Schools, Communities, and Families

EDUC 268 (#36671)
Tuesdays, 3:30 – 6:30pm, Social Sciences I-239
University of California Santa Cruz
Fall 2009

Professor Ron Glass

Office: 257 Social Sciences I
Phone: 459-5188
Email: rglass@ucsc.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:00 – 11:30am. Drop-in, and a sign-up is available on the office door for these hours. Other appointment times can also be arranged.

Course Description: This doctoral seminar explores the nexus of schools, communities, and families, and in particular, how collaboration across institutional boundaries can facilitate school and community reform. It also examines how the funds of knowledge of low-income, racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse families and communities can be integrated into the core structures, processes, and curriculum of schools.

Course Expectations, Policies, and Information: The course seeks genuine understanding of very complex issues and not rote memorization of facts or concepts. Texts and discussions must be approached honestly, openly, and critically. Thoughtful, focused, and sensitive inquiry is expected. Discussions are required to be respectful, even in the midst of debate. Since some of the topics can be controversial and difficult to talk about, possibly at times evoking painful or distressing memories and feelings, we need to be mindful of creating a learning community that makes the class as safe as possible for exploring ideas and experiences. Each of us is responsible for the class becoming a learning community that facilitates truthful, respectful, and compassionate relations among participants and critical investigation of the course themes.

Classroom etiquette requires that cell phones and other electronic devices be turned off (or phones in silent buzzer mode to receive emergency calls, and not used for text messaging), that full attention be given to the class, that computers be used only for note-taking and discussion related searches (not emailing), and that we listen carefully and without interruption to one another.

Active Participation: This seminar requires active participation by everyone, which is demonstrated through consistent and punctual attendance coupled with prepared engagement with the readings and discussions. The more each person puts into our weekly encounters, the stronger the seminar will be.

Reading: The course readings include a range of philosophical, historical, ethnographic, and sociological texts. The specific readings for each week are listed in this syllabus. You are encouraged to read beyond the excerpts that will be the focus of class discussion, and to facilitate this, some of the books have been ordered for sale in Bay Tree Bookstore; you can also often find used copies for sale online. Each student will have responsibility for leading the seminar discussion for particular class meetings, and so more extensive reading preparation for this would be beneficial for
everyone in the seminar. It is very important that readings be completed in advance of the seminar meetings. The reading load varies week to week and some texts are quite challenging, so please plan sufficient time not simply to quickly complete the readings prior to each class but also to reflect on the issues raised by them. The value of the seminar and the quality of discussions depend decisively on reading preparation.

Office hour discussions are a good way to explore the course topics and your interests in greater depth than will generally be possible in class meetings. A drop-in appointment sign-up sheet is on my office door (days and times as noted above) or you can contact me directly (in person, by phone, or email) to reserve a mutually agreeable time.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Written Assignments: There will be three graded written assignments that place a premium on a firm grasp of the arguments and evidence in the texts and a capacity to bring these and the seminar discussions into dialogue around complex themes. These assignments require clear and concise interpretations and analyses of the readings; positions on issues must be supported with sound and valid arguments and relevant textual and experiential evidence. Although relatively short in length, they require careful and thorough preparation, so plan your schedule accordingly. Additional information on the assignments will be provided in class.

All writing must be each student’s original work and of doctoral-level quality. Assignments should be typed or word-processed using 12 pt type fonts, double spacing, and a one-inch margin on all sides of the paper. You must spell- and grammar-check your assignments before submitting them for grading.

Seminar Briefing Papers (x 2; ~ 3-4 pages each)
Each counts for 25% of the Course Grade

Each student will select two seminar sessions (weeks 3-9) for which they will be responsible for preparing a briefing paper. The briefing paper will synthesize the key points from the reading(s) for that particular session, connect those points to key points from other readings or discussions, and present several focal questions to guide the discussion for that seminar session. In addition to being turned in to me, these briefing papers will be distributed to all seminar participants no later than the Monday morning before the seminar meeting. Those students with responsibility for the briefing paper for each seminar session will also provide leadership for the discussion.

Reflection Notebook (~ 10 pages)
40% of the Course Grade
Due Monday, December 7 by Noon in Prof. Glass’ Mailbox

The Reflection Notebook should demonstrate an ongoing critical engagement with the texts, issues, discussions, and investigations that are part of the seminar. The specific topics and focus will be at the discretion of each student. While some seminar time will be devoted to an exploration of each student’s Notebook reflections, office hours are likely a better way to pursue more structured reflections on topics of particular interest. The Notebooks should be synthetic as well as analytic in nature, and bring readings and themes into fruitful dialogue. These reflections may be efforts to clarify the issues in a reading, compare positions on a question raised by several readings, uncover theoretical implications in relationship to a position, synthesize your insights drawn from a seminar discussion, etc. The Notebooks should exhibit a systematic examination of a few of the seminar’s core matters that are of particular interest to you.

Participation and Leadership
10% of the Course Grade

The participation and leadership portion of the grade will be based on the quality of the contributions to the seminar discussion and the leadership exhibited in guiding discussion during sessions in which the student’s
briefing paper is due. We will be paying particular attention during the quarter to current public discourses about communities and families in relation to schools (found in various media, from official websites and blogs to radio and television news, from newspapers to school newsletters and classroom communications), and contributions of examples of these discourses will count toward the participation grade as well.

**Grading Weights:**
- Seminar Briefing Papers ≤ 250 points each
- Reflection Notebook ≤ 400 points
- Seminar Participation ≤ 100 points

**Grades:**
- A+ = 980-1000; A = 940-979; A- = 900-939; B+ = 870-899; B = 830-869; B- = 800-829; C+ = 770-799; C = 700-769; D = 600-699; F ≤ 599.

Any grade below a B- is not considered passing for graduate work.

Students also may take the seminar pass/fail, though the same standards will apply. In order to pass and satisfactorily complete the seminar, students must contribute regularly and substantively to discussions and complete the written assignments in a timely and proficient manner at a B- or higher quality.

**Accommodations:** Students with documented disabilities will be accommodated in accordance with recommendations provided by the Disability Resource Center.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** High standards of academic integrity are expected of all students, in accord with the University Code of Student Conduct, Principles of Community, and Academic Integrity Policy. Penalties for violating these policies can be severe, including failure of the course and expulsion from the University. For further information, consult:
- [http://www2.ucsc.edu/judicial/handbook05-06/index.html](http://www2.ucsc.edu/judicial/handbook05-06/index.html)
- [http://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles_community.asp](http://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles_community.asp)
- [http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/](http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/)

**LATE WORK PENALTY:** Assignments MUST be turned in as specified above. Since most seminar meetings are structured around student work, under ordinary circumstances extensions are not possible for the seminar briefing papers. Late work may be assessed a maximum penalty of 10% of the assignment value per day late.

**Professor’s Reserved Right:** The professor reserves the right to make changes to any or all elements of the course described in this syllabus, including policies, topics, readings, course requirements, and/or assignments. In the event that a change is deemed necessary, the professor will provide sufficient notice to the students for them to make the needed adjustments to complete the course satisfactorily.

“The fundamental certainty is that I can know.

I know that I know.

In the same way, I also know that I do not know, which predisposes me to know the following:

- first, that I can know better what I know;
- second, that I can know what I do not know yet;
- third, that I can produce forms of knowledge that do not exist yet.”

~ Paulo Freire ([Pedagogy of the Heart](http://www2.ucsc.edu/judicial/handbook05-06/index.html))
Tentative Course Schedule
Topics and Readings

1. Sept 29  Introductions
   Reading the World and Framing the Issues

2. Oct 6    Schooling and Communities: Dreams of Democracy vs. One Best System

3. Oct 13   Situating Youth in Schooling

4. Oct 20   Immigrant Families and Schooling

5. Oct 27   Parenting and Schooling

6. Nov 3    Communities and Families and School Knowledge

7. Nov 10   Parental Involvement in Schooling
• Tara Yosso. (2006). *Critical Race Counterstories*. (Ch 2, Madres por la Educación)

**8. Nov 17**  
**Parent/Community-Based Learning and School Reform, I**

• Jeannie Oakes and John Rogers. (2006). *Learning Power*. (esp: Ch 3; Ch 7, Parent U-Turn; Ch 9)

**9. Nov 24**  
**Parent/Community-Based Learning and School Reform, II**

• Dennis Shirley. (1997). *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform*. (Chs 1, 2, 12)

**10. Dec 1**  
**Rethinking Schools, Communities, and Families**