

**Sociology 218 - Education and Inequality: Focus on Chicago**  
**Winter 2016**

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**Office hours:** Tuesdays 11am-12noon and Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm

**Teaching Assistant:**

Office hours/contact information for Teaching Assistant(s) will be on Canvas.

**\*\*Office hours for Dr. Snyder and Teaching Assistants may differ during Reading and Finals week. Please check Canvas.**

This course is an examination of social inequality in education, including its causes and consequences. The course will focus on the case study of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) - a diverse school system in a major urban area. Building on existing sociological theories and concepts regarding educational stratification, as a class we will look at the influences of social inequality and diversity on the practices of education within CPS, including how educational outcomes vary across social student populations. We will also explore the historical development of CPS and the current state of social inequality and diversity within CPS. Social inequality takes on many forms and we will examine the interplay among multiple social statuses including gender, socioeconomic status, immigrant status, and race/ethnicity and explore how inequality impacts the experiences of the diverse student body present within CPS. Finally, we look at current efforts aimed at improving local Chicago public schools and the efficacy of these reform initiatives.

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**Learning Objectives:**

**During the quarter, students will address the following questions:**

- 1) What is social inequality? How does inequality shape the practice of education? How have sociologists studied education?
- 2) How do schools within CPS respond to their diverse student populations and their unique needs? How have recent school reform efforts both encouraged and alleviated social inequality?
- 3) How is CPS both representative and unique in terms of its educational system and relationship to inequality? What larger social factors influence the structure and performance of CPS schools and students?

**During the quarter, students will also:**

- 4) Engage with research and theories related to social inequalities and diversities, with the primary focus on the United States (using the case study of Chicago).
  - 5) Better understand how such differences as race, class, ethnicity, and gender/sexual orientation are related.
  - 6) Better understand the impact that histories, institutions, and/or social structures have on local issues and on individual experiences and identities, including their own.
  - 7) Demonstrate their ability to think more critically about political, social, scientific, economic, and/or cultural issues related to social inequalities and diversities.
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**Student Evaluation:**

Grades will be based on 5 components. In order to receive a passing grade for the course, all course requirements must receive a passing grade:

**1) Class and Discussion Section Participation – 15%**

\*\*Students are expected to do the assigned readings prior to lecture. Students are encouraged and expected to bring their insights, questions, and opinions to lecture/discussion sections. Students are also expected to participate in any online discussions on the course's Canvas site (if any), any group activities during lecture/discussion sections, and any discussion assignments given throughout the quarter not listed on the syllabus. *There will not be discussion sections during Week 1.*

**2) In class Midterm – 25% (Week 5, Wednesday, February 3rd)**

### **3) Journals – 20% (Due Week 10, Monday, March 7th at the beginning of class.)**

- Students are required to keep a journal of their personal reflections of the course material. Journal entries should reflect the topics for the week and how they relate to your own educational experiences and your opinions on current educational debates. (More details to be discussed during Week 2 of lecture). *4 journal entries are required for the quarter.*

***Students must bring journals to their discussion section (at least 2 entries) during Week 6.***

### **4) Take-Home Final Exam - 30% - (Must be uploaded to Canvas by 1pm on March 15th - Tuesday).**

- Take-Home Final Exam be given out the last day of lecture, Monday, March 7th and will be posted to Canvas after class time.

### **5) Fix something! - 10%**

- During discussion sections, students will work in groups to come up with a strategy to fix a specific problem in CPS. More details will be given out during discussion sections. Students will present their solutions during Weeks 8 and 9 of discussion sections.

## **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory at lecture *and* discussion sections. If you do miss a lecture or a discussion section, it is your responsibility to find out what was missed. Please take note of two other student's email addresses. Lecture notes of the teaching staff are not available to students.

### **Academic Integrity**

Issues regarding academic integrity will be immediately referred to the Dean's Office. For further information regarding the academic integrity policy at Northwestern, please consult the *Student Handbook* and

<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/uniprin.html>.

### **Course Materials**

#### **Required Books – Available at Norris Book Center!!!**

Bryk, *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, 2010, University of Chicago Press

Schulz, *Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way: Lessons from an Urban Classroom*, 2008, Teachers College Press

Kozol, *Savage Inequalities*, Broadway Books - Any edition is fine!

Duncan & Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity: The Crisis of Inequality and the Challenge of American Education*, 2013, Harvard/Russell Sage Foundation

#### **Additional materials available online:**

***E-readings:*** Articles/reports marked with \*\*are available through Course Reserves on Canvas **OR** are publically available on the Internet at the web links following the reading assignment.

***CCSR reports:*** Many readings for the course will be reports from CCSR (University of Chicago Consortium on School Research). These reports are available online at the web links listed on the syllabus. These are comprehensive reports but we will only be reading a few pages/sections from each report as indicated.

(Additional materials may be required and added throughout the semester. Any additional materials will be available electronically through the course's Canvas site.)

### **Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)/AccessibleNU**

*Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations is requested to speak directly to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) (847-467-5530) and the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first two weeks of class.) All discussions will remain confidential.*

### **Laptop Policy**

Laptops (along with other forms of technology including cell phones, iPods, etc.) are not to be used during lecture. This includes no texting during class.

**\*\*This syllabus is as of January 5th, 2016. If there are any modifications to the assignments, course policies, or criteria for evaluation, any updates will be posted on the course's Canvas site. Students are responsible for any changes and additions to the syllabus and course assignments and for any announcements made during lecture.**

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## **I. Setting the Scene - Inequality and Diversity in Urban Educational Systems/CPS**

### **Week 1**

***January 4 - Monday - Introduction to the Course***

***January 6 - Wednesday - Introduction to the Sociology of Education***

**\*\*Ballantine & Spade, "Introduction", pgs. 1-5 from *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*, 2015, 5th edition, Ballantine & Spade, eds. Sage Publications.**

**\*\*Ballantine & Hammack, "Sociology of Education: A Unique Perspective for Understanding Schools", pgs. 13-17 from *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*, 2015, 5th edition, Ballantine & Spade, eds. Sage Publications.**

During weeks 1-3, please review these overviews and timelines for CPS. The point is not to memorize all of the facts presented, but to familiarize yourself with CPS.

**\*\*Historical overview of CPS - <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1124.html>**

**\*\*Historical overview of CPS reforms - <http://www.catalyst-chicago.org/reform-timeline-major-events-1979-2008>**

**\*\*Overview of CPS - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago\\_Public\\_Schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_Public_Schools)**

**\*\*Also, the CPS website has much information on CPS, individual schools, options for students/families and much much more! ([cps.edu](http://cps.edu))**

### **Week 2**

***January 11 - Monday - Inequality in Urban School Systems***

Kozol, *Savage Inequalities*, Chapters 2 and 3

***January 13 - Wednesday***

Kozol, *Savage Inequalities*, Chapters 4, 5 and 6

## **II. Diversity and Student Outcomes in CPS**

### **Week 3**

***January 18 - Monday - No Class***

***January 20 - Wednesday - Race/Ethnicity and SES - Understanding the Trends***

Duncan & Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity: The Crisis of Inequality and the Challenge of American Education*, Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4

**\*\*Thompson, "Strike Against Inequality," 2012, *The Nation*. (Available at <http://www.thenation.com/blog/169947/strike-against-inequality#>)**

### **Week 4**

***January 25 - Monday - Race/Ethnicity and SES - Student and Parent Experiences***

**\*\*Davila, "Stories of Struggle and Hope: Lived Experiences of Puerto Ricans in Chicago Schools," 2010, *Perspectives on Urban Education*, 34 - 45.**

**\*\*Hendershot, Hurd, Rodkin & Tanaka, "How to Navigate the CPS Maze: Our Tips For Giving Your Child An Edge," 2012, *Chicago Magazine*. (Available at <http://www.chicagomag.com/Chicago-Magazine/September-2012/Best-Public-Schools-in-Chicago-and-the-Suburbs-CPS-Maze/>)**

**\*\*Catalyst Chicago, *Preschool Matters: Here's Why*," 2011. (Available at <http://www.catalyst-chicago.org/sites/catalyst-chicago.org/files/intheknow-nov2011-english.pdf>)**

**January 27 - Wednesday - Immigrant Populations**

\*\*Crosnoe, Turley & Lopez, "K-12 Educational Outcomes of Immigrant Youth," 2011, *Future of Children* (21), 129 - 152.  
Additional reading to be announced and will be posted to Canvas

**Week 5**

**February 1 - Monday - Gender**

\*\*Urban Prep Academies, *2008-2009 Annual Report*. (Available at [http://www.urbanprep.org/sites/default/files/documents/annual-reports/Urban\\_Prep\\_Year\\_In\\_Review\\_2008\\_to\\_2009.pdf](http://www.urbanprep.org/sites/default/files/documents/annual-reports/Urban_Prep_Year_In_Review_2008_to_2009.pdf))

\*\*Urban Prep Academies, *FY11 Data Findings*. (Available at <http://www.urbanprep.org/sites/default/files/documents/annual-reports/FY11%20Data%20Findings.pdf>)

\*\*Halpern, Eliot, Bigler et al., "The Pseudoscience of Single-Sex Schooling," 2011, *Science* 333: 1706 - 7.

**February 3 - Wednesday - MIDTERM**

**Week 6**

**February 8 - Monday - Transitions - High School Graduation Rates**

\*\*Tyler & Lofstrom, "Finishing High School: Alternative Pathways and Dropout Recovery," 2009, *Future of Children* (19), 77 - 103.

\*\*Also, look at the following graphic from *Restoring Opportunity*: <http://restoringopportunity.com/infographic/>

**February 10 - Wednesday - Transitions - College Attainment and Attendance**

CCSR, *From High School to the Future: Making Hard Work Pay Off - The Road to College for Students in CPS's Academically Advanced Programs, 2009* (Available at <https://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Making%20Hard%20Work%20Pay%20Off.pdf>)

**Page assignment: Executive Summary (pages 1-3) and Chapter 1 (pages 9-16, stop at section "Achievement and Demographic Characteristics of Students in Academically Advanced Programs" on page 16). Also look at Table 2 and Table 3 in Chapter 1 as well. Don't get lost in all the numbers presented in Chapter 1! Focus on the types of academic programs being described and what opportunities they open up for students.**

CCSR, *From High School to the Future: The Challenge of Senior Year in Chicago Public Schools, 2013* (Available at <https://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Senior%20Year%20-%20Final.pdf>).

**Page assignment: Executive Summary (pages 1- 8)**

CCSR, *The Educational Attainment of Chicago Public Schools Students A Focus on Four-Year College Degrees, 2014* (Available at <http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Fast%20Facts%20Brief.pdf>).

**Page assignment: Page 1 through the top section on page 3).**

**Week 7**

**February 15 - Monday - School to Prison Pipeline**

Readings to be announced and will be available on Canvas

**III. So Now What? School Reform in Chicago**

**February 17 - Wednesday - School Closings!**

CCSR, *When Schools Close: Effects on Displaced Students in Chicago Public Schools, 2009* (Available at <https://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/when-schools-close-effects-displaced-students-chicago-public-schools>).

**Page assignment: Executive summary (pgs. 1-3).**

CCSR, *School Closings in Chicago Understanding Families' Choices and Constraints for New School Enrollment, 2015* (Available at <https://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/School%20Closings%20Report.pdf>).

**Page assignment: Executive summary (pgs. 1-4), Introduction (pgs. 5-6), Timeline (pgs. 8-9).**

## Week 8

### **February 22 - Monday - Charter and Selective Enrollment Schools**

Duncan & Murnane, *Restoring Opportunity: The Crisis of Inequality and the Challenge of American Education*, Chapters 6 and 9

\*\*Booker, Gill, Zimmer & Sass, *Achievement and Attainment in Chicago Charter Schools*, Rand Corporation, 2009. (Available at [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical\\_reports/2009/RAND\\_TR585-1.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2009/RAND_TR585-1.pdf)).

**Page assignment: Summary (pages ix to xi) and pgs. 1 - 5.**

### **February 24 - Wednesday - Improving Education: A Comprehensive Approach**

Bryk, *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, pages 1-28 and Chapter 3 (You can skip the section on "Question 2: Each Organizational Element Truly Essential for Improvement?", pages 88-92)

## Week 9

### **February 29 - Monday**

Bryk, *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, Chapters 5 and 6

\*\*Walker, Rollins, Blank, & Jacobson, *Achieving Ambitious Educational Outcomes through School and Community Partnerships*, 2013, Chapin Hall. (Available at [http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/convening\\_summary\\_REVISIED-1-31-14.pdf](http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/convening_summary_REVISIED-1-31-14.pdf))

### **March 2 - Wednesday - Improving Education: A Teacher's Perspective**

Schulz, *Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way: Lessons from an Urban Classroom*, Chapters 1 through 4

## Week 10

### **March 7 - Monday**

Schulz, *Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way: Lessons from an Urban Classroom*, Chapters 5 through 7

**Journals due at the beginning of class (only hard copies of Journals will be accepted.)**

**Take-Home Final will be distributed (and will be posted to Canvas after class time).**

## Finals Week

**Take-home Finals must be uploaded to Canvas by 1pm on March 15 (Tuesday).**