> • 3-5 advanced doctoral students present their policy research	Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 11 <i>HW: Synthesis papers due (at class)</i>
November 28		Vavrus & Bartlett, Ch. 12 <i>HW: Synthesis paper presentations</i>
December 5	Course summary	<i>HW: Chapter summer/critique presentations</i>

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Assessment Rubric(s)

	Levels of Performance			
	(F) Unsatisfactory	© Basic	(B) Proficient	(A) Distinguished
Quality of Work	Unacceptable	Lower graduate level and quality; unsophisticated; assignments show little or no connection to course content or concepts.	Competent; provides credible evidence of understanding and application; some lapses in organization, citations and/or writing clarity. Evidence of understanding presented but incomplete; writing indicates gaps in logic; grammar and/or spelling errors distract the reader. Weak or insufficient citations.	Exceptional quality and insight; a rare & valuable contribution to the field. Convincingly on target; demonstrates evidence of understanding and application; clear and concise writing; the reader is not distracted by grammar and/or spelling and citation errors.
Completeness of Work	Difficult to recognize as the assigned task.	Insufficient evidence of understanding and application; important elements missing or difficult to find.	Moderate shortcomings; minor elements missing that distract the instructor's ability to see the product as a whole. Evidence of effort but one or more significant and important points are missed or not addressed.	100% complete and error free. Accurate & seamless writing; virtually a complete product.
Timeliness	Missed or not submitted. Incompletes not made up.	Excessively or repeatedly late.	Assignments late more than once or without prior conversation with instructor; not necessarily chronic. More than half the assignments are late, but none are excessively late.	100% on time. Almost always on time; rare but forgivable tardiness (such as serious personal or family illness). Instructor is notified in advance that a paper may be late.