

Class: UEP 214
Equity and Access: Public Education in Los Angeles

Instructor: Steve Zimmer

Location: Johnson 301

Date/Time: Wednesday Evenings 7:15-9:30 p.m.

Public Lecture times may vary but will always be on Weds Evening

Office Hours: Immediately before or after class and by appointment

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NOTE: PLEASE SEND ALL EMAILS TO BOTH ADDRESSES

Course Objectives

- **Use the collective wisdom and experience of the class, information and ideas from the lecture/panel series, and public policy research projects to contribute to collective solutions and strategies to the most serious issues facing Los Angeles students, their families and their schools.**
- Understand and analyze the most difficult issues facing public education in the United States and how those issues play out on the ground in Los Angeles
- Understand root causes and current impacts of the present and historical inequities facing students living in conditions of poverty and segregation in Los Angeles
- Examine the challenges of leadership at every level in public education (student, parent, teacher, principal, community, district, state and national) and identify the necessary skills education leaders must possess to become agents for change both within and outside the public education system.
- Interact with leading public education experts in Los Angeles to gain insight from their expertise and experience in our efforts to understand and respond to the perceived crisis in public education
- Study and reflect upon important texts (both contemporary and historical) that inform equity, social justice and critical race perspectives on public education
- Understand the impact of poverty, systemic racism and conditions on classroom instruction and student achievement.
- Understand the impact of state and federal funding as well as the persistent (and intentional) budget crisis on LAUSD students, teachers and families.
- Understand the impact of teacher training, support and evaluation on student achievement and school progress
- Analyze the role and impact of teacher's unions in Los Angeles and the nation
- Analyze the role and impact of parent and family engagement in schools and how this engagement affects student achievement
- Analyze the role and impact of charter schools for students enrolled in charters and on students enrolled in LAUSD

Required Texts:

- Podair, Jerald. 2001 The Strike that Changed New York: Blacks, Whites and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Crisis New Haven Yale University Press
- Kerchner, Charles. 2008 Learning from Los Angeles: Institutional Change in American Public Education Cambridge Harvard Educational Press
- Carter, Prudence and Welner, Kevin. 2013 Closing the Opportunity Gap: What America Must Do Give Every Child an Even Chance New York Oxford Press
- Ravitch, Diane. 2010. **The Death and Life of the Great American School System** New York: Basic Books
- Kozol, Jonathan. 1991 Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools New York: Random House

Strongly Recommended Texts:

- Noguer, Pedro. 2008 The Trouble with Black Boys: Reflections on Race, Equity and the Future of Public Education
- Kirp, David. 2013 Improbable Scholars: The Rebirth of a Great American School System and a Strategy for America's Schools
- Rhee, Michelle. 2014 **Radical: Fighting to Put Students First** New York: Harper Paperback Books
- Goldstein, Dana. 2014 **Teacher Wars** New York, Doubleday.
- Vinson, Jose Luis. 2014 **This is Not a Test: A new narrative on Race, Class and Public Education**
- Darling-Hammond, Linda **The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity will Determine our Future**

Important Public Education Texts

TheodoreSizer 1992.	<u>Horace's Compromise</u>
Pedro Noguera. 2003	<u>City Schools and the American Dream</u>
Marion Orr and John Rodgers. 2010	<u>Public Education for Public Engagement</u>
Paulo Freire. 1993.	<u>The Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u>
Delpit, Lisa. 1995	<u>Other People's Children</u>

*A word about Texts: I know I required a lot here. This is not the type of class where you will be reading word for word from texts. But they are important. This is especially true when the author is visiting the class. Even if we don't use the full text as part of the class I promise you each of these texts will contribute to your understanding of the public education crisis. **Additional articles and texts will be required.** These will be posted on Moodle and/or distributed in class. You will also be required to monitor The L.A. School Report and The Los Angeles Times education blogs, Education Week, and Politico's Morning Education. Check emails and moodle regularly for updates and additional readings for each class and especially for guest lectures.*

Grades

Assignments and Grading

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Weekly Reflection Papers (4)	20%
Issues Analysis Paper	20%
Public Policy Proposal Group Project (paper and presentation)	40%
Final Reflection Paper	10%

- Weekly reflection papers are a 2 page reflection and analysis of the lecture, panel or class discussion/activity. I really like it when students include readings and/or

their own personal experiences in these reflection papers. Students can choose to write the four reflection papers at any point in the semester but they must be submitted on the week of the topic. **Reflection papers must be submitted by 6 p.m. on Friday. Please send a copy to both of my email accounts.**

- The Issues Analysis Paper is an in-depth look at one of the public education issues addressed during the class lecture, panel and/or discussions. The paper must be approximately 5-7 pages in length and include at least three sources beyond the class material. A more detailed assignment will be distributed at a later date. **The Issues Analysis Paper is due by Friday, March 8th at 6 p.m.**
- **The Public Policy Proposal Group Project** will be the focus on the second half of the semester. In a group setting your team will choose a vexing public policy dilemma that is deeply affecting student outcomes. In most cases the public policy issue will be related to the school system and/or a specific equity barrier that is affecting students' access to an outstanding public education.

The project will have three significant components. The first component will be a presentation to the class (this presentation may include additional members of the Oxy and LAUSD community). Student teams will have wide latitude in how to present their report, but my guess is that some type of power point and some narrative research summary. The second group component will a community action component. Here, group members will either present the project findings or recommendations to either LAUSD Board staff, LAUSD Board Members, a Board or Committee Meeting, City Council staff or the staff of the Mayor's Office. While the presentation may contain similar information to the in-class presentation (incorporating feedback from myself and your colleagues), I expect the group to employ lobbying and presentation strategies that we will go over in class during the semester.

The final component to the project will be an individual analysis paper that will cover both the issue and a detailed reflection about the group process you participated in throughout the semester. I will expect you to incorporate new research and sources into your paper, but you should use the group's primary research as well. I will distribute a much more detailed description of the paper, but you can anticipate that it will be between 6-8 pages in length and will be due at the end of Finals.

Tentative Class Schedule

January	23rd	Introduction, Overview and Opening Exercises
January	30 th	1968/9: 2018/19 Understanding Ocean Hill-Brownsville and the context of the Los Angeles Teacher's Strike <u>The Strike that Changed New York: Part One</u>
February	6th	Community Schools and Complications School Power Understanding Ocean Hill-Brownsville and the future of Equity Organizing in Los Angeles <u>The Strike that Changed New York: Part Two</u>
February	13th	First Lecture/Panel Lecture and Videos <u>The Death and Life of the Great American Public System: Part One</u>
February	20 th	Second Lecture/Event Event and Moodle Readings <u>Death and Life: Part Two</u>
February	27 th	The Politics and Policy in Public Education Introduction to the practice and process of education policy <u>Learning from Los Angeles: Part One</u> Discussion of Issue Analysis Paper
March	6 th :	Policy in Action The Equity Implications of Teacher Tenure and Evaluation <u>Learning from Los Angeles</u> and Moodle Readings Issue Analysis Paper <u>Due March 8th</u>
<u>SPRING BREAK</u>		
March	20 th	Policy in Action The Equity Implications of Standardized Testing Moodle Readings Introduction of Group Project

March	27th	3rd Panel/Guest Lecture Readings TBD
April	3rd	Equity in Action The Politics of Organizing for Education Equity <u>Closing the Opportunity Gap</u> : Part one

(The remainder of the schedule will be determined by our Group Projects)