Course Description
This course focuses on the social and contextual influences of education, from a learning, teaching, research and policy perspective. We will examine the role of race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, and identity in the ways individuals and groups influence and are influenced by our education system. In this class you will be asked to deeply evaluate your own beliefs, thoughts and assumptions about the influence of these socio-cultural factors and consider their implications for your own professional and personal development.

Course Goals
1. To understand the philosophical and historical underpinnings of schooling in America.
2. To understand the dynamic role of social forces (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability) on education.
3. To develop skills of teaching-as-researching.
4. To develop practices of self-reflection, systems analysis, and dialogue.
5. To understand the social ecology, culture, and climate of a classroom, school, and community.
6. To develop practices of collegial community within and beyond the school.
7. To explore teacher identity and its impact on students, as well as the impact students have on teacher identity.
8. To develop skills in creating safe, respectful learning environments in classrooms and schools.
9. To understand how the teacher supports the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of individual students.
10. To develop voice and social capacity as a public intellectual.

Northwestern University
Conceptual Framework for Teacher Education

Mission
Our mission is to prepare knowledgeable, reflective, and innovative teachers who will lead and inspire students.

Vision
The Teacher Education Program at Northwestern University is guided by a conceptual framework for teacher education, organized around a vision of learning, learners and teaching. The conceptual framework focuses on

A vision of learning that includes:
1.1. how students come to understand and think about subject matter;
1.2. an emphasis on inquiry and reflection;
1.3. the importance of collaboration and social interaction; and
1.4. experiential activities that are relevant and engaging.

A vision of learners that includes:
2.1 the belief that every person is capable of learning;
2.2 that development is shaped by social contexts; and
2.3 equitable experiences for all.
A vision of teaching that includes:

3.1 connecting theory and practice;
3.2 inquiry, reflection, collaboration, and innovation;
3.3 creating a climate of learning for all students; and
3.4 acting professionally, responsibly, and ethically.

Dispositions
CAEP defines dispositions as “habits of professional action and moral commitment to teaching.” The Northwestern teacher preparation programs will help candidates acquire the following dispositions to the level of proficiency:

1. to reflect on one’s own practice and make changes as appropriate.
2. to support students as individuals.
3. to collaborate with all stakeholders.
4. to engage all students.
5. to incorporate innovations in teaching, including the use of new technologies.
6. to conduct one’s self professionally, responsibly, and ethically.

ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (2013)
Applications of IPTS standards are listed in the Course Schedule and Topics, with reference to the level at which they are being used (introducing (I), developing (D), mastery (M), or review (R)).

Standard 1 - Teaching Diverse Students – The competent teacher understands the diverse characteristics and abilities of each student and how individuals develop and learn within the context of their social, economic, cultural, linguistic, and academic experiences. The teacher uses these experiences to create instructional opportunities that maximize student learning.

Standard 2 - Content Area and Pedagogical Knowledge – The competent teacher has in-depth understanding of content area knowledge that includes central concepts, methods of inquiry, structures of the disciplines, and content area literacy. The teacher creates meaningful learning experiences for each student based upon interactions among content area and pedagogical knowledge, and evidence-based practice.

Standard 3 - Planning for Differentiated Instruction – The competent teacher plans and designs instruction based on content area knowledge, diverse student characteristics, student performance data, curriculum goals, and the community context. The teacher plans for ongoing student growth and achievement.

Standard 4 - Learning Environment – The competent teacher structures a safe and healthy learning environment that facilitates cultural and linguistic responsiveness, emotional well-being, self-efficacy, positive social interaction, mutual respect, active engagement, academic risk-taking, self-motivation, and personal goal-setting.

Standard 5 - Instructional Delivery – The competent teacher differentiates instruction by using a variety of strategies that support critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and continuous growth and learning. This teacher understands that the classroom is a dynamic environment requiring ongoing modification of instruction to enhance learning for each student.

Standard 6 - Reading, Writing, and Oral Communication – The competent teacher has foundational knowledge of reading, writing, and oral communication within the content area and recognizes and addresses student reading, writing, and oral communication needs to facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge.

Standard 7 - Assessment – The competent teacher understands and uses appropriate formative and summative assessments for determining student needs, monitoring student progress, measuring student growth, and evaluating student outcomes. The teacher makes decisions
driven by data about curricular and instructional effectiveness and adjusts practices to meet the needs of each student.

Standard 8 - Collaborative Relationships – The competent teacher builds and maintains collaborative relationships to foster cognitive, linguistic, physical, and social and emotional development. This teacher works as a team member with professional colleagues, students, parents or guardians, and community members.

Standard 9 - Professionalism, Leadership, and Advocacy – The competent teacher is an ethical and reflective practitioner who exhibits professionalism; provides leadership in the learning community; and advocates for students, parents or guardians, and the profession.

**Academic Integrity**
Students in this course are expected to comply with the policies found in the booklet, “Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic Guide.” All papers submitted for credit in this course must be sent as email attachments as well as delivered in printed form. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern, visit: [http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/](http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/). If you need a copy of the brochure visit the SESP Student Affairs Office.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**
In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Northwestern University is committed to providing equal access to all programming. Students with disabilities seeking accommodations are encouraged to contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 467-5530 or ssd@northwestern.edu. SSD is located in the basement of Scott Hall. SSD also has an excellent website which is viewable at: [http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/](http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/).

**Required Texts**
13th – on Netflix

Articles will be posted on Canvas.
*You may use different editions, including Kindle/Nook.*

**Course Schedule and Topics**

**Ongoing assignments:**
Focus papers due Tuesdays
Post on Canvas and respond to others’ posts (usually due Friday)
Home Group projects


**Session 1 January 16: How is where I learn what I learn?**
- Getting to know each other; Recollections process
- Introduction to Descriptive Inquiry Processes
- Toni Cade Bambara: “The Lesson”
- Introduction to the course
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1C, 1L, 2B, 2N, 3K, 4E, 5M, 5P, 6A, 6Q, 8A

*Canvas Post #1 Due Tuesday, January 23*  
*Conversations, emotions, vulnerability*

Choose a sentence from this text that you find particularly thought-provoking, challenging, maybe that raises new questions for you, and write about it. If you see any connections between themes that emerged in our first class or other experiences in your own life, you might start exploring those here. End with questions the reading and/or class discussion has left you interested in pursuing. Please bear in mind that assignments for this class provide space for reflection, exploration, and questions – they are not about making an argument or an analysis. Considerations about dialogue in “Working together across difference” will be important foundations as we think about being in dialogue with texts, with experiences, and with one another.

Focus Paper #1 Due January 23

(if you don’t have a physical copy yet, you may use this e-copy for now)

This week, spend an hour and a half with this book. Explore, flip through, pause, read, skim, take notes for yourself, reflect, talk about it with someone, notice feelings and memories and questions that come up for you, and record them (audio, video, drawing, or writing).

You will probably feel that this book was written to you, or that it was NOT written to you. Either way, what does that mean to you? What are the opportunities here for you?

How does your engagement with this text shape your learning goals for this class? What do these words, these stories and poems and essays and images, make you want to experience? To learn? To change in yourself?

This is a first dive into this text, and into this class. The more deeply you sink into it, the better you will set yourself up for meaningful learning. More structured (and unstructured) work with this text will follow in coming weeks. For this week, we ask that you share with us your notes, including at least 2 questions.

Session 2 January 23: How does my identity affect my learning and my teaching?
- Introduction to Home Groups
  - Current issues facing students, teachers, schools, and communities
  - Select Home Group focus reading
  - 13th
- Teacher-as-researcher framework
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1E, 1K, 2D, 3F, 4B, 4C, 5C, 5K, 6O, 6G, 7E, 7I, 8B, 8G, 9E, 9S

Focus Paper #2 Due January 30
The myth of meritocracy
Read: Darling-Hammond, L. The flat world and education: How America’s commitment to equality will determine our future (Selections).
Coates, T. Between the world and me. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015.
Why the myth of meritocracy hurts kids of color

In the U.S. we learn a story of equal opportunity for all. Why do we believe this story? Darling-Hammond, Alexander, and Coates offer counter-narratives that challenge this story and tell a very different story. What’s a piece of the story each of them tells that you find compelling? How does it help you to discern the story you have been told (implicitly or explicitly) about achievement and opportunity in America? How did you learn this story?
Canvas Post #2 Due FRIDAY, January 26
Choose an article, opinion piece, blog post, podcast, or video addressing a current story focusing on race, gender, sexual orientation, or class, to share with your classmates. Explain what new perspective this text provides you as you reflect on identity and relationships at national and local levels.

Session 3 January 30: How has American education history played out for different groups?

- History and Issues in American Education discussion
- Equity, Democracy, Neoliberalism
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1C (D), 1F (D), 2B (D), 2D (D), 2J (D), 2M (D), 4P (D), 5L (D), 6B (D), 7C (D), 7L (I), 8E (I), 9G (D), 9Q (D)

Reading for next class:
Freire, P. Pedagogy of the oppressed (Ch. 1). Bloomsbury Academic, 2000.
Home Group reading tbd

Focus Paper #3 Due February 6
Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Reading: Please read the Introduction and the first half of Chapter 1 (to the middle of p. 54 in the 2005 edition – see below for the last paragraph of your assigned Freire reading for this week).
The pedagogy of the oppressed, animated by authentic, humanist (not humanitarian) generosity, presents itself as a pedagogy of humankind. Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic interests of the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression. It is an instrument of dehumanization. This is why, as we affirmed earlier, the pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practiced by the oppressors. It would be a contradiction in terms if the oppressors not only defended but actually implemented a liberating education.
Reading Guide: This is difficult reading, full of philosophical terms and rigorous social analysis. You have to stretch your mind to register the importance of what Freire is saying. Bear in mind as you read that Freire’s main emphasis is on humanization: the priority of each individual’s fundamental worth. This applies to everyone. At all moments, Freire challenges us to be conscious of the things, large or small, visible or invisible, that threaten a person’s worth. Freire is writing out of the context of the life he lived in Brazil, where poor people participated in their own oppression through “a culture of silence,” unable to pull themselves out of poverty and despair because they lacked critical awareness of their situation. Throughout his life, Freire worked to educate people for this awareness – in a literacy program often compared to Highlander’s (Myles Horton) Citizenship Schools that helped millions of African Americans pass the test that barred them from voting.

The educational goal Freire outlines is to help each person become a Subject, who acts on and transforms his or her world. “This world to which [s/he] relates is not a static and closed order, a given reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust; rather, it is a problem to be worked on and solved.” To the extent that schooling and culture push us all to conform to an “objective” view of the world that we did not participate in creating, we are all oppressed. And most of us resist putting that view aside and struggling to create our own reality, because that is very hard and entails a great deal of responsibility: thus we participate in our own oppression.

But there is a socio-economic dimension to Freire’s terms too, which force us into uncomfortable (and, it can feel like, oversimplified) categories of oppressor and oppressed. We are hoping that your reading, reflection, and writing will help you to experience this discomfort as productive tension.
Writing: So, instead of writing a coherent paper, for this week, keep a running list as you read, of a few key words, concepts, or perspectives that challenge or unsettle you. Reflect on what experiences, beliefs, and reactions in you might be getting in the way of your understanding of these ideas, and jot down these reflections. Your questions will shape our work together in class next week.

Canvas Post #3 Due FRIDAY February 2

Share a recent experience in your life that connects with what Anzaldúa calls border arte, bearing in mind questions like: what borders are important in your life? How does this artistic or aesthetic experience change you? Can you express this shift somehow in your writing?

Session 4 February 6: What is the relationship between schools and social change?

- History and Issues in American Education discussion
- Progressive education, critical pedagogy, politics and education
- White Fragility
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1L, 2N, 3L, 4K, 5L, 6J, 6O, 8D, 8L, 9E

Reading for next class:
Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (Ch. 2). Bloomsbury Academic, 2000.
Home Group reading tbd

Focus Paper #4 Due February 13: Continue tracking your Freire and B and G responses

Canvas Post #4 CRT and “the master’s house” Due FRIDAY February 9


On p. 30, Ladson-Billings refers to the famous Audre Lorde quotation, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” From this reading, what do you gather about what critical race theorists mean by “the master’s house”? What are “the master’s tools”? What does dismantling the master’s house mean? Many educators believe, on the other hand, that, as Ladson-Billings puts it, the master’s house can only be dismantled by the master’s tools – which suggests that when African American students meet the academic standards set by the white people in power, they are empowered to create a more equitable society. Based on your experiences and reflections, what do you think?

Session 5 February 13: How does power play out in schooling?

- Critical Pedagogy discussion
- Systems analysis and multicultural education
- Racial identity development theory
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 2A, 2C, 3C, 4A, 4B, 5M, 6C, 7L, 8L, 9O, 9P

Reading for next class:
Elliott, S. *Teaching and learning on the verge: Democratic education in action*. Chapter 5

Focus Paper #5 Due February 20

Lipman and Stovall analyze how inequity in education is built into and sustained in Chicago Public Schools through accountability discourse and structures. Elliott and Stovall feature
responses that challenge these structures, in schools in Chicago and other cities. Your focus paper will be a reflection on one or two passages that strike you in each chapter, with reference to your own experience. If you find yourself wanting to write about areas that you have already explored, see how you can take your focus closer on specific moments, scenes, and words.

Session 6 February 20: How do groups resist dominant narratives?
- Dominant culture and power
- Watch: Black Lives Matter: How a hashtag defined a movement
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1A, 2F, 2H, 3Q, 4B, 4D, 4I, 5C, 6J, 7R, 8N, 9P

Reading for next class:
Watch: Andrade-Duncan, Jeffrey. *Roses in Concrete Tedx talk*

Focus Paper #6 due February 27
ROSES
Please read “Cultural Modeling,” from Carol Lee’s 2007 book *Culture, Literacy, and Learning: Taking Bloom in the Midst of the Whirlwind*, and view Jeffrey Andrade-Duncan’s *Roses in Concrete Tedx talk*. Both are referencing Tupac’s “Rose in Concrete” image to refer to challenging systems of oppression (for more of Tupac’s lyrics and imagery, see this link). In what ways are Lee and Andrade-Duncan challenging you to change? What is your relationship to the “concrete” that Andrade-Duncan refers to? Can you “read a social world that is racialized?” (Lee, p. 127). How or how not? What new questions do these texts raise for you? You should build your focus paper around a couple of important passages in either text.

Canvas Post #4 due FRIDAY March 2
How might you apply cultural modeling to a lesson you create in your content area?

Session 7 February 27: How do place, language, and culture intersect with learning?
- Place-based education, anti-racist education
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1J, 1L, 2Q, 3C, 3L, 4E, 5A, 5C, 6I, 6J, 8J, 9N
- Cultural Modeling across the disciplines

Reading for next class:
Warren, C. “The utility of empathy for white female teachers’ culturally responsive interactions with Black male students”

Focus Paper #7 due March 6
After reading Eskin and Warren, what questions do you have? Based on the articles, what implications does this have for your own teaching and practice? What do you think you need to know more about and how will you go about getting that information?

Session 8 March 6: How do we talk about race in schools?
- Language, discourse, power analysis
- Scenarios
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1B, 2B, 2N, 3K, 3L, 4B, 5I, 6B, 8D, 8R, 9D, 9H

Reading for next class:
Home Group reading TBD
Session 9 March 13 Home Group Lessons

Session 10 March 20: What are the possibilities for democratic education today?
- Anti-racist education practice in schools and in communities
- Experiential Education Events Discussion
- Racial Autobiography due
- Class assessment
- IPTS Standards Addressed: 1L, 2D, 2K, 4B, 4C, 7L, 8A, 8E, 9F

**Experiential Education Assignment**: Deadline: March 20
The post should offer a reflection on the event you attended (we will provide a list of event options), responding to the following questions (and offering any other comments you feel are important): What new insight did you gain about schooling, i.e., what it’s like to be a CPS student/teacher/board member; what kind of relationships in schools and in educational decision-making processes foster real learning; how do power structures affect learning? How were race, class, gender differences framed in the event? What connections can you draw with readings, lectures, and discussions we have held in the class? What creative ideas or astute analysis about education did you encounter in the event? How, specifically, does this experience affect your goals as a teacher?

**Racial Autobiography Assignment** Deadline: March 20
As antiracist multicultural educators it is important for us to consciously explore how we come to see the world as we do. This paper gives you the chance to examine your experiences, beliefs, and perspectives in relation to the readings and discussions we engage in this class. Please write a 2-3 pp single-spaced paper, in which you consider the major influences that shape your understandings of race, diversity, and difference.

**MS ED 402: Social Contexts of Schooling Assignments and Grading**
*Additional guidelines for all assignments will be provided*

**Class Participation**
Your attendance and participation in each class session will be part of your final grade.

**Focus Papers**
You will organize your responses to your readings in weekly Focus Papers. These are one-page, single-spaced close reflections on the texts in relation to your own experiences.

**Weekly Discussion Posts**
Each week, you are responsible for posting a short comment or reflection on the Canvas Discussion board. Responses to other posts are also required.

**Experiential Education Events**
Twice over the course of the quarter, you will attend an experiential education event in Chicago and blog on it. Event options (such as Chicago or Evanston school board meetings, community education forums, and conferences) will be posted on Canvas. If you come across an event that you would like to list or to attend, please email us the information.

**Home Group Project** Deadline: March 13
In small groups, you will explore how institutions and societal processes impact education, with a particular focus on the relationship between race and power. Your group will choose a book to read together, and study connections with course readings, conversations, and current events. Each group will share with the class collective learning on their inquiry. Presentation guidelines will be provided.