Course Introduction
Why do we have an “achievement gap” between students from different communities, racial and ethnic groups, and social class groups? What leads people to such heated disagreement about curricula that children are taught in K-12 schools? How have we arrived at a point where children compete against one another for admission to public schools? Do teachers have a legitimate claim to retirement pension and protection from layoffs in a time when our entire society grapples with economic strain? What makes it so hard to bring about change in schools when so many people believe that change is necessary? How can there be so many explanations for what ails (and helps) schools’ efforts to teach their students?

Questions like this drive this course and the inquiry that we will do together this semester. Just as practicing sociologists of education do, we will use sociological lenses—those provided by research and theory from the academic disciplines of sociology, the sociology of education (a subdiscipline of sociology) and organizational theory—in our efforts to answer such questions. There is rarely one “correct” answer, but rather varying answers that are informed by particular perspectives, data, methods of analysis, and theory.

Essential Questions
As the instructor, I assume that each student brings their own questions to this course and that each student will pursue answers to those very individual questions. I invite you to take in all that you can in this course and make use of it in ways that help you to get answers to, or further develop, your own questions. In addition, the following specific questions (to which I refer as “essential questions”) will guide our inquiry this semester:

1) What do societies want from their schools?
2) How do different sociological lenses on education explain what works (and doesn’t work) in American schools, and how?
3) What role do social forces outside of schools have in student learning experiences and outcomes?
4) What kinds of relationships can we observe between society, schools, teachers and students, and what impact do these relationships have on students’ experiences in school?
5) Who gets ahead or falls behind in our schools, and by what mechanisms?
6) How can we change schools? What preserves stability in schools?

Course Goals
As your instructor, I want for all of the course’s students to be able to engage sociology of education (or related) literature in order to answer their own questions as well as this course’s essential questions. In order to meet this overarching goal, there are three more specific goals of the course:

1. Students will learn fundamental principles and theories from the sociology of education perspective that will help them analyze, understand and formulate responses to different situations, problems and dilemmas present in K-12 schools. Our pursuit of this goal will have students bridging together theory and various forms of evidence (such as empirical research, policies, practices and events in the world of education), and responding from this basis.
2. Students will use theory and empirical research from the sociology of education perspective to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view present in historical and contemporary discourse about K-12 schools. Our pursuit of this goal will have us working on identifying and expressing texts’ key arguments and findings, research questions and analytic methods, and critically analyzing texts accordingly.

Assessment of learning
Assessment of students’ learning will be ongoing throughout the semester. Assignments are spread out timewise and there is no high-stakes final assignment (e.g., major research paper or final exam). I chose this assignment structure for three purposes. First, given our course’s essential questions and goals, breadth of knowledge is important. I ask students to reflect on and respond to a variety of issues and readings—not just a final assignment topic—as they move through the semester. Second, the assignment structure is an attempt to balance against the substantial, and occasionally quite heavy, load of assigned reading. I hope that students will focus on reading and responding to assigned material, without the added pressure of a large final assignment. Third, a series of assignments (along with in-class activities) helps me as the instructor to gauge how the course is going for the students and adjust it if needed to better suit students’ strengths, needs or interests.

Your course grade will be calculated on a 100-point scale as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D+  67-69
D    63-66
D-   60-62
F    59 and below

I will use the following criteria for determining your course grade:

Class Attendance: 13%
Class Participation: 7%
Critical Memos:
• 15% for Critical Memo 1
• 17% for Critical Memo 2
• 20% for Critical Memo 3
• 21% for Critical Memo 4
Final Integrative Essay: 7%

Each component of students’ responsibilities in the course is described below.

**Class Participation and Attendance**

This is a highly interactive course, which makes every student’s participation very important. For this reason, participation is worth 20% of your final grade. Specifically, attendance at class each week counts towards 13% of your final grade (1% per class meeting), while active participation in class discussions counts towards 7% of your final grade.

Please arrive on time to class, having read and brought to class 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 assigned texts 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 group.

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., surfing the internet, checking and/or deleting email, text messaging, typing other than taking notes) does not pertain directly to your participation in our course; use of electronics in these ways will negatively impact your course participation grade.

Online class meetings will blend independent work using material that students will be able to access via Sakai with shared conversations where all class members will join together in an online class format (during our regularly scheduled class time). During these weeks in particular, please check your email regularly for communications from me and/or from colleagues with whom you are collaborating. Participation in these sessions will be evaluated by the quality of comments made and completion of all tasks assigned during online sessions (or by the designated due date).
To fully participate in online class discussions, you will need headphones with a microphone function (most headphones for use with a cell phone are adequate). Without these, you will not be able to take part in online breakout groups, which are an important part of building knowledge together in our class. Please purchase and test headphones if necessary before the first online class session (9/5). Headphones are also available for checkout via LUC Libraries.

**Critical Memos**

Students are assigned a series of 4 critical memos, each of which should be 3-5 double-spaced pages in length (not including references), using 12 point font and 1” margins. Please post a copy of each memo to the corresponding assignment section of this course’s Sakai site on the assignment’s due date by the time at which it is due. Please name the files you submit using your last name and the assignment name, for example: “Phillippo.Memo1.docx”

These memos serve as the main vehicle for developing students’ abilities as described in the course’s goals. Each memo should consist of 3 key parts: summary, application of concepts or theories, and your critical evaluation. First, you will need to summarize the source material (whether an author’s argument, a policy or practice, depending on the assignment and the material you are using), that you discuss in your memo. Please summarize your source material briefly, describing its main argument(s), central point(s), and/or issues that directly pertain to your memo. This summary should concisely orient the reader to the material you are considering in this paper. It should be a minor part of your paper compared to the other components (from 2 paragraphs to 1 page at the very most).

Second, once you have clearly and succinctly summarized the materials to which you refer in this memo, please apply your chosen concepts, theories or perspectives to the issue you wish to discuss. How do these help you to interpret and understand your chosen material? What can you see in this material through the lens that these concepts, theories or perspectives provide? Interesting issues or opportunities? Obvious contradictions or problems? A good or poor fit? An opportunity to extend or challenge the concept or theory? A hidden solution?

Third, and most important, is your critical analysis of the written material that you cite. This part of your memo builds upon the application of concepts and theories as discussed above. In this analysis, please express your own analysis of and reaction to the work. It is fine to say that you liked or disliked what you read, but that is not sufficient for the critical memo assignments. Please also offer your own analysis and critique of what you have read based on the perspectives you have gained through steps 1 and 2 of this assignment. Please cite all of your sources in APA style at the end of your memo.

I will grade your memos according to the presence and quality of the three components discussed above (summary: 20%; application of perspectives, concepts or theories: 30%; and critical evaluation, 30%). In addition, I will also evaluate the strength of your writing, including organization, clarity and conventions of writing (e.g., spelling, grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation), worth 20% of each memo’s grade. The rubric I will use for evaluating your assignments follows below.

**Critical memo grading rubric**
Summary of content texts: Author provides a clear, concise summary of any source material or content (as opposed to theoretical or conceptual) texts that are discussed in the memo, so that the reader can understand any content that is analyzed in the paper. 20%

Application of perspectives, concepts and/or theories: Author clearly describes perspectives, concepts and/or theories used in paper, and applies them explicitly and thoroughly to the content text. 30%

Critical evaluation of material: Evidence of original analysis. Evidence is present of author’s original analysis and critique of materials read. Critical evaluation is connected to author’s application of perspectives, concepts and/or theories. 15%

Critical evaluation of material: Author’s argument coherently flows from beginning to end of paper in a fashion that is cumulative, well-developed and easy to follow. All arguments are substantiated with credible evidence. 15%

Writing is clear, and easy to understand, even if concepts communicated are complex; Memo is effectively organized and includes a thesis statement at the memo’s beginning. Author follows conventions of writing (spelling, grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation, APA style). 20%

My goal is to return your essay to you, with feedback, within two weeks. Students have the option of revising and resubmitting each critical memo. Revisions are due one week after the date on which I return papers (with my feedback) to students. Extensions to revision due dates are not available. I will evaluate your original papers using the “track changes” function in Microsoft Word. Please make revisions to the copy I return to you, so that I can see in track changes how and where you have revised your original paper. I will not be able to grade revisions that are not submitted in this format. While revision is never required and does not guarantee a higher grade, it is a chance for you to incorporate feedback into the development and improvement of your work.

Critical memo topics are:

1. Schooling in American society. How does contemporary American schooling reflect society’s values or priorities? Please analyze and discuss the example of Bari Academy, which is available on the course Sakai site. If you prefer, you may analyze another specific statement, school, policy or program, current-day or historical, of your choice. If you choose a different case to evaluate, please consult with me about your choice prior to beginning work on the assignment. Please evaluate your material according to our course readings on what nations and societies want and get from their schools. What is the rationale given for the actions or programs proposed? What would the authors we have read so far say in response, if they could? Critical memo 1 is due on Sunday, 9/17 at 7:00 p.m.

2. Theory-driven analysis of contemporary schooling. Please analyze Urban College Academy for this memo. UCA’s description is posted on Sakai. In your analysis, please apply 2 theoretical perspectives from the following list: Functional Theory, Conflict Theory, Social Capital Theory and Cultural Capital Theory. In your memo, please
address the following: 1) How would your selected perspectives help to explain UCA (for example, its approach, its effectiveness, its shortcomings) as it is described in the text? And, b) How do these perspectives compare and contrast with one another, and which—if either—do you find most useful in understanding students’ experiences at the school? Critical Memo 2 is due on Friday, October 6 at 7:00 p.m.

3. Ability grouping. What is your position on grouping students by perceived ability (within class or between classes)? When developing and describing your position, please consider what you have learned in this class about what America wants from its public schools, how school organization shapes teaching and learning, and how social, cultural and economic status shapes students’ learning experiences and outcomes. Please cite evidence to back up your argument. Please also post this paper to LiveText, as per directions below (in the section entitled “School of Education Conceptual Framework Standards and Assessment”). Critical Memo 3 is due Monday, November 20 at 7 pm.

4. Policy intention and impact analysis. Please choose and briefly describe an educational policy (contemporary or historical). Please describe how and why this policy came into existence, its stated intentions, whom it targets for change, and who is responsible for carrying it out (this is the “summary” part of this particular memo). Then, please analyze how it’s been implemented—how has it shaped teaching, learning or other school-related experiences? To borrow David Labaree’s idea, how usable has this policy been? How, if at all, have national or local context impacted this policy’s implementation? What outcomes have occurred (intentional and unintentional)? How stable has it been, what has changed it? (These are the lenses you can use to analyze your selected policy). Finally, informed by the preceding sections of this memo, please discuss the extent to which you feel that this policy was effective (this is the original critique part of your assignment). Critical memo 4 is due at 7:00 pm on Friday, December 8.

Please submit all critical memos using the Turnitin link on this course’s Sakai page.

**Final integrative essay**

This 3-5 page paper assignment asks students to integrate what they have learned in this course into their research and/or professional practice. For this assignment, please reflect upon and discuss ways in which this course has impacted your understanding of 1) yourself as a member of American society and as education professional, 2) the communities you work with or hope to work with in a professional capacity, and 3) education policy that shapes heterogeneous stakeholders (e.g., students, educators, community members, community and national leaders). What did you think or do at the beginning of this course, and how has your thinking/action changed (expanded, shifted, reversed, deepened)? What do these changes signal for your practice and/or research as you move forward in your education?

Please cite at least 3 specific readings or concepts discussed in the course, and explain specifically how they connect to your experience.

This assignment is worth 7% of your grade, and will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.
Please post the integrative essay to its corresponding section on this course’s Sakai page. It is due on Tuesday, December 12 at 9 am. Please also post this paper to LiveText, as per directions below (in the section entitled “School of Education Conceptual Framework Standards and Assessment”).

**Written assignments and due dates**
If you have extenuating circumstances that keep you from turning in assignments in by their due dates, it is your responsibility to contact me before the paper’s due date to make alternative arrangements with me. After each written assignments’ due date and time, the assignment grade for a paper turned in late without previous arrangement will be reduced by three points (on a 100 point scale) per day. Written assignments turned in on the due date, but after the due time, will be considered late.

**Assessment according to School of Education Conceptual Framework Standards**
This course, as part of the School of Education, has assignments that map directly to standards that derive from the school’s conceptual framework (Social Action through Education). Students’ work will be evaluated according to these standards, in addition to the grade assigned.

Your Final Integrative Essay will be assessed according to Conceptual Framework standard 2, which states that “Candidates apply culturally responsive practices that engage diverse communities.”

As the course instructor, I will assess this according to this standard. Results are reported on Livetext, to which the SOE requires all degree-seeking students to subscribe. Students are required to post the Final Integrative Essay to Livetext, in addition to submitting it via Sakai. Instructions for posting your assignments to Livetext are posted on the “Assignments” section of our course’s Sakai page. Please contact me if you have any questions about this.

**Communication between instructor and students**
In addition to updates I may give verbally in class, I will occasionally send electronic updates to the class using the Sakai system. I will assume that if I have sent any updates to you at the address you have provided to the university, and the email has not bounced back to me, that you have read it and that I may hold you accountable for understanding these updates’ contents. 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).

ISBN-10: 0804782474


In class-by-class reading assignments, I denote readings from these texts with (T) after their listing. Other readings will be posted on LUC’s Sakai site for this course (noted as S) or, where readings are accessible on the internet, I have provided a searchable link. Some links are updated by their webhost; if you find a weblink that no longer works please let me know as soon as possible. All assigned readings are listed below by the week in which they are assigned.

Class meeting dates, themes and assigned readings

Class 1: August 29. Class will meet face to face.
Introduction to course: purpose, focus, goals and logistics

Required reading:

Brint, Schools and societies, chapter 1, particularly pages 20-29 (T)

Labaree, Someone has to fail, Introduction. (T)


Class 2: September 5. Class will meet online.
Sociological perspectives on education. What do societies want (and get) from their schools? Discussion of macro-perspective.

Brint, chapters 2 and 3 (32-105) (T)


In class on 9/5 we will discuss the format and requirements for your first critical memo.

Class 3: September 12. Class will meet face to face.

What does America want (and get) from its schools?

Labaree: Chapters 1, 2 and 3 (10-105). (T)


Critical memo #1 is due Sunday, September 17 at 7:00 pm.

Class 4: September 19. Class will meet online.

From Sadovnik and Coughlan text, Chapters 2 (Durkheim, On education and society, p. 23-36), 3 (Collins, Functional and conflict theories of educational stratification, p. 37-52) and 4 (Bowles & Gintis, Broken promises: School reform in retrospect, p. 53-70), see also pages 3-8 for an overview by Sadovnik. (T)

Brint, Chapter 4 (150-185) (T)

Class 5: September 26. Class will meet face to face.
Finish traditions in the sociology of education: Social and cultural capital and their manifestation as privilege in educational settings; Begin consideration of schools from a meso-level perspective. Social and cultural capital theories.

From Sadovnik and Coughlan text: Chapters 6 (Bourdieu, The forms of capital, p. 83-96), and 7 (Coleman, Social capital in the creation of human capital, p. 97-114). (T)

Khan, pages 1-17, 77-80, 96-113, 151-192 and 193-199. (T)


Lewis, Chapter 6 (154-187)(S)

Critical Memo 2 is due Friday, October 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Class 6: October 3. Class will meet face to face.
The society-school-student connection: Schools and Communities. How factors outside of the school impact what happens inside of the school.


Ushomirsky, N. & Williams, D. (2015). Funding gaps 2015: Too many states still spend less on education for students who need the most. Washington, D.C.: The Education Trust. Accessible online at: https://edtrust.org/resource/funding-gaps-2015/ (Click on article title link on this page and it will download.)


Chapter 5 from Putnam (190-226, skim case vignettes on pages 193-206). (T)

From Sadovnik and Coughlan text: Berliner, D.

*No class 10/10. Have a fabulous fall break!*

*Class 7: October 17. Class will meet online.*
The society-school-student connection: Schools and districts as organizations, consideration of schools from a meso-level perspective.


From Sadovnik text: Chapter 10 (Gamoran, Secada and Marrett, The organizational context of teaching and learning: Changing theoretical perspectives, p. 155-178.) (T)


*Class 8: October 24. Class will meet face to face.*
The society-school-student connection: Schools and teachers. What kind of relationships can we identify between society, schools and teachers? What do these relationships’ qualities tell us about the role of teachers in our society? How do schools influence teachers’ practice? How do these relationships effect student learning?

From Labaree: Chapter 5 (p. 134-162) (T)

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](http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1226&context=gse_pubs).

From Sadovnik & Coughlan, Chapter 11 (Ingersoll, Is there really a teaching shortage? p. 179-196.) (T)


**Class 9: October 31. Class will meet face to face.**
The society-school-student connection: Schools and students
How do schools shape students? How do students shape schools? How do a school’s organizational and social contexts set the stage for these interactions?


Phillippo, K. & Griffin, B. (2016). “If you don’t score high enough, then that’s your fault”: Student civic dispositions in the context of competitive school choice. *Journal of Critical Education Policy Studies, 14*(2), 67-95. Accessible online at: http://ecommons.luc.edu/education_facpubs/96/

Morris, E. W., & Perry, B. L. (2016). The punishment gap: School suspension and racial disparities in achievement. *Social Problems, 63*(1), 68-86. (S)


**Class 10: November 7. Class will meet online.**
Who gets ahead or falls behind in our schools, and by what mechanisms? Ethnicity, gender, culture, income and educational achievement.

Putnam, chapters 1 (19-45), 3 (80-134) and 4 (135-190). Character vignettes can be skimmed. (T)

Lewis chapter 5 (128-153). (T)

Brint, pages 203-254. (T)

**Class 11: November 14. Class will meet face to face**
Who gets ahead or falls behind in our schools, and by what mechanisms? Focused exploration of tracking and ability grouping.
During class 11, we will be joined by Dr. Carrie Levy, LUC/SOE graduate and Senior Research Associate at Evanston Township High School, to discuss her experience researching and addressing tracking issues at ETHS. Please note that 1-3 short additional readings on ETHS’ detracking initiative may be assigned for this week.

Brint, p. 254-268 (T)


From Sadovnik and Coughlan: Chapter 12 (Hallinan and Oakes exchange about tracking, p. 197-209). (T)

Parsons, E. (2016). Does attending a low-achieving school affect high-performing student outcomes? Teachers College Record, 118(8), 1-36. (S)

Please read one of the two following articles:


Critical Memo 3 due Monday, November 20 at 7 pm.

No class Tuesday, November 21. Have a fabulous Thanksgiving holiday!

Class 12: November 28. Class will meet online.
Why schools change (and don’t change). What maintains stability in schooling? What brings change?

Tyack, D. and Cuban, L. (1995). Tinkering Toward Utopia. Chapter 2 (pp. 40-59, Chapter 3 (pp. 60-84), Chapter 4, (pp. 85-109). (T)


Class 13: December 4—Final class meeting. Class will meet face to face.
Continue discussion of stability and change in schooling, with a focus on education policy in response to inequity; Review, conclusions, preparation for integrative essay, course evaluations.

Labaree text: Chapters 4 (106-133) and 8 (222-256) (T)

Darling-Hammond, L. (2013). Inequality and school resources: What it will take to close the opportunity gap. In P. Carter and K. Welner (Eds.), Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give every child an even chance (77-97). New York, NY: Oxford Press. (S)

Putnam, chapter 6 (227-261). (T)

Marsh, J. A. (2016). The Political Dynamics of District Reform: The Form and Fate of the Los Angeles Public School Choice Initiative. Teachers College Record, 118(9), 1-37. (S)

Critical memo 4 is due at 7:00 pm on Friday, December 8.

Final Integrative Essay due at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 12.

School of Education and University Policies Related to Course

Please see www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/, a link that directs students to statements on essential policies regarding academic honesty, accessibility, ethics line reporting and electronic communication policies and guidelines. We ask that you read each policy carefully. This link will also bring you to the full text of our conceptual framework that guides the work of the School of Education – Social Action through Education.

School of Education Conceptual Framework
The School of Education’s Conceptual Framework—Social Action through Education—is woven throughout this course. My goal as your instructor is to help students use the tools presented by sociologists of education towards social action, be it through research, school-based practice, or community-based work in the interest of students, families and schools.

Diversity
This course explicitly addresses diversity in the field of education through nearly all of its assigned readings. In addition, I as instructor will encourage class members to engage notions of diversity (e.g., social class, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual and gender identity, age, ability, political and professional backgrounds) as we consider different topics. Diversity among enrollees in the course is one of its strengths, critical to this course’s success. As instructor, I will promote full participation and contribution by all class members, asking that varied viewpoints be expressed, thoroughly considered and respected by all members of our class.

Academic Honesty
In addition to University policies on academic honesty, please also note that all written assignments for this course are to be submitted via Turnitin on Sakai. As a result, each of your papers will be assessed electronically for originality (comparing it to other papers submitted for this course, and available internet resources, including Wikipedia, academic and popular press articles, and other electronic texts). If you have any questions about properly citing and using other resources, please let me know.

IDEA Course Evaluation Link for Students
Each course you take in the School of Education is evaluated through the IDEA Campus Labs system. We ask that when you receive an email alerting you that the evaluation is available that you promptly complete it. To learn more about IDEA or to access the website directly to complete your course evaluation go to: http://luc.edu/idea/ and click on STUDENT IDEA LOGIN on the left hand side of the page.

CEPS Program Objectives
This course also aims to advance the mission of the Cultural and Educational Policy Studies (CEPS) program at Loyola University Chicago, which seeks to provide a multi-disciplinary examination of education policy and practice with an overarching emphasis on social justice. Toward this end, this particular course advances the preparation of students to meet the following program outcomes:

• CEPS graduates apply disciplinary (humanities, social science) perspectives to issues and questions in educational policy and practice.
• CEPS graduates critically assess the methodological, epistemological & ethical foundations of research.
• CEPS graduates possess an independent and specific area of expertise.
• CEPS graduates critically assess the methodological, epistemological and ethical foundations of research.

Dispositions
All SOE students are assessed on one or more dispositional areas of growth across our programs: Professionalism, Inquiry, and Social Justice. The instructor in your course will identify the dispositions assessed in this course and you can find the rubrics related to these dispositions in LiveText. For those students in non-degree programs, the rubric for dispositions may be available through Sakai, TaskStream or another platform. Disposition data is reviewed by program faculty on a regular basis. This allows faculty to work with students to develop throughout their program and address any issues as they arise.

LiveText
All students, except those who are non-degree, must have access to LiveText to complete the benchmark assessments aligned to the Conceptual Framework Standards and all other accreditation, school-wide and/or program-wide related assessments. You can access more information on LiveText here: LiveText