Course Description

Education is a dynamic, multidisciplinary field that encompasses a variety of perspectives, including philosophy, history, sociology, ethnography, psychology, autobiography and the arts. How do scholars in different disciplines study, understand and write about education? What kinds of questions do they pose? What methods do they use to search for answers? How do teachers, writers and artists grapple with and represent the practice of teaching, life inside schools and the larger purposes of education?

This course examines education on both micro and macro-levels of analysis, ranging from detailed, narrative portraits of individual students to broad social science investigations of schools as large and complex systems. We will explore the following topics, among others: the core ideas that have animated American public education; the relationship between schooling and socio-economic inequality; what cognitive science tells us about the most effective learning and teaching strategies; and recent developments in online education.

Course Readings


* All additional readings will be available on Moodle *


**Course Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (15%)</td>
<td>Every class</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the News Small Group Presentations (15%)</td>
<td>Fridays, starting September 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Portrait (15%)</td>
<td>Tuesday, September 25 by midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Critique (15%)</td>
<td>Tuesday, October 16 by midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Essay (20%)</td>
<td>Friday, October 26 by midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Final Exam (20%)</td>
<td>Monday, November 19 by 5PM</td>
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Education 110 is a **Writing-Rich course** and you will have the opportunity to focus on your fundamental writing skills, with an emphasis on drafting and revision. Students with last names A-M will meet with our Writing Assistant (WA) for the classroom portrait assignment; students with last names N-Z will meet with the WA for the film critique assignment. All of you will have the opportunity to revise your analytical essay, if you so choose. Please note that the Writing Center (located on the 2nd floor of Scoville) has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final proofreading. Walk-ins are welcome, though writers with appointments have priority: [https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/](https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/)

**Course Outline**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

M, September 10

Course Syllabus (read *in advance* of class)

W, September 12

Mary Antin bio  
and selections from *Promised Land*  
Frederick Douglass bio  
and selections from *Narrative*  
Benjamin Franklin bio  
and selections from *Autobiography*

**PHILOSOPHY**

F, September 14

M, September 17

Plato, selections from *The Republic*
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, selections from *Émile*
John Dewey, “My Pedagogic Creed”

W, September 19

School Mission Statements

**MEMOIR I**

F, September 21

*Teacher Man*, Prologue and Part I
In the News Small Group Presentation

M, September 24

*Teacher Man*, Part II

W, September 26

*Teacher Man*, Part III

**TR, September 27: Classroom Portrait Due by midnight**

**HISTORY**

F, September 28

*Someone Has to Fail*, Introduction and Chs.1-2
David Tyack and Larry Cuban, “Why the Grammar of Schooling Persists”
(concentrate on pp.85-93, skim pp.94-109)
In the News

M, October 1

*Someone Has to Fail*, Chs.3-5

W, October 3

*Someone Has to Fail*, Chs.6-8
FILM

F, October 5

Film Scenes
In the News

SOCIOLOGY

M, October 8

Keeping Track, Preface and Chs.1-3

W, October 10

Keeping Track, Chs.4-6

F, October 12

Keeping Track, Chs.7-10, skim Chs.10-11
In the News

M, October 15, No Class (Midterm Break)

T, October 16: Film Critique due by midnight

PSYCHOLOGY

W, October 17

Why Don’t Students Like School? Introduction and Chs.1-3

F, October 19

Why Don’t Students Like School? Chs.4-6
In the News
M, October 22

*Why Don’t Students Like School?* Chs.7-9 and Conclusion

**TECHNOLOGY, ONLINE EDUCATION AND FOR-PROFIT UNIVERSITIES**

W, October 24

Clive Thompson, “How Khan Academy is Changing the Rules of Education”
Salman Khan TED Talk
Explore Khan Academy website

F, October 26

Lauran McKenna, “The Big Idea”
WBEZ interview with Anant Agarwal
Explore *Chronicle of Higher Ed* MOOC site
Explore the websites of edx, coursera and/or udacity
In the News

M, October 29

Explore University of Phoenix website
In Class: Watch *College, Inc.* (PBS Frontline documentary)

**ETHNOGRAPHY**

W, October 31

*Ain’t No Makin’ It*, Chs.1-3
In the News

F, November 2, No Class (Professor attending conference)

M, November 5

*Ain’t No Makin’ It*, Chs.4-8

W, November 7

*Ain’t No Makin’ It*, Chs.9-10 (skim), Ch.11 and Appendix (pp.270-293)
MEMOIR II

F, November 9

_ Hunger of Memory_, Prologue and Chs.1-3

In the News

M, November 12

_ Hunger of Memory_, Chs.4-6

CONCLUSIONS

W, November 14

Final Exam Details

Analytical Essay revision due by midnight

Course Assignments and Grading

Participation, 15%

“Be Prepared.” The Scout motto sums up the crux of participation. Because this course places a premium on classroom and small-group discussions, students are expected to come to every class on time with the assigned readings completed, ready to participate meaningfully in all class activities. Speaking up, while important, is not the only hallmark of participation. Active listening and engaging with others’ ideas respectfully are also key components of participation. *Air-time* is less important than the relevance and sincerity of your contributions.

Please *power-down* your electronic devices—laptops, cell-phones, etc.—before the start of class (and, yes, we can still see you when you are surreptitiously texting under the table).
Classroom Portrait (1000 words), 15%
Tuesday, September 25 by midnight

The goal of this paper is to examine how assumptions and ideas about education inform what happens inside classrooms. Choose a particular classroom from a school that you attended prior to Carleton; any grade/subject is fine (1st grade, 7th grade Home-Ec, 10th grade Chemistry, etc.). Briefly describe the classroom setting and introduce the teacher. How would you characterize the educational philosophy of the teacher? How did the classroom environment, activities, assignments and so on exemplify or advance a particular approach to education? Draw on the work of two or more of the philosophers we have read to develop your analysis.

Students with last names A-M will meet with the WA to get feedback on an initial draft of their classroom portraits. After revising your draft in light of the WA’s comments and suggestions, you will turn in a final draft to me. Your final draft must be accompanied by the original draft you discussed with the WA as well as a 1-2 paragraph summary of how you incorporated the WA’s feedback.

In the News, 15%

Working in small groups, prepare a short presentation (approx. 20 minutes) that illuminates a significant contemporary educational debate, controversy or policy initiative. Prepare a class handout with a 250-word summary of the issue at hand along with a short bibliography (minimum of five sources). In your presentation, draw at least one noteworthy connection between the topic and our course material. Each group should email me the topic of its presentation at least one week in advance. I highly recommend that all groups complete a practice run-through of their presentations before class.

Movie Critique (1000 words), 15%
Tuesday, October 16 by midnight

The goal of this paper is to examine how Frederick Wiseman’s 1968 documentary film High School portrays the character, purposes and dilemmas of public education. Wiseman is famous for his cinema verité approach to filmmaking in which nothing is seen or heard except what the cameras recorded at the scene. Your task is to uncover and explicate the film’s underlying themes:

How does High School depict the aims and objectives of public schooling? (What is the nature of the curriculum at Philadelphia’s Northeast High School? How does the school appear to define an “educated” person? How would you describe the mission of the school?)
What does *High School* reveal about the experience of attending school? (What happens inside Northeast High’s offices, classrooms and corridors? How are students taught, addressed and disciplined?)

What does Wiseman’s film tell us about schools as institutions? (How is Northeast High organized? What different functions does it serve?)

How does *High School* represent the different roles played by students, parents, teachers and administrators? (How do these different groups of people interact inside the school? What are the key sources of conflict among them?)

Your analysis should be informed by the themes of our course and should refer to at least three different course texts. Please make sure to include specific evidence from the film—quotations, brief scene recaps, portraits of individual figures, etc.—to support your points.

**Students with last names N-Z will meet with the Writing Assistant to get feedback on an initial draft of their film critiquess.** After revising your draft in light of the WA’s comments and suggestions, you will turn in a final draft to me. Your final draft must be accompanied by the original draft you discussed with the WA as well as a 1-2 paragraph summary of how you incorporated the WA’s feedback.

**Analytical Essay** (1,500 words), 20%
Monday, October 29 by midnight

The goal of this essay is to present a close and critical reading of one of the course books. Your analysis should have a central argument that focuses on what is most significant, provocative or problematic about the text. Concentrate your energies on developing your own original analysis (deepening or complicating our understanding of the book) rather than on summarizing the book. Some questions to consider: What is new, intriguing or infuriating about the book? What are the author’s main claims? (Are they well supported?) How does the book change our understanding of education? What happens when you put the author into conversation with other authors we have read? Your essay should draw on the work of at least one additional course author in this regard.

You can revise your critical essay based on my feedback. If you choose to do so, you will need to hand in the revised paper, the original paper with my comments and a 1-2 paragraph explanation of how you have incorporated my suggestions. The revised paper will be graded as a new paper. It is due on the last day of class at midnight (please note that revising the paper does not guarantee a higher grade and will not erase a late penalty on the original paper).

**Final Take-Home Exam**, 20%
Monday, November 19 by 5PM

Details will be provided on the last day of class.
The Fine Print

Attendance:

Given the importance that all Educational Studies classes place on learning with peers through classroom discussions, students are expected to come to every class session. After two unexcused absences from class, each subsequent absence will result in the lowering of your course grade by a third (e.g. from an A to an A-).

Guidelines for Written Assignments:

1. All written assignments should be double-spaced and written in 12-point Times font
2. Include a word-count at the top of each assignment
3. Use APA format for all citations
4. Save all of your assignments as Word documents in the following format: 
   Lastname_Assignment Name (e.g., Snyder_Film Critique)
5. Submit all of your assignments using the dropboxes on Moodle
6. No late assignments will be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. All late assignments will be marked down by a third per day
7. Assignments will be evaluated based on the following criteria: quality of writing; organization (clear introduction with a thesis; logical transitions between paragraphs; clear conclusion); appropriate evidence; original voice and analysis; relevance to course material; and proper citations

Academic Honesty:

Sharing ideas with friends is central to the academic enterprise at Carleton. So too is availing yourself of the ever-expanding universe of print and digital resources available through the Library. In your written work, of course, it is imperative that the words you present as your own are in fact original to you. When you borrow somebody else’s ideas or words, make sure to cite the original author. For more on academic honesty at Carleton, including a helpful overview of citations, see: http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/honesty/

Disability Services:

Carleton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process.

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