

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Course Title: Education Policy: Comparative and International Perspectives
EDUC 873

Class Date and Time: Mondays, 7:20-10:00 PM

Class Location: 209 Krug Hall

Instructor: Valerie O. Sutter
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course uses an interdisciplinary approach to study education policy and policymaking in comparative perspective. Lectures, discussions and readings will focus on description and analysis of educational policy issues in selected countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe. The course also addresses education policy-related issues which transcend national boundaries and have implications for educators in internationalizing curricula and in fostering social justice and global awareness.

II. STUDENT OUTCOMES: At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

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 differing theoretical and methodological approaches to the comparative study of national education policies.
4. Understand the formation of educational policies as an ingredient of the planning process consistent with a value system and a country's overall development.
5. Describe, interpret and analyze educational problems in cross-cultural perspective.
6. 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.

III. Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

The conceptual framework for this course is linked to the goals of the Graduate School of Education and more specifically to the mission of the Center for Education Policy as outlined in its Charter: (1) Translate education research into policy options and recommendations for a variety of audiences (decision makers, practitioners, and the public); (2) Conduct timely, sound, evidence-based analysis; and (3) Develop interdisciplinary and cross-sector education policy

networks. The student outcomes are linked to this mission, in particular to the importance of evidence-based analysis.

IV. NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course is taught using lectures, class discussions and student presentations.

V. REQUIRED READING

Fiske, E.B. & Ladd, H.F. (2004). *Elusive equity: Education reform in post-apartheid South Africa*. Washington, DC: Brookings.

Freire, P. (1986). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Available online at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html>.

Rotberg, I.C., (Ed.) (2004). *Balancing change and tradition in global education reform*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2004.

Seierstad, A. (2002). *The bookseller of Kabul* (trans. 2003). New York: Little, Brown and Co.

Weiner, Myron (1991). *The child and the state in India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*Several articles will be assigned as additional required reading during the course.

VI. RECOMMENDED READING

Achebe, C. (1959). *Things fall apart*. New York: Anchor Books.

Arnove, R. F. & Torres, C.A. (1999). Comparative Education. The Dialectic of the Global and the Local. Baltimore: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999.

Barber, B.R. (1995). *Jihad vs. mcworld. how globalization and tribalism are reshaping the world*. New York: Ballantine/Random House.

Beauchamp, E. R. (2001) *The comparative education reader*. New York.: Falmer.

Chubb, J. & Moe, T. (1992) *A lesson in school reform in Great Britain*. Washington: Brookings.

DeCoker,G. (Ed.) (2002). *National standards and school reform in Japan and the United States*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Dore, R. *The diploma disease: Education, qualification, and development*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Friedman, T. L. (1999). *The Lexus and the olive tree. Understanding globalization*. New York: Random House.
- Friedman, T. L. (2005). *The world is flat. A brief history of the 21st century*. New York: 2005.
- Fuller, B. (1991). *Growing up modern. The western state builds third-world schools*. New York: Routledge.
- Gibson, M. & Ogbu, J.U. (1991). *Minority status and schooling: A comparative study of immigrant and involuntary minorities*. New York: Garland.
- Kielburger, C. & Major, K. (1998). *Free the children: A young man's personal crusade against child labor*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Lane, J. J. (Ed.) (1995). *Ferment in education. A look abroad*. New York: National Society for the Study of Education.
- Lewis, C.C. (1995). *Educating hearts and minds. Reflections on Japanese preschool and elementary education*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lutz, C.A. & Collins, J.L. (1993). *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McAdams, R.P. (1993). *Lessons from abroad. how other countries educate their children*. Technomic: Lancaster, PA.
- Mezlekia, N. (2000). *Notes from the hyena's belly*. New York: Picador/St. Martin's Press.
- Nafisi, A. (2003). *Reading Lolita in Tehran*. New York: Random House.
- Paton, Alan.(1940). *Cry, the beloved country*. New York: Scribner's.
- Priorities and strategies for education. A World Bank review*. (1995) Washington: The World Bank.
- Reimers, F. (Ed.) (2000). *Unequal schools, unequal chances: The challenges to equal opportunity in the Americas*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Rohlen, T. P. & Le Trendre, G.K. (Eds.) (1998). *Teaching and learning in Japan*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sachs, J. (2005). *The end of poverty. Economic possibilities for our time*. New York: Penguin Press.

- Savitt, W. (Ed.) (1993). *Teaching global development. A curriculum guide*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Starrett, G. (1998). *Putting Islam to work education, politics and religious transformation in Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stearns, K. (1996). *School reform: Lessons from England*. Princeton: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Stevenson, H.W. & Stigler, J.W. (1994). *The learning gap: What we can learn from Japanese and Chinese education*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Stigler, J. W. & Hiebert, J. (1999). *The teaching gap. Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Stiglitz, J.E. (2003). *Globalization and its discontents*. New York: Norton.
- Suarez-Orozco, M. M. & Qin-Hillard, D.B. (Eds.) (2004). *Globalization: Culture and education in the new millennium*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wolf, P. J. & Macedo, S. (Eds.) (2004). *Educating citizens. International perspectives on civic values and school choice*. Washington, DC: Brookings.

Journals:

Comparative Education Review, the journal of the Comparative and International Education Society

International Journal of Educational Development International Review of Education

Anthropology and Education Quarterly

Compare

Oxford Studies in Comparative Education

Comparative Education

VII. COURSE CONTENT

Class 1 (8/29)

Introduction to the course (review content, assignments, etc.; introductions)

Comparative and International Education approaches and perspectives. (as a field of inquiry; purposes; and resources)

Global trends in education policy: the social justice goals of education (overview).

Class 2 (9/12)

Educational borrowing and lending: promises and challenges.

What drives policy and why? Academic Olympics: Comparative perspectives (TIMSS, PISA, etc.).

Reforms in British Education: Policy Lessons from England (school choice, national standards, testing, etc.)

Read for discussion: *Nation at Risk* and Rotberg: preface & chapter 14.

Also, in preparation for this class; peruse and note key comparisons:

<http://nces.ed.gov/timss>

Class 3 (9/19)

Japanese Educational Policy: The influence of culture, and current reforms. What are the lessons for American education policy?

“Preschool in Three Cultures” (video and discussion).

Read : Rotberg, Chap.1, 10 & 11.

Class 4 (9/26)

Educational Policy and Political Change: China

South Africa: educational policy’s role in pursuit of social justice in the post-apartheid era.

Read for Discussion: Fiske and Ladd, *Elusive Equality*. Paper due. Also, Rotberg, chap. 3

Class 5 (10/3)

Educational Policy and Political Change (continued): Russia

Poverty, educational policy and the developing world: Focus on Africa

Education for All: Focus on the Education of Girls.

Read Rotberg: chap. 2 & 5

Class 6 (10/11)*note this is Tues.

India: National schools vs. Popular Education Alternatives (“Deepalaya”)

Read for discussion: *The Child and the State in India* (paper due). Proposal for the final paper is due.

Class 7 ((10/17))

Child Labor: A Challenge for Education. Speaker: representative from International Child Labor Program, U.S. Department of Education

Compensatory Education Policies and Programs

Class 8 (10/24)

Latin America: Education and the legacy of injustice. Read for discussion: Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (paper due).

Policy choices and popular education models: "Fe y Alegria" (Bolivia); and "Escuela Nueva" (Guatemala and Colombia)

Read for discussion: Rotberg, chapter 4.

Class 9 (10/31)

Cuba's policy decisions: academic achievement and education equity in the context of international isolation

Haiti: education challenges

Chile: school voucher policy and results

Class 10 (11/7)

Education policy as a component of US foreign policy: projects in Afghanistan and Iraq. (Guest speaker: TBA).

Education, human rights and democracy building

Read for discussion: *The Bookseller of Kabul* (paper due).

Class 11 (11/14)

Diverse populations: the effects of educational policy: Canada, France, Germany and the US

"The World in a Zip Code": Diversity in American Schools

Read Rotberg, chapters 5, 6, 12 & 16.

Class 12 (11/21)

International educational exchanges: policy implications for post 9/11 America. We will discuss current programs and challenges they face; opportunities for students and educators. Speakers: TBA

Marketing higher education: Economics and Education Policy: Australia
Read Rotberg: 15

Class 13 (11/28)

Final papers/projects: presentations by students

Class 14 (12/5)

Final papers/projects: student presentations

Global interdependence, human rights and social justice: a role for education policy? Global trends and local impact for education policy.

Course summary and conclusions; lessons learned?

VIII. PERFORMANCE BASED EVALUATION

A detailed rubric for evaluation of student performance is included on the last page of this syllabus. The following components will be evaluated using that rubric.

1. Class participation including in-class assignments.
2. Completion and discussion of required readings.
3. Four short written assignments (3-4 pages) related to the required books (Fiske & Ladd, Freire, Weiner, Seierstad). These papers are due on the day the book is discussed in class. Guidelines for these assignments will be explained the first day of the course.
4. Select, read and review (1) one comparative education research article of interest to you and relating to educational policy in another country. In a short oral presentation (about 5-10 minutes) summarize and lead a discussion of your article. During each class session, usually at the beginning, one or two students will present; be prepared to hand out a brief, one (1) page outline to all class members: outline should include: complete citation for your article; author's thesis or main point; 2 or 3 key findings; your insights (i.e. value of the article, connection to course themes, etc.
5. An individual or two-person paper or project about a specific education policy (ies) in another country or countries and related to a theme, issue, or idea included in the course content or objectives. This paper should pose a question, show evidence of scholarly research, and include critical-interpretive assessments and conclusions. This paper must be prepared in APA style and be approximately 10-12 pages in length. Papers will be presented to the class (15 minute presentations) during the last two (2) class sessions. A proposal (written) for the final paper is due at Class 6. The final paper is due at the time of presentation.

Grades: Participation and class discussion: 10%
Short written assignments on required readings: 40%
Oral presentation of journal article: 10%
Final paper: 40%

EVALUATION

Grading Scale:

A =	96-100	A- =	92-95		
B+ =	89-91	B =	85-88	B- =	80-84
C+ =	76-79	C =	73-75		
F =	72 and below -- A grading rubric is attached.				

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL GSE STUDENTS

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects all students to *read* and abide by the following:

- ✓ Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See www.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.
- ✓ Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/policies/#TOC_H12 for the full Honor Code.
- ✓ Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- ✓ Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/students/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Grade/Points	Quality of Written Work	Completeness of Work	Timeliness	Class Participation
A 96 – 100 A- 92 – 95	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.	100% complete Accurate & seamless writing; virtually a complete product	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.	Outstanding; facilitates and promotes conversation focused on the topic; questions & comments reveal thoughtful reaction. Good team participant Well above average doctoral student; actively helps move group toward goal.
B+ 89 –91 B 85 – 88 B- 80 – 84	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. Barely passable for graduate credit; only enough to get by; little evidence of understanding; assignments lack clarity and organization; little evidence of proof reading. Citations absent or inaccurate.	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. Barely sufficient; work is the least that could be done to justify graduate credit.	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. Excessively or repeatedly late.	Reliable and steady worker; questions and comments reveal some thought and reflection. Doesn't contribute often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection. Follows rather than leads group activities. Few meaningful contributions to class discussions. Little evidence of participation.
C 79 and below	Undergraduate level and quality; unsophisticated; assignments show little or not connection to course content or concepts.	Insufficient evidence of understanding and application; important elements missing or difficult to find.	Excessively or repeatedly late.	Weak or minimal participation; passive; often sidetracks group.
F	Unacceptable	Difficult to recognize as the assigned task.	Missed or not submitted. Incompletes not made up.	No constructive participation; destructive; demeaning toward other points of view.

