

Education 209A, Syllabus

POLS Seminar, Part I, Fall, 2020

Friday, 9:30-12:20

Instructors:

Gay Hoagland

Amanda Lu

graceh1@stanford.edu

amandalu@stanford.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Overview:

As POLS students, you have come to Stanford with an ambition to improve educational systems in the United States and other parts of the world. You have nine short months to gain skills and knowledge to inform your individual approach to change-making. This seminar is formulated to give you a place to synthesize, theorize, and hypothesize about change. We want you to leave both grounded in the grave realities, but also with a strong analytical toolbox to create sustainable change in an ever-shifting and dynamic system. The general arc of the three quarters is as follows:

Fall Quarter: Educational Systems and Their Tensions

- **Guiding Questions:** Is there one best system of governing education? What tensions are negotiated when constructing this system?
- **Big Ideas:** Educational Goods, Competing Values and Goals, Social Mobility, Democracy, Human Capital Theory, Accountability, Autonomy

Winter Quarter: Individual and Group Experiences in Education

- **Guiding Questions:** How do educational experiences vary by identity and affinity groups? How can we guarantee equal access to opportunity for all?
- **Big Ideas:** Race, Gender, Sexuality, Class, Diversity, Inclusion

Spring Quarter: Leading Change in Education

- **Guiding Question:** How can individuals advocate for a better system?
- **Big Ideas:** Leadership, Personal Development, Sustainable Change

This quarter is designed to be a macro-level view on the governing tensions of education systems. It is by no means comprehensive, but you will leave with a sense of how to conceptualize conflicts in education in intersections between long-standing tensions. Each

week has a set of readings and a specific case study which embody the tension of focus for that week.

Use of Class Time:

We are splitting our time each week between discussion about educational issues and guiding you through the completion of your POLS projects. In the fall quarter, we will have a time split of roughly 2 hours on educational issues and one hour on the project. In the winter and spring quarter,

If there is the demand for more time on educational issues, we can choose as a group as to how we will proceed.

Assignments:

Assignment	Due Date	Percent
Reading Reflections (weekly)	Thursdays 12:00 PM posted to Canvas forum, responses to two other classmates by start of class	50%
Final Paper Proposal	Friday,	5%
Class Participation	Ongoing	30%
Final Paper	Sunday after Week 10 Seminar	35%

Reading Reflections:

Weekly will be a approximately 200 word response that gives the you to chance to talk about your thinking with one of the week's primary readings.

Class Participation:

Attendance will comprise half your class attendance score (15 percentage points out of 30 percentage points of your total grade) and the other half will be the quality of your participation. Quality will not be judged on "air-time", but level of engagement and the thoughtfulness of your contribution. In Week 4, we will send each student a check-in about their participation level with insights on avenues of improvement, if necessary. If improvements

are made and maintained after this check-in then students still have the opportunity to receive full participation points. We expect that all students will receive full points in class participation. At the beginning of the quarter we will co-construct discussion norms as a group, but as a baseline we expect the following:

- We are critiquing ideas, not people who hold those ideas.
- Monitor your air time. Step back to listen if you've spoken a lot, step up if you haven't spoken in awhile.
- Remember that we're in a conversation with others. Seek and give feedback. Build on others' points.

Final Paper

The final paper is an opportunity to dissect a problem within an education that matters to you. The paper can be in harmony with your POLS Project or be a completely separate topic and line of inquiry. We want this paper to be both personally useful and research-informed.

General components of the research paper include:

There is no minimum or maximum word count for this assignment, but a guideline is 8-12 pages double-spaced, 12 point font.

A written proposal (~500 words) will be submitted for feedback in week 7..

Readings:

9.18 - Introduction, Week 1: The One Best System		
Guiding Question: Is there a single best system that we should be striving for in education? What type of leadership is needed?	Readings: David Tyack and Larry Cuban, <i>Tinkering Towards Utopia</i> , Prologue, Chapters 1-3 (Available through the Stanford Library) Linda Darling-Hammond, <i>Third Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research—The Flat Earth and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will</i>	Discussion Questions: What are your individual visions of an ideal American schooling system? To what degree is your vision uniform for every student? To what degree is it individualized?

	<p><i>Determine Our Future</i>, (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>Kenneth Leithwood, <i>Transformational Leadership in a Transactional Policy World</i> (pdf on canvas)</p>	What outcomes are important?
Unit 1, Week 2-5: Defining the Purpose of Education		
9.25 - Week 2: Public vs. Private Good		
<p>Guiding Question:</p> <p>What is the goal of education in a democracy and society of individuals?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>David Labaree, <i>Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals</i> (pdf on Canvas)</p> <p>Danielle Allen, Rob Reich, Clint Smith, Debra Satz The Boston Review, <i>What is Education?</i></p>	<p>Case Study: COVID Schooling Pods</p> <p>Families Priced Out of 'Learning Pods' Seek Alternatives</p> <p>Learning Pods During Coronavirus Explained</p> <p>Parents Turning to Tutors, "Pandemic Pods" to Help with Remote Learning (one hour audio)</p>
10.2 - Week 3: Mobility vs. Hierarchy pt. 1		

<p>Guiding Question:</p> <p>Does education change or preserve social structures?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>Conversations with Raj Chetty</p> <p>Some colleges have more students from the top 1% than the top 50%</p> <p>Lani Guiner, adapted for The Chronicle of Higher Education, <i>The Tyranny of Meritocracy</i> (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>Michael Sandel, The Tyranny of Merit (TED talk) and NYTimes Op-Ed</p>	<p>Case Study: Finding The Missing One-Offs/Prep for Prep</p> <p>Better Colleges Failing to Lure Talented Poor</p> <p>Prep for Prep and the Fault Lines in New York's Schools</p>
<p>10.9 - Week 4: Mobility vs. Hierarchy pt. 2</p>		
<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>How can organizational and individual practice legitimate and compound inequality?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>Lisa Delpit, Excerpts from <i>Other People's Children</i></p> <p>Pedro Noguera,</p> <p>Karolyn Tyson, William Darity, Jr., Domini R. Castellino, <i>It's Not "a Black Thing": Understanding the Burden of Acting White and Other Dilemmas of High Achievement</i>, American Sociological Review</p>	<p>Case Study: Tracking in Schools</p> <p>Take a look at links provided by Palo Alto Unified to justify their practices</p> <p>https://www.pausd.org/school-life/learning/curriculum-resources</p>
<p>10.16 - Week 5: Fairness vs. Equality of Opportunity</p>		

<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>Is fairness the same as equality of opportunity in education?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>Christopher Jencks, <i>Whom Must We Treat Equally For Educational Opportunity To Be Equal?</i>, (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>Harry Brighouse and Adam Swift, <i>Educational equality versus educational adequacy: A critique of Anderson and Satz</i>, (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>Elizabeth Anderson on Integration and Equality (pdf on canvas)</p>	<p>Case Study:</p> <p>Affirmative Action</p> <p>The New Yorker, Thurgood Marshall and the Need for Affirmative Action</p> <p>NY Times, Asian-Americans Suing Harvard Say Admissions Files Show Discrimination</p> <p>The New Yorker, The Rise and Fall of Affirmative Action</p>
<p>Unit 2, Weeks 6 and 7: Governing the Education System</p>		
<p>10.23 - Week 6: Who decides?</p>		
<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>Who decides what is taught in schools?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>Richard Ingersoll, Power, Accountability, and the Teacher Quality Problem (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>Mary Metz, <i>Real School</i> (pdf on canvas)</p> <p>David Cohen, <i>A revolution in one classroom: The case of Mrs. Oublier</i>, (pdf on canvas)</p>	<p>Case Study: Common Core Standards</p> <p>NY Times, Rage Against the Common Core</p> <p>EdSource, National Poll shows most oppose the Common Core</p>

10.30 - Week 7: Accountability vs Autonomy		
Guiding Questions: Does increasing or decreasing regulation improve educational outcomes?	Readings: Ethan Hutt and Jack Schneider A History of Achievement Testing in the United States Or: Explaining the Persistence of Inadequacy (pdf on canvas) David Figlio and Susanna Loeb, School Accountability Tom Dee and Brian Jacob, The Impact of No Child Left Behind on Student Achievement ABC's of ESEA ESSA and NCLB	Case Study: Atlanta Public Schools' Cheating Scandal The New Yorker, Wrong Answer The Washington Post, How and why convicted Atlanta teachers cheated on standardized tests
Unit 3, Weeks 8 and 9 : Changing Education		
11.6 -Week 8: Good Intentions and Unintended Consequences		
Guiding Questions: How should we approach replacing “broken” systems? How fast should we move?	Readings: Larry Cuban, <i>Why so many structural changes in schools and so little reform in teaching practice?</i> (pdf on canvas) A Nation at Risk The Disruption of America's (Broken) Education System	Case Studies: Littleton Public Schools (pdf on canvas) The Prize- Newark Public Schools

11.13 - Week 9: Choice vs. Voice		
<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>What's the best way to express discontent with educational systems which aren't working?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>John Chubb and Terry Moe, <i>America's Public Schools: Choice Is a Panacea</i> (pdf on Canvas)</p> <p>Opinion The Original Charter School Vision</p> <p>A Video Summary of Hirschman's Exit, Voice, and Loyalty</p> <p>An Interview with Milton Friedman</p>	<p>Case Study: New Orleans Public Schools</p> <p>Opinion How New Orleans Is Helping Its Students Succeed</p> <p>Whose Choice? Student Experiences and Outcomes in the New Orleans School Marketplace</p> <p>KEY CONCLUSIONS about the New Orleans Charter Reforms</p> <p>Kevin Lawrence Henry, Heretical Discourses in Post-Katrina Charter School Applications (pdf on canvas)</p>
11.20- Week 10: Making Sense of it All		
<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>What do we do?</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <p>James March, <i>Education and the Pursuit of Optimism</i></p>	<p>Discussion Questions:</p> <p>What are the challenges in front of us?</p> <p>What makes these challenges daunting?</p> <p>What gives you optimism?</p>

