Fall 2011

Class: UEP 212, 213
Policy Debates and Controversies in Public Education

Instructor: Steve Zimmer
Location: Johnson 200 and 208
Date/Time: Wednesday Evenings 7:00-9:00 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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323-360-1656 (cell)

Course Objectives

- Use the collective wisdom and experience of the class, information and ideas from the lecture/panel series, and action research projects develop a vision and action plan for how to dramatically increase LAUSD’s High School Graduation Rate
- Understand and analyze the most current and controversial issues facing public education in the United States and how those issues play out on the ground 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 budget crisis on LAUSD students, teachers and families.
- Understand the impact of student, family, and community health on student attendance and achievement
- 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 on student achievement
- Analyze the role and impact of charter schools for students enrolled in charters and on students enrolled in LAUSD
**Required Text:**


**Strongly Recommended Texts:**


Charles Kerchner (et al) 2008. *Learning from Los Angeles: Institutional Change in American Public Education*

**Important Public Education Texts**

Jonathan Kozol. 1989.  *Savage Inequalities*

Theodore Sizer 1992.  *Horace’s Compromise*

Pedro Noguera. 2003  *City Schools and the American Dream*

Linda Darling-Hammond. 2010  *The Flat World and Education*

Marion Orr and John Rodgers. 2010  *Public Education for Public Engagement*

*Additional articles and texts will be required. These will be posted on Moodle and/or distributed in class. Check emails and moodle regularly for updates*
Assignments and Grading (2 credits)

Class Attendance and Participation 20%
Weekly Reflection Papers 40%
Issue Analysis Paper 40%

Assignments and Grading (4 credits)

Class Attendance and Participation 20%
Weekly Reflection Papers 20%
Issues Analysis Paper 20%
Action Research Project 40%

- Weekly reflection papers are a 1-2 page reflection and analysis of the lecture, panel or class discussion/activity. I really, really like it when students include readings and/or their own personal experiences in these reflection papers. Reflection papers must be submitted by 6 p.m. every 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 November 18th at 6 p.m.

- The Action Research Project is for 4 credit carrying students only. It is a comprehensive analysis of a major public education issue. The project will be the equivalent of at least 12-15 pages in length and must include some form of field work or primary source research. Projects will be presented in the last two weeks of class and are due the Friday before final exams. A much more detailed description will be distributed and a class meeting about the project will take place in early October.
### Tentative Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 31&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Introduction, Overview and Exercises</td>
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<td>September 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Education Press Corps</td>
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<td>September 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. John Deasy (5:30 class and 7:00 p.m. lecture)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Parent, Family and Community Engagement</td>
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<td>September 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No class (Film Viewing: Waiting for Superman, Teachers, Race to Nowhere, To Sir with Love)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Intentional Crisis in Public Education</td>
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<td>October 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Who will Teach our Children?: Teacher Recruitment, Training and Evaluation</td>
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<td>October 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Lunch and Nutrition Symposium</td>
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<td>October 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Role and Impact of Teacher’s Unions in Public Education</td>
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<td>November 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Role and Impact of Charter Schools and the School Reform Movement</td>
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<td>November 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Immigration, Language Acquisition and Public Education</td>
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<td>November 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Highly At Risk Students and the Drop Out/Push Out Crisis</td>
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<td>November 23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No Class (Film Viewing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Project Presentations and Class Reflections</td>
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*The class schedule is set for the month of September. Class topics may change and/or shift dates depending on expert speaker availability. I will give updates regularly about changes in the schedule or topics. Please note the attendance will be required for all events with Dr. Deasy on September 14<sup>th</sup>.*