

ED 649
FOUNDATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION REFORM
Fall 2018

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Room 2229
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Class meetings:

Tuesdays
5:15 – 8:00 p.m.

Exceptions:
No class on: September 18 or October 17

I will use Canvas to send announcements to communicate with you. Important information about assignments, classes, changes, and additional resources will be provided and I will assume you are receiving all such announcements. Please set Canvas to make sure you are receiving announcements through the email you use regularly.

I will respond within 24 hours to all email messages you send to dball@umich.edu. If you need to reach me, you can also text (734-972-4793).

To make the management of class files easier and more reliable, please title class documents with a standard label, i.e.: <assign1_lastname.docx>, or <paper#1_lastname.docx>. You will submit all assignments to the course Canvas site.

COURSE POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES

Diversity and Respect in the Classroom Community

In order to create community and spaces where people share their ideas and views and are open to hearing others, and where we seek to challenge and change patterns of marginalization and privilege, the following core principles are fundamental and expected in this class:

- **Respect:** We must respect and value the efforts, identities, capacities, and ideas that each person brings into the space. We call people their chosen names and we make the effort to learn and to say their names as they wish them said.
- **Curiosity and openness:** We must all be open to alternative views, experiences, and perspectives, and curious to learn about and from one another. Freedom to express ourselves, a fundamental civil and human right, excludes expressions that commit or encourage violence or trauma toward others. I do not invite racist, sexist, classist, and, generally, bigoted ideas, nor am I inviting tolerance or respect for such ideas. Judgments about this are part of the responsibility that a free and just society entails.
- **Diversity:** We stand for the goals of diversity, inclusion, justice, and equity expressed in our school community's statement of institutional commitments: <http://www.soe.umich.edu/diversity/>. Acting on these commitments in our day-to-day work together means that we each must cultivate awareness of our own biases and perspectives. Actively advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice requires that we are mindful of our ways of being, listening, talking. Being cognizant of our own biases and perspectives and actively working to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice will require each of us to critically interrogate the materials, ideas, structures, and contexts we examine, and the ways in which we examine them in our work together.

Appreciation

Our opportunities to learn together in this course owe a great deal to the work of many others who labor to ensure that classes are held in clean and heated rooms, that the technology works to support our learning, and that we have the supplies we need, and access to the materials and resources we need.



I especially would like to thank Tina Sanford in the Educational Studies office, Mike Napolitan and Daniel Adkins in the SOE Facilities office, and Joanna Elliot in Instructional Technology Services. These individuals and many unnamed others across campus are often invisible to us and are disproportionately people of color and low-income people, while their labor creates comfort and security for our school. In fact, their work is successful when it simply happens without attracting attention, yet they are often not accorded the respect and gratitude they deserve. Please join me whenever you can in expressing thankfulness for their skill and resourcefulness in making it possible to teach and learn here.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. Some aspects of this course—the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is taught—may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, I will work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help me make appropriate academic accommodations. SSD typically recommends accommodation through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. SSD contact information: 734-763-3000; <https://ssd.umich.edu/>

COURSE FOCUS AND LEARNING GOALS

EDUC 649, Foundational Perspectives on Education Reform, is a core requirement for students in the Educational Leadership and Policy master's program in Educational Studies. The course is also appropriate for graduate students interested in efforts to improve education systems and their impacts, including the history of efforts to "reform" education. We will seek to peel back the cover of reform efforts to understand the underlying assumptions and theories of action, and to analyze both the intended and unintended effects of various policies, interventions, and innovations. Centered in U.S. education practice and policy, the course will consider how specific policies and practices work and, consequently, who benefits and who loses. Specifically, our analyses and explorations will probe patterns of marginalization and exclusion that are at times explicitly oppressive and at other times underlying apparently laudable practices and policies.

What does it mean that this course focuses on "foundational perspectives"? First, consider closely what "perspectives" includes. One place to look is the *Oxford English Dictionary* (<https://tinyurl.com/perspectives-OEDUM>). In one sense "perspective" is about ways of seeing and connecting different ideas and narratives in a domain—in our case, the domain referred to as "education reform"—in relation to one another. But "foundational" (another word to investigate here (<https://tinyurl.com/foundation-OEDUM>)) means also that these form the fundamental bases for building and developing something. Because this course is designed for education leaders who will play roles in the practice of improving education, this "something" comprises not just foundational *knowledge*, but also foundational *practices* and *habits* that are the basis for skillful leadership in education "reform."

Focal Topics, Methods, and Questions

Efforts to improve education in the United States are as old as the country itself. On one hand, ideals of innovation and improvement are held up with admiration. Enthusiasm for "new" and "better" permeates many aspects of American culture. For example, the continuous cycle of new curriculum and new materials is always represented in terms of change, linked as improvement. The solution of societal problems is also often put at the hands of schools, from drug education to global competitiveness. The common school reformers of the 1840s were among the earliest campaigners for "reform." The children with whom they were concerned were white. Although enslaved African children were often actively learning to read, these children's literacy was both a key resource for liberation and also deeply risky to acquire. The reformers' vision of "common" schools was challenged even by other whites, immigrants and Catholics, who resisted the dominant school curricula and values being promoted by the reformers. Here the struggle over whom and what are schools for, and how and when the voices and aspirations of different communities and families are included, was already deeply at play. Also at play was how children were to be formed, and how their identities reflected dominant perspectives on everything from "proper" behavior, to gender roles, to racialized images of competence and skill.

Thus, on the other hand, "reforms" are also conservative. White supremacy coupled with strong conservatism and commitments to practices and structures—to hierarchies of privilege and power related to race, class, and gender—have persistently dominated the history of education reform. Schools have been seen as a resource and a tool for the creation of the society and for the development of its most important human resource—our young people. And dominant groups have also used schools to retain power and opportunity for their own children, and systematically denied opportunities for "other people's children" (Delpit, 2006).



The history of education reform in the United States is at once one of repeated failure but also a success story given the articulation and institutionalization of dominant values and learning. Who has led different efforts and with what goals and rationales? What theories of action have shaped various reforms efforts? What has been the discourse of education reform and what has it foregrounded and what has it concealed?

With these problems embedded in what seems a ubiquitous and taken for granted part of the landscape of U.S. education, we will set out to puzzle and to learn about education reform, its design, enactment, and consequences. We will draw on what we and many others have experienced, watched, done, and studied. The sites for our exploration will include texts, our own experience, artifacts of teaching, and other people. At the same time, we will cultivate a stance of critical inquiry and consciousness about whose voices, perspectives, and experiences are refracted through knowledge of and research on education reform, and whose are not. How does education reform look across time in the evolution of U.S. education? How does reform reproduce larger structural and historical racism, sexism, and other patterns of exclusion and power, and (how) can it challenge and disrupt such structures?

This preface suggests that we will be venturing into difficult territory in this course. Three sets of questions will structure our work together:

1. What has been the history of reform in U.S. education? What problems have reformers tried to solve, for whom? Who has framed the problems—and the arguments that particular reforms could solve those problems? Whose interests have been served by various reforms and whose have not? What meaning is carried by the notion of “reform”? Who have been the actors and agents? When and how have non-dominant communities shaped development and improvement efforts in their own visions and with their own strategies?
2. What is involved in “implementing” reforms (or changes) in educational practice? How does the design of a reform interact with its enactment in particular cases and in particular environments?
3. What outcomes have resulted from particular reform efforts, and what explanations are there for these outcomes? What patterns are there in the discourse around reforms and their intended and unintended effects? Whose perspectives and what evidence or data shape the narratives around particular reforms? Whose perspectives and what evidence are missing?

There are no settled answers to the questions that are the territory of this course, despite the fact that they seem to be the most obvious of the challenges of education. We will explore the issues above to develop workable provisional answers, and will consider how the issues may be further explored in our own work as leaders and educators.

Learning Practices for Leadership

In addition to these specific substantive goals, the course is designed to help you cultivate a variety of practices and stances important for leadership in education, in a range of settings, institutions, and contexts. These include:

- consciously examining one’s own identities and how these shape one’s interpretations and actions
- using evidence and reasoning both to construct and critique claims and arguments
- exercising both skepticism and open-mindedness
- analyzing theories of action
- scrutinizing ways in which practices and policies reinforce or have the potential to disrupt patterns of racism and oppression
- presenting ideas in writing and orally
- communicating with attunement to audience and context
- planning and leading meetings

Our work will be informed by reading a wide range of historical and contemporary material, including studying the work of well-known scholars and thinkers. But because such foundations have often been shaped by only some voices, and predominantly white and male perspectives, we will deliberately and consciously study work that contributes to building our perspectives, and improving our questions as well as our provisional answers. This means seeking and reading, listening, and learning in other domains—philosophy, for example, or political science—as well as by a range of authors with different experiences and identities. It also means using fiction, film, essays, podcasts, and other resources that can help us see connections, ask better questions, and come up with new insights. This course is designed to focus explicitly on methods and forms of inquiry, thought, and expression, what it means to use “data” or “evidence” for an argument—methods of interpretation, analysis, and argument, as well as approaches to communicating—that are fundamental to skillful leadership practice.



The nature of the course work will involve interpreting and analyzing texts, artifacts, observations, experiences, and other materials, framing and revising questions, making conjectures, and testing alternative assertions. All this involves taking intellectual risks, being both playful and disciplined. Establishing a culture in which such work is valued, encouraged, and supported is part of our collective work. Each of you brings different experiences, interests, perspectives, and expertise. Who you each are and what you bring to the class can be resources for the course, if we learn to make use of them, and of one another, generously and inquisitively.

Collectively, we will examine and analyze what each of us—as instructor and students—*does* as we construct the curriculum, discourse, relations, and culture of the class. Doing that requires attention to practices of teaching and learning, and making that attention part of the course work. The course depends on you as much as it does on me. We will regularly reflect on the course content and instruction, and use them to keep developing our opportunities to learn together this term.

Reading¹

We will read a wide range of texts, including empirical and conceptual work about teaching; work in particular disciplines and domains; articles in the public media; reports of commissions and panels; writing about other professions and practices; and, even dictionaries. The work of the class will depend on reading interactively, on bringing both collective and individual goals to reading, considering, and reconsidering texts. In its most straightforward expression, this involves bringing questions to think about while preparing to read something, reading a text, and reflexively placing what one has read in the context of both evolving scholarship on a subject and one's own development as a scholar.

The following sets of questions offer a framework for reading generously and critically in ways that support learning:

1. *Who is the author—in terms of identity, context, times, disciplinary training and orientation, experience, and approach to inquiry?*
We will learn more about each of the people whose work we read, study, and analyze. I will ask you to contribute to our collective understanding of our authors by taking turns at sharing some insights about them and the contexts of their work.
2. *What is the author trying to say, claim, or argue?*
What are the principal and subsidiary arguments or theses? To whom is the author writing? What are the important conceptual terms? What does the author seem to assume? What sorts of evidence and methods are used? Can you identify specific passages that support your interpretation? Are there other passages that either contradict or appear less consistent with your understanding? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author's argument? Can you make sense of, or account for, these differences?
3. *What is the author's purpose and how has the author constructed the text, and with what audience in mind?*
Why was this work written? To whom is the author writing and talking, against, or for? How do the author's arguments fit within various communities of discourse? How is a piece of work connected to the efforts of others dedicated to similar purposes? In what community or communities does the author locate him or herself? What can you know or infer about the author's motivation and on what do you base that? What is the author *doing* in this text?² What is the logic of the text's structure? What clues can you get from the text's design and structure? Does its organization give you insights into the argument? Are there patterns in the author's presentation that help you to locate and understand the most valuable material? What can you do to concentrate your attention to and interrogation of the text? How does the author treat the words and concepts central to the work? How does the author use language to distinguish their argument from others'? What seems to be missing and is it deliberate (as in setting a boundary) or implicit or invisible?

¹ This section on intellectual practices has evolved over many years and a wide range of courses that I have taught with colleagues, including Chandra Alston, Dan Chazan, David Cohen, Michael Sedlak, and Suzanne Wilson, as well as on my own. Teaching graduate courses is always a work in progress for many distinctive reasons, and the development of what David Cohen calls the "meta-curriculum" of graduate school is always one of the most fascinating parts of teaching at this level.

² See, for example, Joseph Schwab, "Enquiry and the reading process," for a thorough unpacking of what it means to examine a text.



4. *What is the relationship between the author's assumptions and ideas and your own understanding? How might your response to the work be affected by your values, beliefs, and commitments? Can you read and make sense of the work on its own terms? How does the author's treatment of a particular concept or word interact with yours?*

Discussion and Talking

Creating thoughtful arguments requires making conjectures and offering justification for them. Sometimes justification comes from the texts—specific references to an argument that an author has made well. At other times, justification is based on the logical analysis of a term or set of ideas. Sometimes arguments are more empirically based, grounded in data or in disciplined use of experience.

The course will be run as a seminar. Your participation in discussions and in class activities is important not only for your own learning but also for others'. What you learn in this course will be influenced by the degree of everyone's engagement in and contributions to the discussions. Preparing the readings and coming to class with questions, insights, and issues is crucial to making the course work; I rely on everyone's contributions and participation. Building the culture of the class so that genuine inquiry is possible will take all of our efforts to make the seminar a context in which people communicate and are listened to, in which evidence of a wide range matters, in which thoughtful questioning of one another's claims is desirable, and in which alternative perspectives and interpretations are valued. Because we will investigate a complex topic, we will need to try out ideas that are only partially developed. Doing so is an important part of developing the capacity to think in disciplined ways. How we listen to one another's ideas, assist with the formulation of an interpretation, and question or challenge ideas, will affect the quality of what we can do together. How we listen to others' reactions to our ideas, accommodate critique and questions, change our minds—revise at some times, and reinforce our analyses at others—all of these things will affect the intellectual culture of the class.

We will develop and maintain norms that can support our work together. Listening carefully, treating ideas with respect and interest, raising and responding to questions, sharing the floor—all these will matter in constructing an environment where satisfying and challenging intellectual work can take place. One part of exploring an idea or an argument is to attend closely to it to understand its logic, intention, meaning. Listening generously, assuming that ideas and claims are made for good reasons, is crucial to thinking well. Another part is to be skeptical, to consider what is missing or logically flawed. Using both—generosity and skepticism—contributes to careful unpacking of ideas and to good thinking.

It is also important to reflect on the sort of support you need from me. What are you working on, trying to learn or do, or finding particularly intriguing or challenging? What is helpful to you, and what have you learned about the ways in which you use instructors and their teaching that might enable you to use this course and its teacher and teaching in useful and productive ways?

Writing and Presenting

Writing and presenting are another important vehicle for exploring and clarifying ideas, for trying out interpretations and arguments, and for representing ideas and communicating with others. Writing plays a central role in graduate work, and in educational scholarship and practice. It is an important part of learning to participate in a community of educational scholars and practitioners who have a specialized discourse. The course will provide occasions to focus on and develop these new aspects of your writing, and the writing assignments are structured to provide guidance and resources, as well as the opportunity for comments and suggestions. Writing will be developed through cycles of design, experimenting, drafting, getting feedback, revising and developing, and refining. The guidance I will provide is designed to support you in your writing assignments for this course, with the goal not only of scaffolding these tasks, but also of helping you extend your practice and habits as a writer.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for this course have been developed deliberately to support your learning of key practices of leadership work and to engage you in different sorts of exploration and analysis that will support your learning in this course, but also beyond. In this section, I provide an overview of each of the main projects, their scope, design, and timeframe. More details will be provided separately to guide the stages and components of each of these. In this section, the assignments and their purposes are described.

1. Education reform autobiography (due September 18)

This first assignment asks you to reflect back over your experience as a student and/or as a professional and consider your own firsthand experience with education reform. Where, how, and



under what circumstances have you been involved in or your experience affected by a particular reform effort? You will use part of your own history with education reform to unpack what you are bringing to the course and to our investigations together. You will describe the particular “reform,” analyze it based on your experience and in light of some of the questions we are asking in the first part of the course, and consider how this experience has affected—and positions—you as an educator and education leader. It is possible that you might identify and analyze an experience with “reform” that you did not think of as reform when you experienced it. This autobiography should be no more than 1000 words.

2. Book response and plan for its use in a specific context (response due October 2; plan due October 9)

Choose one of the following books [here](#), and read it during the week of September 18 when we do not have class. You will be able to see the book choices of every one in our class so that you can discuss the book you are reading with others who are reading the same one. We will talk about ways to read books such as these, for particular purposes.

Lomawaima, K. T. (1994). *They called it prairie light: The story of Chilocco Indian School (North American Indian Prose Award)*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Established in 1884 and operative for nearly a century, the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma was one of a series of off-reservation boarding schools intended to assimilate American Indian children into mainstream American life. Critics have characterized the schools as destroyers of Indian communities and cultures, but the reality that K. Tsianina Lomawaima discloses was much more complex.

Lomawaima allows the Chilocco students to speak for themselves. In recollections juxtaposed against the official records of racist ideology and repressive practice, students from the 1920s and 1930s recall their loneliness and demoralization but also remember with pride the love and mutual support binding them together—the forging of new pan-Indian identities and reinforcement of old tribal ones.

Nieto, S. (2015). *Brooklyn dreams: My life in public education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

In *Brooklyn Dreams*, Sonia Nieto—one of the leading authors and teachers in the field of multicultural education—looks back on her formative experiences as a student, activist, and educator, and shows how they reflect and illuminate the themes of her life’s work. Nieto offers a poignant account of her childhood and the complexities of navigating the boundaries between the rich culture of her working-class Puerto Rican family and the world of school. *Brooklyn Dreams* also chronicles her experiences as a fledgling teacher at the first bilingual public school in New York City—in the midst of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strike—and the heady days of activism during the founding of the bilingual education program at Brooklyn College and later in establishing and running an alternative multicultural school in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Podair, J. (2002). *The strike that changed New York: Blacks, Whites, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

On May 9, 1968, junior high school teacher Fred Nauman received a letter that would change the history of New York City. It informed him that he had been fired from his job. Eighteen other educators in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville area of Brooklyn received similar letters that day. The dismissed educators were white. The local school board that fired them was predominantly African-American. The crisis that the firings provoked became the most racially divisive moment in the city in more than a century, sparking three teachers’ strikes and increasingly angry confrontations between black and white New Yorkers at bargaining tables, on picket lines, and in the streets.

This book revisits the Ocean Hill–Brownsville crisis—a watershed in modern New York City race relations. Jerald E. Podair connects the conflict with the sociocultural history of the city and explores its legacy. The book is a powerful, sobering tale of racial misunderstanding and fear, a New York story with national implications.

Shalaby, C. (2017). *Troublemakers: Lessons in freedom from young children in school*. New York: New Press.

In her first book, Carla Shalaby, a former elementary school teacher, who also works here in the School of Education, explores the everyday lives of four young “troublemakers”, challenging the ways we identify and understand so-called problem children. Time and again, we make seemingly endless efforts to moderate, punish, and even medicate our children, when we should instead be concerned with transforming the very nature of our institutions, systems, and structures, large and small. Through delicately crafted portraits of these memorable children—Zora, Lucas, Sean, and Marcus—*Troublemakers* allows us to see school through the eyes of those who know firsthand what it means to be labeled a problem.



Tatum, B. D. (2017). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race*. New York: Basic Books.

Walk into any racially mixed high school and you will see Black, White, and Latino youth clustered in their own groups. Is this self-segregation a problem to address or a coping strategy? Beverly Daniel Tatum, a renowned authority on the psychology of racism, argues that straight talk about our racial identities is essential if we are serious about enabling communication across racial and ethnic divides. These topics have only become more urgent as the national conversation about race is increasingly acrimonious. This fully revised edition is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the dynamics of race in America.

Winn, M.. (2018) *Justice on both sides: Transforming education through restorative justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Restorative justice represents “a paradigm shift in the way Americans conceptualize and administer punishment,” says author Maisha T. Winn, from a focus on crime to a focus on harm, including the needs of both those who were harmed and those who caused it. Her book, *Justice on Both Sides*, provides an urgently needed, comprehensive account of the value of restorative justice and how contemporary schools can implement effective practices to address inequalities associated with race, class, and gender.

Read the book you choose and then write a 1000-word reflective review of it, due October 2. What is the author doing with this book? Does the book fit with or challenge your own experience and perspectives in any ways and, if so, how? What is your reaction to the author’s argument? What does reading this book suggest about—or for—education reform? In what ways could this book be a resource for disrupting patterns that reproduce racism and inequity in schools?

The second part of the work with your book will be due on October 9, one week later. For this part, you will design to have a group—you will identify the group—read this book. Examples include a building staff, the administrators in a school district or a charter network, the school board, families, the board member of a particular non-profit education reform organization. Why would you decide to have this particular group read your book? How would you stage and set up their reading of it? What would you do with them as they read it or after they have read it, and why? How might their reading inform their encounters with reform initiatives or their efforts to institute particular reforms? Specific planning guidelines will be provided to help you prepare your plan.

3. Reform design project

The second half of the term will focus on the work of preparing a proposal for a reform or improvement in a particular context. You will work with a small (1–2 others) group of education leaders (in this class) across this multi-part project. Your team will ultimately produce and present a proposal for a specific plan of improvement, and respond to questions from the decision-making group and other concerned and interested stakeholders in the context you have identified. You will draw on what we have been investigating all term about the central questions of the course, including a sense of history, awareness of power and agency, analysis of theories of action, implementation, and consideration of who benefits from reforms. You will be expected to keep in focus the imperative to ensure that your proposal is deliberate about anticipating and averting patterns that reproduce inequity and racism and that its theory of action is well-thought out to reach children and families.

The course will explicitly sequence and provide support and instruction relevant to your work on your proposal across the term. First, you will review the problem on which you want to focus and learn about its past history. You will draft your plan and solicit and use feedback on it from multiple sources and stakeholders. Based on the feedback, you will prepare a 10-minute presentation about your proposal to a group of key decision makers and stakeholders. The review memo and the presentation of the proposal, including the design and plan itself, will be graded. The outline will not. I will provide specific details about the criteria for each one.

To begin: Choose one of the following areas in which substantial reforms have been tried over time: (1) special education; (2) curriculum standards; (3) school or class size; (4) interventions related to inequities (sometimes conceptualized as “gaps”); (4) school structure; (5) due to poverty or race; (6) partnerships with families and communities.

We will discuss how to choose in class and you will be supported in selecting and refining your focus. It will be important to bound the time period in which you are looking, and to have a way to focus the contexts in which you are investigating.



The three stages of the work are:

- a) Review of history/contemporary efforts of reform in one specific area (due November 13)**
 Read about particular developments or key efforts in this strand. What seems to stand out as far as how reform efforts have been designed and on what they have focused and with what theory(ies) of action?

The product of your investigation will be a succinct memo (1200 words maximum) to a school board or other decision-making body about what the patterns of reform efforts in this area seem to have been and what they should be cautious or intentional about in trying to make improvements. Please supply details about the context—who is on the board (or other body), what the power dynamics are, how their identities play out for their work—and be clear about what it is about your area of reform that you could be anticipating responses in this context.

- b) Outline of your proposed reform in that same area, in a specific context (due November 20)**

Prepare an outline of a reform in the same basic domain that you would like to propose for the specific context and stakeholders you were using for your review (assignment #3). Your outline should state the problem or issue to be addressed and what the goal of your plan is and how you will track its effects. Describe the key features of your design, who will be involved and how, and how implementation will be supported. Include a brief but clear explanation of your theory of action. A template and length guidelines will be provided to support you in developing your outline. You will get feedback on your draft proposal to help you develop and refine it as you get ready to present it at the end of the term.

- c) Presentation to engage a specific audience in your reform proposal (slides due December 4, actual presentations to be scheduled)**

You will succinctly and persuasively present your proposal for a reform in a way designed to be attuned to a specified audience of stakeholders. Your presentation will aim to persuade your listeners that your reform is worthy and that your theory of action is sensible. It will be crucial as you present to be attentive to a range of issues related to possible unanticipated negative effects, particularly ones that could impact marginalized and minoritized groups, perpetuating structural inequities and oppression. You will need to convince them that your plan for implementation is wise and has a good probability of success.

- 4. In-class work and small assignments:** Across the term, you will do small exercises or tasks that contribute to your learning. These, together with your engagement in our weekly class sessions, comprise the remaining 30% of your grade. Our discussions, activities, and opportunities to engage with leaders in the field will complement and draw on the readings and other media we interrogate. Class sessions will provide practice with ideas, skills of analysis and critique, listening, questioning, and encouraging the development of others' ideas. You are key resources for one another and I will design class sessions to take advantage of who is in the course.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

Task	Product	Due	Percentage of final course grade
1) Education reform autobiography	Reflective essay	September 18	10%
2) Book response and plan for its use in a specific context	a) Short essay review from your perspective	October 2	10%
	b) Plan for engaging a specific group in this book	October 9	10%



3) Review of history/contemporary efforts of reform in one specific area	Memo addressed to school board or other decision-making body	November 13	20%
4) Outline of your proposed reform in that same area, in a specific context	Outline of reform proposal	November 20	No grade, submitted for feedback
5) Presentation to engage a specific audience in your reform proposal	a) Slides b) Handout(s) c) Tool for getting feedback	December 4	20%
6) Participation and small assignments and in-class work	various	ongoing	30%

A few comments about evaluation in graduate work: I want your experiences in this course to contribute to your capacity as a practitioner, a leader, and educator. To support that, I will comment on your writing, offer suggestions, and encourage you to refine your ideas in a variety of ways and using different resources to do so.

You can use your work in this course, with one another and with me, to help you to improve your sense of what good work consists of, and how to produce it. This includes writing good sentences and paragraphs, using words carefully, treating ideas with discipline and respect. It also means using, and not losing, your own voice. We will work on developing a diverse set of ideas about quality in writing and communicating. As you develop your sensibilities, you will be able to do more and more as your own critic and editor.

One obvious reason to take writing seriously is that it is a tool for learning and for communicating persuasively and skillfully with others. A second reason to take your work seriously is that you intend to work as a professional in a field in which improving the quality of the educational enterprise depends on communication among educators and with many publics. Good communicating is unfortunately not something at which most professionals in public education have excelled. Current educational debate, like U.S. educational history and much teaching and writing in schools of education, is littered with jargon-filled, clumsy, and obscure writing. Some of the problems are technical or literary: incorrect grammar, a passion for the passive voice, and needless words. Many other problems are intellectual: arguments that wander, implausible assumptions, paragraphs that do not cohere, and a failure to consider other views respectfully. Professionals who communicate in such ways are in no position to communicate well with the publics on which public education depends.

Improving your work is a joint endeavor, composed of what I and your classmates can offer each of you by way of help and feedback, and how you use my guidance and that of your classmates.



Academic and Professional Integrity

I expect that you will submit original work and will appropriately cite others' work referenced in assignment submissions. If you are unsure about how to correctly cite others, please ask. Please refer to the following website for U-M policies and procedures regarding academic and professional integrity:

http://www.soe.umich.edu/file/academic_integrity/

COURSE SCHEDULE: READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: Reading and writing assignments are listed with the class for which they are due.

Readings will be posted on Canvas in the **class** folder for the day they are due.

Assignments will be specified separately, with details about the tasks involved and the evaluation criteria.

All assignments and resources for them will be posted in the **assignments** section of Canvas.

Date	Focus	Reading	Assignments
COURSE INTRODUCTION			
CLASS 1 September 4	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Overview of our course</p> <p>The salience and role of identity in our practice as educators</p> <p>Communicating about reform: Whose reform and for what ends? "No excuses" charter schools</p>	<p>a) KIPP schools promotional video https://youtu.be/OjJY69Vsrhl May 5, 2017</p> <p>Panel on No Excuses Schools Albert Shanker Institute, March 9, 2016:</p> <p>b) David Kirkland https://youtu.be/4Wvfyapdd_Q?t=3s</p> <p>c) Leslie Fenwick https://youtu.be/jofa8lUxelc</p>	
1. WHAT HAS BEEN THE HISTORY OF REFORM IN U.S. EDUCATION?			
<p>What problems have reformers tried to solve, for whom? Who has framed the problems—and the arguments that particular reforms could solve those problems? Whose interests have been served by various reforms and whose have not? What meaning is carried by the notion of "reform"? Who have been the actors and agents? When and how have non-dominant communities shaped development and improvement efforts in their own visions and with their own strategies?</p>			
CLASS 2 September 11	<p>Questions:</p> <p>What arguments did each of these authors make concerning the role of education?</p> <p>What was each arguing regarding the improvement (or "reform") of education, and for whom?</p>	<p>a) Mann, H. (1848). <i>Twelfth annual report to the Massachusetts Board of Education</i>. Boston, MA: Board of Education. pp. 76–90.</p> <p>b) Mechanics' Free Press (1828). Preamble and resolutions adopted in a public meeting of the working men of the city of Philadelphia, August 11, 1828. In Commons, J.R., Phillips, U.B., Gilmore, E.A., Sumner, H.L. & Andrews, J.B. (Eds.), (1958), <i>A documentary history of American industrial society</i> (pp. 94–107). New York, NY: Russell & Russell.</p>	<p>By Friday, September 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read syllabus closely and respond to survey with your comments Make your book choice at: http://tinyurl.com/books649



		<p>The following readings are both in the file labeled <i>Sumner on Canvas</i>:</p> <p>c) Sumner, C. (1849). Brief for public school integration. In Martin, W.E. (Eds.), <i>Brown v. Board of Education: A brief history with documents</i> (pp. 48–57). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.</p> <p>d) Shaw, L. (1849). Opinion of the court in <i>Roberts v. City of Boston</i>. In Martin, W.E. (Eds.), <i>Brown v. Board of Education: A brief history with documents</i> (pp. 57–60). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.</p>	
<p>NO CLASS MEETING September 18</p>	<p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the author doing with this book? • Does the book fit with or challenge your own experience and perspectives in any ways and, if so, how? • What is your reaction to the author's argument? • What does reading this book suggest about—or for—education reform? • In what ways could this book be a resource for disrupting patterns that reproduce racism and inequity in schools? 	<p>Read the book you selected for assignment #2 (see pp. 6 –7)</p>	<p>Begin to think about your book response (due October 2): (see p. 7, and in Assignments in Canvas)</p>
<p>CLASS 3 September 25</p>	<p>Questions:</p> <p>How do the perspectives of these authors compare with the arguments made by those we read for class #2?</p>	<p>a) "Learning to Read and Write." In Douglass, F. (1845). <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave</i>. Boston: Anti-Slavery Office.</p> <p>b) Katznelson, I. & Weir, M. (1985). <i>Schooling for all: Class, race, and the decline of the democratic ideal</i>. Berkley, CA: University of California Press, Chapters 2,3,4.</p> <p>c) American Indian Boarding Schools Haunt Many, National Public Radio, Charla Bear (May 12, 2008) https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16516865</p>	



<p>CLASS 4 October 2</p>		<p>Siddle Walker, V. (2018). <i>The lost education of Horace Tate: Uncovering the hidden heroes who fought for justice in schools</i>. New York: New Press. Introduction, chapters 1–3; pp. 1–54.</p>	<p>Book response review (assignment 2, part 1): Your review and response to your selected book (see p. 7 and in Assignments on Canvas)</p> <p>Proposed focus for your project (assignment 3, initial step) (see pp. 7–8 and in Assignments on Canvas)</p>
<p>2. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN “IMPLEMENTING” REFORMS (OR CHANGES) IN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE? How does the design of a reform interact with its enactment in particular cases and in particular environments?</p>			
<p>CLASS 5 October 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is Dr. Siddle Walker <i>doing</i> in your group’s chapter? ▪ Identify one story or incident or quote that your group thinks brings forward Siddle Walker’s central theme or point in this chapter. ▪ Prepare how to share it with the class succinctly, including direct connection to the text, and what you think it signifies that is important to understanding the chapter and its contribution to the narrative. 	<p>Siddle Walker, V. (2018). <i>The lost education of Horace Tate: Uncovering the hidden heroes who fought for justice in schools</i>. New York: New Press. Chapters 4–10; pp. 55–142.</p>	<p>Book response review (assignment 2, part 2: Plan for using the book in a specific context): due October 18</p>
<p>October 16 NO CLASS: University Fall Break</p>			
<p>CLASS 6 October 23</p>	<p>a) What is the core problem on which each of these authors is focusing? b) What does each contribute to our question about whose interests are served by particular reforms, and how this plays out in practice? c) How does Lipsky’s notion of the “discretion” inherent in public service workers help to explain what Lewis and Diamond discuss? What about his discussion of the “ubiquity of bias”? d) Where do Lipsky’s analysis and Lewis & Diamond’s connect? What are some differences?</p>	<p>a) Lewis, A., and Diamond, J. (2015). <i>Despite the best intentions: How racial inequality thrives in good schools</i>. New York: Oxford University Press. Prologue, Introduction, Chapter 2. (pp. xiii–xix; 1–16; 45–81.</p> <p>b) Lipsky, M. (1980). <i>Street-level bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public services</i>. New York: Russell Sage. (Preface and Chapters 1, 2, 8).</p>	



3. WHAT OUTCOMES HAVE RESULTED FROM PARTICULAR REFORM EFFORTS, AND WHAT EXPLANATIONS ARE THERE FOR THESE OUTCOMES? What patterns are there in the discourse around reforms and their intended and unintended effects? Whose perspectives and what evidence or data shape the narratives around particular reforms? Whose perspectives and what evidence are missing?			
CLASS 7 October 30	Unpacking desegregation (part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key features of the teaching and schools portrayed by Siddle Walker and Diamond & Lewis In each: (a) What seem to be the main goals? (b) How does the broader environment shape practice? (c) What questions does each raise for investigating desegregation as a "reform"? 	a) United States Supreme Court, <i>BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION</i> , (1954) No. 10, Argued: December 9, 1952 Decided: May 17, 1954 b) Siddle Walker, V. (1996) Introduction: Remembering the good (pp. 1–11); Chapter 6: Their highest potential (pp.141–169). <i>Their highest potential: An African American school community in the segregated south</i> . Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. c) (continue with) Lewis, A., and Diamond, J. (2015). <i>Despite the best intentions: How racial inequality thrives in good schools</i> . New York: Oxford University Press. Prologue, Introduction, Chapter 2. (pp. xiii–xix; 1–16; 45–81.	
CLASS 8 November 6	Unpacking desegregation (part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From our earlier work, what were the narratives around why desegregation was crucial? How were Black children's interests served and denied in the Black schools we have read about? What perspectives are revealed in Blanchett's and Ladson-Billings' arguments about the effects of the "reform" called for by the 1954 <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> Supreme Court decision? What issues and questions about schooling and the persistence or disruption of racism do these different articles suggest to you? 	a) Blanchett, W. (2009) A retrospective examination of urban education from Brown to the desegregation of African Americans in special education—It is time to "go for broke." <i>Urban Education</i> , 44, 370–388. b) Ladson-Billings, G. (2004). Landing on the wrong note: The price we paid for Brown. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 33(7), 3–13.	



<p>CLASS 9 November 13</p>	<p>Special education</p> <p>Guest: Ebony Perouse-Harvey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the evolution of special education as a “reform” intersect with respect to core themes in U.S. schooling: “opportunity,” “all” children, and “differentiation”? • How does special education connect to the history of the implementation of desegregation following Brown? • How does this story reflect the construction of “intelligence” and “deficits” related to people of color in the U.S.? 	<p>Watch either:</p> <p>a) the entire 2018 Brown lecture by Dr. H. Richard Milner (https://youtu.be/wBoF5pFHTDM?t=518) “Disrupting Punitive Practices and Policies: Rac(e)ing Back to Teaching, Teacher Preparation, and Brown”</p> <p>or the entire 2017 Brown lecture by Dr. Alfredo Artiles (https://youtu.be/DtmwoCmPw3s) “Re-Envisioning Equity Research: Disabilities Identification Disparities as a Case in Point”</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>a) Newell, M., & Kratochwill, T. R. (2007). The integration of response to intervention and critical race theory-disability studies: A robust approach to reducing racial discrimination in evaluation decisions. In <i>Handbook of Response to Intervention</i> (pp. 65–79). Springer, Boston, MA.</p> <p>b) Darby, D. Social Construction of Race & Ability: Introduction and Chapter 2 of <i>The Color of Mind</i></p>	<p>Reform proposal project, part a: Memo to school district or organization (see pp. 7-8, Reform Project handout, Assignments on Canvas)</p>
<p>CLASS 10 November 20</p>	<p>Continue special education</p>	<p>Review readings from last week</p>	<p>Reform proposal project, part b: Outline of reform proposal submitted for feedback (see pp. 7–8, Reform Project handout, Assignments on Canvas)</p>
<p>CLASS 10 November 27</p>	<p>Raising standards and common curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some relationships of curriculum and its rigor to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meritocracy ○ Social class ○ Teacher discretion and teaching as a profession? • What are obstacles to curriculum reform? 	<p>a) Anyon, J. (1981). Social class and school knowledge. <i>Curriculum Inquiry</i>, 11, 3–42.</p> <p>b) Cohen, D. K. (1981). The failure of high schools and the progress of education. <i>Daedalus</i>, 110, 3, <i>America's Schools: Public and Private</i> (Summer, 1981), 69–89.</p> <p>c) Wilson, S. (1990). A conflict of interests: The case of Mark Black. <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>, 12, 293–310</p>	<p>Reform proposal project, part c: Slides for presentation (see pp. 7–8 and in Assignments on Canvas)</p>



CLASS 11 December 4	Retrospective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have we learned about the three core questions of this course? • What have we learned from how we have worked and been together in this course? 		Presentations
CLASS 12 December 11	Retrospective (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have we learned about the three core questions of this course? • What have we learned from how we have worked and been together in this course? 		Presentations

SUPPORT SERVICES

Mental Health Support Resources: University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs>, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see <http://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources>. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>

Counseling and Psychological Services <http://www.umich.edu/~caps/>

Offers a variety of support services aimed at helping students resolve personal difficulties and strengthen the skills, attitudes, and knowledge that will enable them to take full advantage of their experiences at the University of Michigan. **Location:** Third floor of the Michigan Union (Room 3100) | **Hours:** 8:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. Monday–Thursday; and 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Friday | **Phone:** (734) 764-8312

Bias Response Team <https://deanofstudents.umich.edu/bias-incidents>

The Bias Response Team (BRT) is committed to providing support for those who may have been targets of or affected by bias. The BRT works to ensure that appropriate university resources and expertise are made available to anyone who feels they have been harmed by bias. Therefore, anyone who feels they have been affected by an incident of bias is encouraged to make a report to the BRT, so the University can offer assistance. The BRT cannot impose discipline and no one is required to participate in any aspect of the BRT's work. Its purpose is to assist those who feel aggrieved, to help students, faculty, or staff understand how their behavior has affected others and, over time, to contribute to the maintenance of respect and understanding among members of the University community.

Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)

<https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/workplace-improvement/office-institutional-equity>

The Office for Institutional Equity serves as a vital resource and leader in promoting and furthering the university's commitment to diversity and equal opportunity for all members of its community.

The OIE works with partners on campus to foster and support an environment that is inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination and harassment. This site includes university policies and practices with respect to:

- Harassment and Discrimination Reporting Form
- Information for Responsible Employees
- Americans with Disabilities Act Information
- Discrimination and Harassment Resolution Process
- Education and Training Programs
- Filing a Complaint
- Nondiscrimination Policy Notice



- Recruiting for Staff Diversity
- Resource Groups on Campus
- Student Sexual Misconduct Policy

Sweetland Writing Center <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/>

The Sweetland Writing Center offers a variety of writing courses and support for graduate students. Sweetland Writing Workshop faculty offer skillful, supportive advice to graduate students as they draft their course papers, projects, and theses. We act as an interested outside audience, direct students to resources, and give specific suggestions about organization, disciplinary modes, evidence, clarity, grammar, and style. Graduate students may schedule one 60-minute appointment per week, with a limit of seven (7) visits during fall and winter terms including walk-ins. During spring and summer half-terms, the limit on visits is four (4) including walk-ins. | **Location:** 1310 North Quad | **Hours:** For hours each semester, click on *Schedule a Writing Workshop Appointment* | **Phone:** (734) 764-0429 | **Email:** sweetlandinfo@umich.edu

ITCS Computing Assistance Hotline <http://its.umich.edu/help/>

Provides support for various computer resources and services at the University of Michigan. **Monday–Friday:** 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. | **Sunday:** 1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. (email only) | (734) 764-HELP

