

SYLLABUS

Education 649, Foundational Perspectives on Educational Reform, Section 001, #10638, designed for El MaC 10a Students, Winter 2008; 9-12 Mon, Tues, Thurs; January 3 – 31, no class on Jan 21 (MLK day) or Jan 24, extra class on Jan 23 & Jan 25; Room 2232; Adjunct Professor Stuart C. Rankin, Office 1228J SEB, phone 734-647-4723, home phone 248-661-3915, e-mail srankin@umich.edu

Overview

This section of Ed 649 examines the forces leading to school reform; the social, economic, political, historical, legal, legislative, and educational foundations behind those forces; key strategies used in reform efforts; and the research findings on the effectiveness of some of those strategies.

There will be a special (but not exclusive) focus on urban school reform including some multi-cultural emphases. The plight of urban school districts will be considered with Kozol's work as a major resource. Effective school-level strategies and teacher-level strategies will be examined using Marzano's work as a guide. Criticisms of public schools in America will be confronted using some views expressed by Barber's and Berliner and Biddle's works. It is assumed that changes in schools are occurring all the time. Changes that are considered "school reform" are generally those that are systemic, i. e., they impact a whole school (or one or more departments or grades in a school), or a district, or a state or a country.

There will be several special events. Robert Grover, attorney for all of the school districts in Jackson County, will present and answer questions about the legal responsibilities of teachers. Beth Grzelak will bring us up to date on the "No Child Left Behind" legislation. We shall visit classrooms in an elementary school in West Bloomfield where a number a school reforms have taken place.

Class discussions will be informed by material presented in texts, in the course pack, and in presentations about actual events and reports related to educational reform. Those discussions will include analyses of the forces inside and outside of education, research findings on the alternative strategies that comprise many of the reform efforts, and examination of the consequences of those efforts for students and educators. The learning will occur through reading, writing, and discussion. Class participation is essential.

Reference Materials Recommended for Purchase

The Course Pack will be available at Excel Test Preparation & Coursepacks, 1117 South University Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; 734-996-1500.

Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. Harper Collins Publishers, 1991. ISBN #0-06-097499-0. Should be purchased.

Marzano, Robert J. *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. ASCD, 2003. ISBN: 0-87120-717-6. Should be purchased.

Required Reading Materials in Coursepack

Datnow, Amanda. "Power and Politics in the Adoption of School Reform Models," in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Winter 2000. Part of course pack.

Gardner, Howard. "Reflections on Multiple Intelligences: Myths and Messages," in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Nov 1995. Part of course pack.

Goals 2000 and New American Schools. Part of course pack.

Goodlad, John I. "Kudzu, Rabbits, and School Reform" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Sep 2002. Part of course pack.

Kozol, Jonathan. "The Shame of the Nation: Confections of Apartheid" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Dec 2005. Part of course pack.

Ramirez-Smith, Christina. "Stopping the Cycle of Failure: The Comer Model," in *Educational Leadership*, February 1995. Part of course pack.

Other Sources for Some of the Course Content

Barber, Larry W., editor. *Straight Talk About America's Public Schools: Dispelling the Myths*. Phi Delta Kappa Hot Topics Series, 1996, Code HTSTAAS. (Now out of print, copies may be borrowed from the professor.)

Berliner, David C. & Biddle, Bruce J. *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attack on America's Public Schools*. L. Perseus Books, Cambridge, 1995. Need not be purchased.

Bowen, William G. & Bok, Derek. *The Shape of the River: Long-term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*. Princeton University Press, 1998. ISBN #0-691-00274-6. Need not be purchased.

Assignments

The criteria used for judging written assignments will be the power and consistency of your arguments, your responsiveness to the questions or prompts, your own personal meanings, the correctness of the writing, and extensions or applications to other professional or personal knowledge. These are not research papers that require a bibliography, quotes from authors, and footnotes. I am interested in your wording of your understandings, ideas, reflections, and/or views.

Basic responses that minimally answer the questions with only an occasional incorrect interpretation will receive a grade of C. Proficient responses that answer the questions thoroughly and correctly will receive a grade of B. Distinguished responses that answer the questions thoroughly and correctly and also provide opinions, applications, extensions, or connections to other experiences or situations will receive a grade of A. I may also use pluses or minuses at times.

1. Reading response, 3 pages maximum, due Thursday, January 10.

Read Chapters 1-5 of *Savage Inequalities* and answer these questions: Which of the inequalities described by Kozol for the East Saint Louis, Chicago, and New York City areas are, in your view, the most "savage" and why? What approaches do you think might be most promising to deal with them and why? According to Kozol, why does money matter in the education of the children in Camden and Washington D. C? According to Kozol, why did Brown v Board of Education have more promise for providing equal educational opportunity than did Plessy v Ferguson? What effect did the Detroit Milliken v Bradley case have on the promise of Brown and/or of Plessy? 20%

2. Reading response, 3 pages maximum, due Thursday, January 17.

Read pp. 1-70 in *What Works in Schools*. Select one of Marzano's five school-level factors and tell why you chose it; summarize the research findings supporting that factor; tell which parts of Marzano's "action steps" you agree or disagree with and why; and report the extent to which you have seen this factor in operation in your internship school. 20%

3. Reading response, 3 pages maximum, due Friday, January 25.

Read pp. 71-143 in *What Works in Schools*. Select one teacher-level factor and one student-level factor for review and tell why you chose them; summarize the research findings supporting those factors; tell which parts of Marzano's "action steps" you agree or disagree with and why; and report your observations of the presence or absence of this factor in your school. 20%

4. Forces and strategies paper, 3 pages maximum, due Thursday, January 31.

Describe and discuss three forces impacting school reform. Describe and discuss three strategies that have been used as part of one of more school reform efforts and the reasons supporting those strategies. It is certainly acceptable but not required that the forces have a one-to-one correspondence to the strategies. 20%

5. Attend all classes and participate fully in the learning activities. 20%

Possible Order of Activities (will no doubt be modified)

Jan 3 Evaluation of elmac program to date. Survey of student information including grade level selected for W. Bloomfield visit. Review of syllabus and course requirements including introduction to Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* and special events during course. Define school reform; identify forces for school reform (think, discuss and categorize with small group, share); Stu's lists of forces. For Jan 8, read pp. 1-19 in course pack on Goals 2000, New American Schools, and The Comer Model.

Jan 7 Continue discussion of forces for school reform; begin presentation of examples of urban school reform in last 50 years. I'll begin with the major forces of poverty and the loss of people, jobs, power, and money to suburbs. We'll use examples of school and district organization, decentralization, desegregation, curriculum reforms, leadership, multi-cultural reforms including race balance among teachers and principals, professional development; effective schools research and school improvement models; increased emphases on testing; the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, 1983, and responses to that report by *The Sandia Report*, Barber, and Berliner and Biddle.

Jan 8 Robert M. Grover, attorney for all of the school districts in Jackson County, presents "Legal Responsibilities of Teachers." Brainstorm and discuss strategies for school reform (think, group, categorize, share); Stu's notions on strategies; Goals 2000 and the New American Schools movement (part of course pack). For Jan 10, papers are due on Kozol, Ch 1-5.

Jan 10 Beth Grzelak will present information on NCLB. Papers due on Kozol, Ch 1-5; discuss Kozol. Plan for visit to W. Bloomfield schools, January 15. Introduce Marzano's work: *What Works in Schools* including research syntheses, effect size, and action steps, and clarify assignment for Jan 17. Continue presentation on school reform. For Jan 14, read Kozol's "The Shame of the Nation," pp. 20- 30 in course pack.

Jan 14 Discuss Kozol's *PDK* article, "The Shame of the Nation" on poor instructional methods being used with minorities. Present Stufflebeam's CIPP model for evaluation in service of decisions. Continue presentation on school reform. For January 17 read Goodlad's "Kudzu, Rabbits, and School Reform," pp. 31-38 in course pack.

Jan 15 Visit Scotch School in W. Bloomfield.

Jan 17 Papers due on Marzano’s school-level factors. Discuss Marzano’s action steps in groups by factor chosen and report to class. Discuss observations based on visit to Scotch School. Discuss Goodlad’s article, “Kudzu, Rabbits, and School Reform. Prepare students for Marzano’s teacher-level factors. For Jan 22 read Datnow’s “Power and Politics in the Adoption of School Reform Models,” pp. 40-48 in course pack.

Jan 21 MLK, Jr. Holiday

Jan 22 Discuss Datnow’s article with special emphasis on where change, reform, and innovation decisions are made, who makes the decisions, and what is the relationship with Stufflebeam’s CIPP model. Consider the school effects research and the major findings of that research with emphasis on the work of Brookover, Lezotte, Edmunds, Mortimore, and Rankin’s DPS Achievement Program.

Jan 23 Discuss the role of leadership in school reform; present the Seattle study on the leadership by the principal. For Jan 28, read Gardner’s list of multiple intelligences, and his “Reflections on Multiple Intelligences: Myths and Messages,” pp. 49 – 58 in course pack.

Jan 25 Papers due on Marzano’s teacher-level factors. Discuss Marzano’s action steps in groups by factor chosen and report to class. Present findings and recommendations of Bowen and Bok’s *The Shape of the River: Long-term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*.

Jan 28 Discuss Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences and their implications for school reform strategies. Other items to be determined.

Jan 29 We’ll conduct a group simulation exercise on school-driven school reform.

Jan 31 Papers due on Forces and Strategies; two-minute talks by each student on favorite strategy for school reform; class evaluation of course; elmac concerns.

