

**Loyola University Chicago**  
**School of Education**  
**ELPS 219 003: American Education**  
**Spring 2008**

Instructor: Desmond Odugu  
Email: [dodugu@luc.edu](mailto:dodugu@luc.edu)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Meeting is by appointment

Class Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.  
: Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.  
Classroom: Damen Hall, Room 641

### **Course Overview**

This course examines education in the United States from a historical perspective. Arranged chronologically, topics focus on the development and change of educational ideas and institutions from the pre-colonial era through to the present. Extensive primary and secondary sources are used in examining the importance of human agency, chronology, and geography in constructing and interpreting historical evidences relevant to the forces and processes of historical change and continuity that have shaped American education over time. Consistent with the School of Education's conceptual framework of seeking to enhance "professionalism in the service of social justice", this course highlights the intersections of power and privilege associated with race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and beliefs in shaping the educational opportunities and experiences of diverse groups of people.

In keeping with Loyola University Chicago's commitment to expanding students' capacities for critical thinking and effective communication, this course provides dynamic learning space for students to undertake common investigations through varied group activities and also to engage in personal inquiries on education issues extending across geographical (transnational, regional and local), temporal (pre-colonial through present) and thematic (policy, epistemological, institutional, sociologic, cultural, and methodological) contexts. The overall objective is to deepen and expand students' understanding of the history of American education and to sharpen their critical skills for understanding the processes of identifying, examining and using historical facts and evidences in constructing historical arguments.

### **Course Objectives**

Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the development of American education. Students will be able to explain the historical conditions and events that have shaped present educational circumstances and policies. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of history as a form of scholarly inquiry.

### **Loyola University Chicago Core Knowledge Area Objectives**

This course satisfies Loyola University's core knowledge area requirement in "Historical Knowledge". Consequently, students are to develop a core set of historical knowledge and skills. Requirements in this course have been designed to facilitate students' success in developing these competencies.

## **Learning Objectives: General Competencies in Historical Knowledge**

1. *Demonstrate the ability to evaluate and explain the forces of historical continuity and change.* Since topics in this course are organized in chronological order, students examine the continuity and change of educational ideas, issues and themes over time as well as the historical contexts in which they are embedded. Through discussions and written assignments students are expected to articulate how these issues represent continuity and change in American educational aims, experiences, and institutions.

2. *Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships among historical events, culture, and social forces.*

This course is designed to enhance students' understanding of how education is shaped by broader historical, political, economic, regional, religious, and social forces. In examining the effects of these forces and specific events on education, students come to understand and demonstrate in written assignments and discussions how these broader forces shape education and how education also functions as an instrument for social change.

3. *Demonstrate an awareness that human values, ideas of justice, and methods of interpretation, influence and are influenced by time, culture, and personal perspective.*

A vital component of this course is the requirement that students utilize multiple sources (including primary sources) in examining multiple perspectives and diverse historical interpretations of the evolution of American education. Juxtaposing multiple perspectives/interpretations and their historical evidences help students assess the validity of claims about American education especially with regards to the biases stemming from the time, space, culture and personal perspective of the author(s). Through paper assignments and discussions, students formulate arguments supported with primary and secondary sources demonstrating their awareness of the temporal, spatial and conceptual embeddedness of their claims as well as how their own biases are shaped by their sense of values and ideas of justice and how these influence their interpretation.

4. *Differentiate among historical and contemporary perspectives about the world with a view to fashioning a humane and just world.*

Besides identifying themes in American education over time, students learn to understand how those themes derive from unique historical moments. This course is designed to help students unveil the gradual and oftentimes reluctant evolution of particular contemporary educational idea or institution within specific historical contexts surrounded by different configurations of social forces. As such, students develop the ability to distinguish between historical and contemporary perspectives on several burning educational issues like access to education, equity and justice, universal public education. In this process, students come to understand the forces that conduce to success in addressing educational needs perceived within particular historic contexts and how these problems and their educational implications survive within the contemporary context.

## **Skill Objectives: Understanding History as a Form of Scholarly Inquiry**

1. Demonstrate effective written, oral, and visual communication skills and sensitivities.

*Effectively articulate, organize, and support positions extemporaneously:* As part of their participation in the course, students read, rigorously critique and write reactions to selected text(s) individually and in groups. Such written critiques reference relevant primary sources and establish linkages to secondary sources; and these inform students' participation in general and group

discussions. Through these activities students learn to speak among, listen to, and engage each other and also learn to articulate well supported positions, building their skills to respond extemporaneously to complex material and contexts.

*Perform research and communicate the results, including developing a thesis, locating sources, and assessing their credibility, integrating sources as evidence to support or qualify claims, and practicing appropriate documentation:* In the course of this course, students write several papers in which they practice and demonstrate strategic skills vital for historical investigation. Written assignments progressively challenge students to move from single to multiple primary and secondary historical sources analyses. In these assignments, students develop a thesis backed by strong and credible sources and connect their arguments to broader historical themes and topics. These activities provide opportunities for students to demonstrate a command of historical research skills evidenced by their written narrative and their selection and documentation of sources.

2. Demonstrate effective critical thinking skills and dispositions.

*Analyze relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representation intended to express beliefs, judgments, experience, reasons, information, or opinions:* In analyzing primary documents, students identify and connect propositions and expressive representations with evidences marshaled in their support and relate such to information about a particular time period. This activity fosters students' ability to understand and question historical interpretations that establish linkages between different sets of evidences and the claims or judgments they are meant to support.

*Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of varying points of view:* In analyzing secondary documents, students identify and evaluate the arguments posed, interpretations of the past that accompany such arguments and weigh the relative strength and weakness of their evidences in juxtaposition with primary sources of the same time period. Students' judgments regarding the strength of an argument are based on evidences from the secondary source as well as relevant primary sources.

## **Reading List**

**Required Reading** (Available through the Loyola University Chicago bookstore)

Rury, J. L. (2005). *Education and Social Change: Themes in the History of American Schooling*. Mahwah, NJ: LEA

Fraser, J. W. (2001). *The School in the United States: A Documentary History*. New York: McGraw Hill

**Recommended Reading** (Available through the Loyola University Chicago bookstore)

Urban, W. J. & Wagoner Jr, J, L. (2004). *American Education: A History*. (3rd Ed.). New York: McGraw Hill, 2004.

## **Other Readings**

Provisions for additional reading materials will be made available through the Blackboard Academic Suite. Electronic hard copies or links to journal holdings of specific materials will be provided under Course Documents in Blackboard at [www.blackboard.luc.edu](http://www.blackboard.luc.edu).

## **Course Requirements**

### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance to and punctuality in all weekly class lectures are mandatory. Course materials are organized sequentially, and missing one class has the potential of affecting students overall learning and skill outcomes in the course. Therefore, absence from any class should be duly permitted by the instructor, and a make-up reaction paper on the assigned reading for the day is due before the next class meeting. Missing class more than three times or missing class once without permission incurs a one-level drop in overall grade (an “A” to an “A-”, a “B+” to a “B”).

Students are expected to attend lectures having already read all assigned readings and done all required assignments. Additionally, participation in general class and group discussions will be evaluated as part of overall final grade. Please, access electronic copies of reading materials not contained in required text in the Course Document folder on Blackboard. Print and bring copies of these readings to class for reference.

### **Technology and Logistics**

*Blackboard Academic Suite:* Working access to your Loyola University Chicago email account is required in order to use the Blackboard Academic Suite (<http://blackboard.luc.edu>). Although it is possible to set your luc.edu email account to route incoming mails to another email, your Loyola universal ID and password are required for access to Blackboard; and this is vital for access to additional reading materials and other relevant announcements and information.

*Loyola University Chicago Libraries' Online and Digital Resources:* The use of Loyola University Chicago Libraries' Online and Digital resources ([www.libraries.luc.edu](http://www.libraries.luc.edu)) is required in this course. Primary sources available through the Library of Congress's American Memory project (<http://memory.loc.gov>) are important sources for the course and form important part of integrating technology into teaching and learning. A library resource session will be held on February 14.

### **Assignments**

The major goal of the assignments in this course is to expand students' understanding of the history of American education and increase their facility in identifying and using historical facts in constructing credible historical arguments. Students are required to do several short reaction papers, participate in debates, write a midterm and a final examinations, and a final research paper.

#### *"History as a Scholarly Inquiry" Debate Project*

In this project, students are randomly assigned to groups and each group chooses a topic from the syllabus for or against which they debate with another group. Debates consist of analyzing evidences from the week's assigned readings in juxtaposition with primary source materials from the period; each group constructs arguments to demonstrate the validity, credibility and logical consistency of the positions of the assigned readings based on their personal analyses of the primary sources. Although each group debates only once across the semester, all students are required to participate in two ways: (a) by critiquing the arguments of the debaters for each session; and (b) by writing a reaction paper embodying their thoughts about the validity, credibility and logical consistency of the arguments of each weeks' reading materials based on their personal analyses of primary sources. The one-page minimum (two pages maximum) reaction paper is to be submitted via Blackboard's Digital Dropbox (under the “Assignment Submission” tab) before the start of each debate session.

Debating groups are required to write a group reaction paper, and a common grade is assigned to all group members. Detailed information about this assignment is posted on Blackboard under the "Assignment" tab and additional information will be discussed in class.

#### *Midterm Examination:*

The midterm examination will be an in-class essay-type written activity taken on February 28. It will consist of a compulsory essay question and some short "identifications" in which you are required to identify, explain the broader context, and discuss the significance of a particular educator, reformer, policy, institution, cultural trend etc. The content of this examination will focus on the topics and issues discussed in the first half of the semester.

#### *Final Examination*

The final examination, given on April 29 is noncumulative and will focus on the activities of the second half of the semester. The final examination will be an in-class essay-type written activity in which you are required to identify, examine, explain the broader context, and discuss the significance of a particular educator, reformer, policy, institution, cultural trend, etc.

#### *Final Research Paper*

The final research paper provides an opportunity for you to increase your familiarity with a specific topic on the history of American education that is of particular interest to you. Additionally, the project will increase your facility in using research skills in identifying primary and secondary sources, broaden your understanding of different methods of historical writing and interpretation, and help you identify and investigate research problems within the history of American education topic area. You are expected to select a topic or issue of choice based on the broad framework of the issues and topics in this course. Any topic that falls radically outside the limits of this course content should be discussed with the instructor. At least, two primary and two secondary materials must be used in this paper and appropriately cited.

Students are required to make short presentations of their progress on this paper on March 27 and a final brief presentation of their findings on April 17. A total of 7 to 10 pages paper (double spaced, 12 point font size, Times New Roman font) is due via Blackboard's Digital Dropbox at midnight on May 2, 2008. More detailed information about the final paper is posted on Blackboard and further information will be discussed in class.

### **Policies and Assessment**

#### **Evaluation and Grading**

*The "History as a Scholarly Inquiry" Debate project* and your participation in class will make up 20% of your final grade in this course. Grading for this assignment will be based on (a) how deeply you are able to analyze the imagery and/or text in the selected primary source, (b) how effectively you are able to connect it with larger themes, policies or movements in the history of education, (c) the creativity and care that you put into selecting issues, evidences and relevant analyses, (d) the clarity and organization of your debate presentation and writing, and (e) the persuasiveness and logical command of your debate presentations. Although time is not included on this list, its management is crucial to success in the above items.

*The midterm exam* and the *final exam* will each make up 25% of your final grade in the course (together

making up 50% of your final grade). Grading for both exams will be based on (a) how well your answers demonstrate a deep, studied familiarity with significant events, people and moments in the history of US education, as well as (b) the clarity and effectiveness of your writing.

*Final research paper* will make up 30% of your final grade in the course. Grading for this paper will be based on (a) relevance of the issue selected to American education, (b) depth and credibility of evidences used, (c) validity of analyses and the logical consistency of arguments, (d) effectiveness in connecting issues to larger and diverse themes, policies, issues, movements and so on, (e) clarity and organization of presentation and writing, and (f) overall quality of paper. Details for this paper will be provided via Blackboard.

### **Accessibility**

Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd> .

### **Harassment**

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. For specific definitions of discrimination, abuse, and harassment refer p. 25-26 in the Loyola University Chicago Student Handbook, located at: <http://www.luc.edu/studentaffairs/pdfs/LoyolaStudentHandbook2006.pdf> If you believe you are subject to such harassment, you should notify your instructor. If you believe you are subject to harassment by your instructor, contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at 312-915-6464.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. Academic dishonesty is one of several possible reasons why a student may be dismissed from Loyola University Chicago. For specific policies and procedures see:

[http://www.luc.edu/education/academics\\_policies.shtml#honesty](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies.shtml#honesty)





