Course Introduction

Are state- and federal-level changes in education policy, such as teacher evaluation requirements and Common Core curriculum, really changing teachers’ practice, or is it driving teachers out of the profession? Do teacher unions do more good than harm, or vice versa? Can we universally define a “quality teacher”? Why do so many new teachers leave the profession in the first years of their career, particularly when teaching jobs are so often hard to find? Why are people so enthusiastic about professional learning communities, and do they even work? Why does the Vergara vs. California case provoked so much controversy?

We live in an era where the practice and profession of teaching engenders challenging questions such as these on a regular basis. These are the kinds of questions that we will address in this course. Using sociological research, perspectives and theory, we will dig into these questions in pursuit of a deeper understanding of the practice and profession of teaching.

School of Education Conceptual Framework

In keeping with the SOE’s Conceptual Framework (Professionalism in Service of Social Justice), I seek in this course to ground students’ work as educators, administrators and researchers in empirical knowledge gathered by scholars concerned with the sociology of education and the study of teaching. I have designed this course with an aim of further developing students’ abilities to think critically about, and respond to, social phenomena that impact, and occur among, teachers, which in turn impacts schools and students. This course’s topics and readings explore the complex dynamics, demands and contexts of teaching in today’s socioeconomically and racially diverse schools. My hope is that this course will support students’ ability to reason about and respond to issues of teaching practice and the teaching profession with strong mind and spirit.

Course Goals

In addition to the goals as expressed above, my other goal for students of this focused seminar course are threefold. First, I hope that students will expand their factual knowledge about various topics, both historical and contemporary, related to the sociology of teaching and the study of teaching. My second goal is that students will develop their ability to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view about topics related to the practice and profession of teaching. Finally, I want students to apply course material and research they encounter as they work on their independent research for this class to
strengthen their thinking, problem-solving and decision-making related to current problems and challenges in the fields of education and, particularly, teaching. Because of these three-pronged goals, this course packs in substantial reading on a range of topics, and will blend structured assignments with independent work opportunities, particularly students’ responsibility to direct seminar discussions and choose topics for their major research paper. Abilities developed in this course should reach the level required for developing a conceptual framework or literature review for a thesis paper, dissertation proposal or other empirical research.

Assessment of learning
I will assess students’ learning both through classroom interactions (discussion, short presentations) and formal assignments. This course has a few small assignments and one major assignment, a research paper, which includes series of smaller assignments that will help you develop this final product. I will use the following criteria for determining your course grade:

Participation—20%
Brief discussion of media coverage of teachers—5%
Short paper 1—10%
Short paper 2—10%
Research paper—55%
  • Paper topic—5%
  • Bibliography—7.5%
  • Introduction section—12.5%
  • Paper—30%

Each component of students’ responsibilities for these assignments, as well as the criteria used for assessing learning and due date (when applicable), is described below.

Class Participation and Attendance
This seminar course is very interactive and places a high premium on every student’s participation. While introductory graduate courses are often structured to manage students’ participation (through planned activities and instructor lecture), this class will be structured instead as a shared, rigorous conversation, where the instructor facilitates, but does not dominate. This arrangement will require thoughtful, detailed reading of assigned texts and regular contributions (e.g., multiple times per class meeting) to class discussions where we unpack, consider and compare the ideas and data presented in the texts you will read. Participation, including regular attendance, is therefore worth 20% of your final grade.

Please come on time to class, having read all assigned materials (either the text hardcopy or an electronic copy where you have taken notes either on the document or separately), and ready to discuss them with your colleagues. If you are using an electronic copy of the text, please make sure it is accessible to you at the beginning of class. If you come late and/or unprepared, you will have a difficult time fully participating in class, which will impact the entire seminar.

Attendance at this seminar is critical for the seminar’s effectiveness. This course’s attendance policy, therefore, is as follows: If you miss more than two class sessions over the semester, you will only be
eligible for a maximum final grade of “B” in the course. The following rubric will be used to determine each student’s participation grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A (18-20 points)</th>
<th>B (16-18 points)</th>
<th>C (14-16 points)</th>
<th>D (12-14 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Attends every class, arrives on time at the beginning of class and after class breaks, stays until end of class.</td>
<td>Misses 1-3 classes, on infrequent occasions arrives late at the beginning of class or after class breaks, or leaves before end of class.</td>
<td>Misses class 3-4 times, late to class or leaves class early on a regular basis.</td>
<td>Excessive number of absences, late arrivals, and early departures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>Makes multiple meaningful, thoughtful contributions, which are related to readings and/or class session theme, to each seminar discussion.</td>
<td>Makes 1-2 meaningful, thoughtful contributions, which are reasonably related to readings and/or class session theme, to each seminar discussion.</td>
<td>Makes occasional contributions to seminar discussions, contributions are peripherally related to readings and/or class session theme.</td>
<td>Makes very infrequent contributions to seminar discussions, or makes contributions that are not related to readings and/or class session theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Recognizes and demonstrates respect for the importance of shared seminar discussion, balances regular contributions against the need for all colleagues to have space to contribute, responds to colleagues’ contributions thoughtfully and respectfully.</td>
<td>Shows moderate respect for the importance of shared seminar discussion, usually balances regular contributions against the need for all colleagues to have space to contribute, responds to colleagues’ contributions with some thoughtfulness and respect.</td>
<td>Shows limited respect for the importance of shared seminar discussion, struggles to balance regular contributions against the need for all colleagues to have space to contribute, responds to colleagues’ contributions with limited thoughtfulness and respect.</td>
<td>Regularly fails to show respect for the importance of shared seminar discussion, does not balance regular contributions against the need for all colleagues to have space to contribute, responds to colleagues’ contributions without thoughtfulness and respect.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
For any missed class meetings, I will ask you to 1) Notify me in advance of your absence, and 2) write a brief reaction paper to the assigned readings. You will still be held responsible for all assigned readings, due dates for written assignments, and course requirements or updates discussed in class. Please check in with one of your colleagues if you miss a class meeting.

The use of electronics (cell phones, computers) is often a necessity of modern life, but also interferes with participation in class, particularly in this interactive course. Please refrain from using electronic devices in class if their use (e.g., texting, internet surfing, writing aside from taking notes) does not pertain directly to your participation in our course.

Written assignments

Brief discussion of media coverage of teachers

For this assignment, each student will briefly discuss a piece of contemporary media coverage of teachers. The media may be print, electronic or broadcast, but you must be able to share it with the class by providing a photocopy to class members at the beginning of your presentation or an electronic link (in the form of a URL, which you can send to class members the day before your presentation). Education blogs, including This Week in Education, Jersey Jazzman, Eduwonk, GothamSchools, Chalkbeat, Flypaper, the White Rhino Blog, Diane Ravitch, Jay Mathews, and Joanne Jacobs, are a few good sources of news stories, but feel free to cast your net widely. Please come to class prepared to do the following:

- Briefly summarize the piece that you are discussing (in less than 2 minutes).
- Point out any portrayal of teachers (positive, negative, expectations, assignment of responsibility, fantasies, gender, race, professionalism, etc.) contained in the piece, and critique this portrayal if you feel it merits critique.
- Draw connections to course readings or discussions.

This assignment will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. Students will sign up for presentation slots during the first class meeting.

Short paper 1: Conditions of teaching today

Following our discussions and readings from the first three class meetings, please discuss current-day tensions in the teaching profession and how these represent continuity with or divergence from the conditions of teaching described in “classic” pieces on the topic. In this short paper, please draw at least two connections between current day and “classic” conditions of teaching. This paper should be three to five pages long, and should present a clear thesis statement based on your analysis. Grading criteria for this paper are:

- Thesis statement is present and makes an original argument based on the material you have analyzed (3 points)
- Presence of at least two clear connections between current-day tensions in the teaching profession and earlier renditions of the conditions of teaching (5 points)
- Quality of writing: Clear, concise language, thematically-organized paragraphs, and evidence of proofreading for grammar, spelling and punctuation (2 points)

This paper is worth 10% of your grade and is due on Sunday, February 1, 6:00 p.m.
Short paper 2: Status of teachers in comparison to other professions

This paper builds upon the frequent observations made by my students and others that teaching as a profession is compared, often unfavorably, to other professions. This assignment asks you to develop these comparisons in greater detail to see what they tell you (and the rest of your colleagues in class!). Using Ingersoll and Merrill’s “The status of teaching as a profession” as your foundation, please use their classic indicators of a profession’s status (listed at the bottom of page 186) as a guide to compare teaching with one other profession of your choice. Choose 2 indicators (from the list of credentials; induction programs for entrants; professional development support, opportunities and participation; specialization; authority over decision making; compensation levels; and prestige and occupational social standing), and use those indicators to compare the profession of teaching to your other chosen profession. This endeavor will require you to do a bit of research on both the teaching profession and your comparison profession. This is a short paper, so I do not expect extensive research, but do expect you to ground your claims in empirical evidence (e.g., certification standards, average incomes, professional development requirements, nature and membership of regulating bodies). Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria:

- Thesis statement is present and makes an original argument based on the material you have analyzed (3 points).
- Ingersoll and Merrill criteria are listed and defined (1 point).
- Comparison of professions and claims related to this comparison are grounded in empirical evidence (4 points).
- Quality of writing: Clear, concise language, thematically-organized paragraphs, and evidence of proofreading for grammar, spelling and punctuation (2 points)

This paper is worth 10% of your grade and is due on Sunday, February 22 at 6:00 p.m.

Major Research Paper

Given that I have structured the class around selected readings, the research paper assignment gives students the opportunity to choose and investigate a topic of interest to them. I strongly encourage you to consider how this paper can help you to advance your own intellectual and professional agenda. What are you interested in exploring in your program? What issues and interests brought you here (to your program, or this course) in the first place? What kinds of issues do you want to explore in your master’s thesis, qualifying exams, or doctoral dissertation? How can you configure this paper as an opportunity to examine some part of this larger agenda, in a way that will move your thinking or your professional goals forward? I am open to any topic related to the sociology of teaching. Some options include (but are not limited to) a structured literature review on a specific topic, a history of a particular issue, policy or problem related to teaching, the analysis of a contemporary issue related to teaching, or the analysis of existing data related to teachers (e.g. public use data). Whatever topic you choose, your paper will need to synthesize and analyze data, and present an explicit and coherent argument that flows through and structures the paper. A rubric for the evaluation of this paper follows at the end of this syllabus.

This assignment will proceed through the semester in stages, giving you multiple opportunities for instructor feedback as you develop your project and work towards your final project, a paper approximately 20-25 pages in length (double-spaced, using 12 point font and 1 inch margins, excluding references).
First, please prepare a paper topic proposal (1-2 pages). This is due on Sunday, February 15 at 6:00 pm. In this proposal, describe the topic you want to investigate, the literature and/or data you anticipate using in your research, and why this topic is important to study. I realize all too well the pain of having to explain your topic’s importance, and ask you to engage in this exercise on purpose. Why should you spend most of your semester researching this topic? Why does it matter now? To whom does it matter? Whom might your findings help? Does your proposed topic aim to fill any gaps in research literature? As with all assignments in this course, please feel free to contact me if you have questions or encounter challenges in writing this proposal. This assignment will be graded on a pass/revise basis. If you do not present sufficient information as requested in this proposal, I will ask you to revise and add to your original proposal. I will give you written feedback on your proposal and we will discuss your proposal and your subsequent work on it in our mid-semester consultation (held in late February and early March).

Second, one month after your paper topic proposals, I ask that you send me a preliminary bibliography for your paper on Sunday, March 15 by 6:00 pm. While I do not expect you to have absolutely concluded your research by this date, I do expect you to have identified key resources that you will use for your paper. Please ensure that you conduct thorough literature searches by not only conducting a quick search using ERIC, JSTOR or another search engine. You should also identify key articles related to your topic, then look at who that author cites, as well as what other authors have cited that article/text since it was published. For this assignment, I am looking for a well-developed reference list that shows effort to know your topic well. This paper is worth 7.5% of your course grade. I will assign up to 7.5 points for this assignment based on the extent to which this reference list is well-developed and shows evidence of effort to deeply research your chosen topic. Along with your reference list, feel free to include any questions or requests for guidance that you have for meat this point in your research, and I will respond to them in my feedback.

Third, 2/12 months into our course, please submit an introduction section for your research paper on Thursday, 4/2, by 6:00 pm. This section should be from 1 to 3 pages long, double-spaced. It should present the argument that you will develop in your final paper, the rationale for studying this topic now, an overview of the literature and/or data you will use for your paper, and a plan for the paper (first, I will consider. . . then, I will examine. . . Finally, I will. . . ). This assignment is worth 12.5 percent of your course grade. I will assign points for this assignment based on the extent to which you present a clear thesis argument for the longer research paper you will write (5.5 points), concisely situate your topic in relevant issues (present and/or historical) and literature (3 points), present a plan for the paper (2 points), and write in a fashion that is clear and well-organized (2 points). Clearly, a lot is packed into this short assignment; that is the idea. I want you to spend time just focusing on the beginning portion of your paper and laying out what you will do. My hope is that this endeavor will set you up to write a well-organized, coherent paper. I do not expect you to leave this statement unchanged in your final paper. Turning in a draft gives you an opportunity to receive my feedback, which you will hopefully incorporate as you work towards your final product.

Finally, the paper! All students may, if they choose to, turn in an optional first draft of the paper. In order for me to thoroughly read and respond to these first drafts in time for students to make use of my feedback, I need to receive them no later than April 12. I will return first drafts to students, with my comments, by April 20. Papers that go through multiple drafts tend to be stronger, but aside from this, I will not award any “brownie points” for students who submit a first draft. I will assign a grade for any
drafts turned in. You can elect whether to keep this grade as your final paper grade, or can revise your paper according to any suggestions I might give. Because there is a quick turnaround between submitting a paper, my grading it, and your revising it to turn it in as a final draft, I cannot accept first draft papers submitted after April 12. Your final draft of your research paper is due Tuesday, April 28 at 10 pm. I will use a rubric to evaluate this final paper. That rubric follows at the very end of this syllabus. I will send you a full set of comments by email after I have evaluated your paper.

About written assignments

Paper length
Please adhere to the stated page length requirements (which do not include reference lists). Pages should be double-spaced with a 12-point font and 1-inch margins. I reserve the right to not grade material that exceeds the stated maximum length.

Reference lists and citation
Please prepare reference lists for all written assignments where you cite other published work. Please follow your academic discipline’s format for in-text citations and reference lists. In the field of education, this is usually APA, but if you use another style (e.g., MLA), that is fine as well.

Submission of assignments
Please submit all written assignments directly to me via Sakai’s assignments page.

Due dates
As your instructor, I expect timely submission of assignments or clear, proactive communication if alternative arrangements are needed. If you need to extend an assignment date due to pressing circumstances, please contact me before the assignment is due and we will negotiate a workable date. If you do not make arrangements with me before the assignment’s due date, late assignments’ grades will be reduced by one-third of a grade (3 points) per day. Written assignments turned in on the due date, but after the due time, will be considered late.

Communication between instructor and students
In addition to updates I may give verbally in class, I will occasionally send updates to the class via email, using the LOCUS system and Sakai announcements. I will assume that if I have sent email updates to you at the address provided on LOCUS, and the email has not bounced back to me, that you have read it.

If you wish to reach me, the best way to do so is by my Loyola email address. I will respond within 48 hours between Monday and Friday.

Course Readings
The following assigned texts are available for purchase at the Loyola University Bookstore, Water Tower Campus (Baumhart Hall, 26 E. Pearson), and are also available on reserve at the Lewis Library (25 East Pearson, 6th floor).


Other readings are either available through the LUC libraries’ electronic course reserves (at http://libraries.luc.edu/, under “Find” and then “Course Reserves,” noted below in this syllabus as “Course reserves”), LUC’s Sakai site for this course (noted below as “Sakai”), or, where readings are accessible on the internet, I have provided a searchable link. Books that are required are also on reserve at Lewis Library. All assigned readings are listed below by the week in which they are assigned.

Class meetings

Class 1, January 20
Course introduction and overview, classic literature on the conditions of teaching


Lortie, D. (1975/2002). Schoolteacher: A sociological study. (Chapter 1, 2, 3 (p. 1-81) and 6 (p. 132-161).

Class 2, January 27
Contemporary conditions of teaching; demonstration of and sign up for media coverage assignment

Ingersoll, 136-189.


Recommended reading (discussion will not be planned around these other related readings):


Sunday, February 1, 6:00 p.m.: Short Paper 1 Due (please submit via Sakai)

Class 3, February 3
Teacher professionalism and status: Who sets agenda for teachers’ training and work?
Ingersoll, 66-135.

Ingersoll and Merrill (2012). The status of teaching as a profession. In Ballatnine and Spade (eds.), Schools and society (4th ed.). Accessible online at http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1226&context=gse_pubs.


Recommended reading:

Class 4, February 10
Teacher unions


Recommended reading:

Sunday, February 15, 6:00 pm, paper topics due (please submit to Sakai)

Class 5, February 17
New teachers: Where the conditions of teaching meet teacher training and professional status


Sunday, February 22, 6:00 p.m.: Short Paper 2 Due (please submit via Sakai)
Class 6, February 24
Teachers and the media


DeRogatis, J. (2012). Chicago teachers rock. WBEZ website, accessible at http://www.wbez.org/blogs/jim-derogatis/2012-09/chicago-teachers-rock-102377Please read story and also read story you will reach by clicking on the link in the story that reads, “A particularly anti-labor editorial in yesterday’s Tribune made the city's real agenda here crystal clear.”


No class March 3—Spring break!

Class 7, March 10
Gender and teaching


Sunday, March 15, 6:00 pm: Preliminary bibliography for major research paper is due (Please submit via Sakai)
Class 8, March 17
Race, ethnicity, social class and teaching


Recommended, related readings:

Class 9, March 24
Teaching and emotions

Hochschild, pages 1-23, 35-75, and 89-136


Recommended:

**Class 10, March 31**

Teacher turnover and retention


Recommended reading (overview of earlier teacher attrition research):

**Thursday, April 2, 6 pm (right before LUC Easter Break): Paper introduction due (Please submit via Sakai.)**

**Class 11, April 7**

Teachers together: Collective efficacy, professional learning communities and teacher social networks


Sunday, 4/12, 6:00 pm: Optional first draft of research paper due (Please submit via Sakai).

**Class 12, April 14**
Teacher effects on student learning, value-added methodology


**Class 13, April 21**
Expanding/redefining the teacher role; Course summary and evaluations


Major research paper due on Tuesday, April 28 at 10:00 p.m. (Please submit via Turnitin).

Rubric for grading major research paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Possible Points (Out of 100)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argument clarity and coherence: Argument is clearly stated and builds throughout the paper in a fashion that is steady, well-developed and easy to follow.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument and claims are substantiated with credible evidence.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper reflects thorough efforts to gather and analyze relevant evidence</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic and resources used connect clearly to the sociology of teaching, either by considering teaching at the profession level, considering the social conditions of teaching, or by engaging material related to course themes.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing is clear and easy to understand, even if concepts communicated are complex.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper is well-organized, and is broken into sections that mirror the procession of the author’s argument.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions of writing are followed (spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation).</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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University policies regarding this course

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. The School of Education’s Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml). For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml)

Please also note that all papers for this class are submitted to Sakai, which uses Turnitin software to conduct an originality analysis. In this analysis, your work will be compared to other papers and publications in its repository, including past papers for this class, other papers submitted via Turnitin, and other electronic publications (including but not limited to electronically available books and journals). If you have any questions about proper citation of others’ work, please let me know.
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/

EthicsLine Reporting Hotline
Loyola University Chicago has implemented EthicsLine Reporting Hotline, through a third party internet & telephone hotline provider, to provide you with an automated and anonymous way to report activities that may involve misconduct or violations of Loyola University policy. You may file an anonymous report here on-line or by dialing 855-603-6988. (within the United States, Guam, and Puerto Rico)

The University is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct as an integral part of its mission of expanding knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith. To achieve this goal, the University relies on each community member's ethical behavior, honesty, integrity and good judgment. Each community member should demonstrate respect for the rights of others.
www.luc.edu/ethicsline

Technology
Internet access and enrollment in LUC’s LOCUS and Sakai systems is required for this course. I will communicate with students occasionally via these systems, which sends emails to all students enrolled in this course. All documents (including the syllabus, power point presentations, and additional texts) are posted on this course’s Sakai page. Occasional communication using online formats may be used during the semester.

Electronic Communication Policies and Guidelines
The School of Education faculty, students and staff respect each other’s rights, privacy and access to electronic resources, services, and communications while in the pursuit of academic and professional growth, networking and research. All members of the university community are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, communication, and responsibility while accessing and utilizing technology, information resources, and computing facilities. A link to the Loyola University Chicago and School of Education official policies and guidelines can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Cyberbullying_Policy.pdf http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Netiquette_Guidelines.pdf

Diversity
This course addresses diversity in the profession and practice of teaching through many of its assigned readings. In addition, I as instructor will encourage class members to include notions of diversity (e.g., social class, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual and gender identity, and age) as we consider different topics. Diversity among enrollees in the course is critical to this course’s success. As instructor, I will promote full participation and contribution by all class members, asking that varied viewpoints be thoroughly considered and respected by all members of our class.