Sociology of Urban Education

Course Objective:
This course examines the development of race and class stratification in education system, with a particular focus on urban schools. In the context of theoretical debates grounded in sociology, anthropology, and economics, this class asks how schools, families, and communities may perpetuate race and class inequality. In order to address these questions, the course will critically examine theories and research focused on social stratification, race relations, as well as class and gender inequality in various school and community contexts. To that end, the course will enable students to better understand how structural, cultural, sociological, and historical factors impact inequality in schools.

Required Reading (All available at Jersey Books):

1) Race in the Schoolyard (Lewis)
2) Keepin’ it Real (Carter)
3) Black Identities (Waters)
4) Asian Americans in Class (Lew)
5) Both Sides Now (Stuart-Wells)
6) The Resegregation of Suburban Schools (Frankenberg & Orfield)
7) The Flat World and Education (Darling-Hammond)

On Black Board:
All Articles are on Black Board (BB) or JSTOR

Grading:
Class Presentation and Participation (10%):

This is a doctoral seminar examining critical issues in sociology of education with a specific focus on social stratification, urban sociology, and race & ethnic relations. Students are expected to read all course material prior to class and be fully prepared to discuss the readings. In addition to class participation, each student is responsible for presenting one of the required books/ and journal readings outlining discussion questions for the entire class. Students should be prepared to lead the class discussion for these readings. Absence will negatively affect your grade so please make every effort to attend class.
Midterm Research Paper: (30%):

Your midterm and final paper should be treated holistically. At the end of the course, I encourage you to have developed a working template for a research proposal that could be expanded into a journal article, conference presentation, and/or proposal for dissertation.

Students will select a topic of their choice and investigate a set of research questions. The research paper could be a topic of your choice, as long as it involves issues related to urban education and various research topics discussed in class. The midterm paper could be further expanded into a final paper; however, this is not required should you change your research topic later on in the semester. The paper should be double-spaced and approximately 15-18 pages in length.

Final Paper: (60%):

Your final paper should have the following: 1) problem statement or set of questions to be investigated; 2) a body of literature that contextualizes your research question(s); 3) methods section to test your study.

The hope is that you could take this format, albeit in progress, and eventually fine tune the methodology, develop an empirical study, and analyze findings to expand the paper for your own future proposal or publication for an academic journal. As mentioned, you can use the research from the midterm to develop your final.

In short, your final paper should reflect the purpose of the course: to develop an in-depth understanding of historical or contemporary education issue, to build theoretical framework for developing a research topic or a set of research questions, and to examine how theory and practice may inform education research and policy.

The final paper should be double-spaced and approximately 28-32 pages. All final papers are due May 7 (Tuesday). Please note that late papers will not be accepted. On the last day of class, you will be presenting your final paper: 1) set of research questions; 2) literature and theories to frame your study; and 3) possible methodologies to be implemented for the study.
Course Schedule:

1/22
Sociology of Urban Education: Introduction

1/29
Social Mobility and Race Relations: Intersections of Class, Race, Gender
Lewis, A. “Race in the Schoolyard” (Ch. 1-3)

2/5
Bourdieu, P. “Forms of Capital”—Sadovnik Reader
Lewis, A. “Race in the Schoolyard” (Ch. 4-6)

2/12
Re-visiting Race and Class: Cultural Capital of Black Identities
Ogbu, J. “Collective Identity and Burden of Acting White in Black History, Community, and Education”—Sadovnik Reader
Carter, P. “Keepin it Real” (Ch. 1-3)

2/19
Carter, P. “Keepin it Real” (Ch. 4-6)

2/26
Children of Immigrants: Changing Demographics and Schools
Waters, M. “Black Identities.” (Ch. 1-3)

3/5
Waters, M. “Black Identities.” (Ch. 4-6)

MIDTERM DUE
Social and Cultural Capital: Parental Strategies and Achievement


SPRING BREAK


Stanton-Salazar, R. “Help Seeking Orientation of Latino and Non-Latino Urban High School Students?”—Sadovnik Reader

Lew (2006). “Asian Americans in Class: Charting the Achievement Gap Among Korean American Youth” (Pt II and Conclusion)

School Desegregation and Racial Integration: Urban and Suburban Districts


Education Reform and Policy Development


Darling-Hammond (2010). “The Flat World and Education” (Chapter 1-4)


Darling-Hammond (2010). “The Flat World and Education” (Chapter 5-9)

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

AERA