

Historical Perspectives on US Education

EDU 210/HIS 210

Fall 2021

Instructor: Prof. Deborah Michaels

Class: T: 10-11:50, Th 10-10:50 am

Office hours: M 3-5pm or by appt

Office hour sign-up: <https://calendly.com/profmichaels>

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Classroom HSSC N2110

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Course Description

Why has the educational system in the U.S. failed to fulfill the promise of providing all people equal access to high quality schooling? We will explore in this course the historical reasons for supporting public schools and investigate how these economic, political, social, and ethical agendas have played out over time in the U.S. Three sets of overarching questions will guide our inquiry: (1) *Whose interests* should schools serve and whose interests have schools served in the past? (2) What should be included in our basic school *curriculum*, and how does that ideal compare with the curricular choices of the past? (3) What *structures of school organization* have we inherited from past generations, why were schools established in these ways, and what is the impact of these organizational choices on our current educational system?

This course will have implications for school reform by uncovering how oppressive ideologies are embedded in the structures and everyday practices of schooling, while also touching upon liberating alternatives. To disrupt the European-American narrative of the history of US education, we will look in depth at dimensions of Black and Native American education in this country. This choice inevitably limits time for exploring US education for other minoritized groups. However, you will have the opportunity to investigate and present to the class research of interest to you through your current event memos and your final project, thus expanding the scope of this course through your own contributions.

Required Texts

(in order of reading schedule)

Urban, Wayne J., and Jennings L. Wagoner. 2013. *American education: a history*. Available as an [ebook](#)

Lomawaima, K. Tsianina, and T. L. McCarty. "To Remain an Indian": Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education . New York: Teachers College Press, 2006.

Danns, Dionne, Michelle A. Purdy, and Christopher M. Span. Using Past as Prologue : Contemporary Perspectives on African American Educational History. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2015.

Other required readings are available on PWeb.

Please bring to class printed or electronic copies and your notes on those readings.

Course Learning Goals

In this course, you will learn to:

- Describe and analyze some of the perennial challenges that public schools face and how those challenges have often arisen out of beliefs about the purposes of schooling.
- Interrogate how your own schooling experiences have been shaped by past and current conceptions of “public interest,” informed by ideologies such as democracy, capitalism, racism, sexism, classism, gender bias, etc.
- Learn how to contextualize and interpret primary documents in line with basic tenets of historical research.
- Develop historical skills to contextualize and interpret past practices and artifacts in schooling.
- Take informed positions on proposed school reforms and their likelihood of fulfilling the promise of public education based on historical data.

Assessments

1. Participation & Engagement (ongoing/integrated):

In this course, your voice and perspectives are central to our learning as a class community. We will engage in various forms of dialogue to challenge our understandings about schooling. To encourage participation for all kinds of learners, I regularly vary groupings in class, i.e. whole-class discussion, small-group, pairs, discussion boards, and individual quick writes. Peer reviews—providing written and oral feedback to your peers on their work—is another dimension of participation in our course.

Attendance. We can't engage with each other if we don't show up. Missing 7 classes or more usually results in failing the course. If you are experiencing chronic health issues or personal emergencies that are contributing to repeated (3 or more) absences, please communicate with me right away and collaborate with Student Services to request accommodations.

Pandemic Circumstances. Given the uncertain and changing circumstances of the pandemic, we each might have to switch to remote-learning at various points in the term. Please notify me if you need to attend class remotely due to a pandemic-related situation (e.g. family emergency, after testing positive for COVID-19). We can then have you attend class synchronously via my Virtual Office in WebEx or I will try to record classes for you and have you send an email thought response to classes. Attending classes remotely for documented reasons will not count as absences.

Note on Dialogue & Our Class Culture

I seek to foster with you a classroom in which we value each other's experiences and respond with civility and curiosity to each other's comments. Active listening means working to understand not just what someone is saying, but their viewpoint—i.e. why they are saying it—even if you disagree with their idea. To that end, I encourage you to ask follow-up or clarifying questions of your peers and me, to summarize what you understand someone else to be saying before you make a counterargument, and to disagree with ideas rather than people. When adding to a conversation, try to connect to what others have already said. What we strive for in the class is provocative discussion of ideas in an environment where everyone feels safe participating.

Questions are always welcome, not only perceived answers. In short, effective class dialogue is an exercise in inclusion and active listening. Invite others into the conversation.

Listen. Ask. Contribute.

Dilemmas of Gauging Engagement

As someone who struggled with public speaking, I feel you if your heart leaps into your throat at the thought of speaking up in class. Nonetheless, I still ask you to take the risk of speaking up and entering the dialogue. We need your voice: in our classroom, in the world. I'm happy to meet with you to talk about strategies for managing discomfort with public speaking. Another dilemma of gauging engagement is that if you regularly speak up in class but don't reference the readings/texts, I can't know that you have actually engaged with the texts. That doesn't mean that I want you to only speak to our course readings—in fact, I appreciate it when you bring your own experiences and outside readings into our class conversations. However, if you regularly don't show me that you've read and thought about our texts—through written notes, marginalia, or through speaking—I can't see that engagement. Unfortunately (actually, fortunately!), teachers are not mind readers: assessing student learning is about making (imperfectly) tangible students' understandings and growth.

2. Discussion Board Posts (25%)

Discussion Board posts (DBs) are an opportunity for you to show me how you are engaging with our course texts outside of class time. DBs render visible your thoughts on the texts and “prime the pump” for class discussion. **DBs are due at 11:59pm on Mondays on PWeb, and your responses to two peers' posts are due weekly on Fridays by 11:59pm.**

For DBs, I'll ask you to write: 1) a brief summary of a major argument or thesis (2-3 sentences) in the texts from that week, accompanied by 1 relevant quote from each text to evidence your theme/point. Include after each quote a simplified in-text citation (author, p. #); 2) the bulk of your DB should be one comprehension inquiry or critical inquiry based on the texts along with your thoughts on that question. By *comprehension inquiry* I mean something you didn't understand or would like to learn more about. It should *not* be something that can be easily discovered by quick web search. In contrast, a *critical inquiry* seeks to consider a main point in the texts or connect the texts to other readings/discussions from our course or other courses.

These inquiries + grappling with your question will take the form of a tentative dialogue. For example a comprehension question might look like this: “I looked up the term ‘social reproduction,’ and from the definitions I found, I believe [author X] means in their statement on page 68 that schools replicate socio-economic class status from one generation to the next. But I'm uncertain because they then write, ‘Schools are vehicles for positive social change’ on page 72.” In other words, ask questions of the texts and engage with your questions (see “Reading Critically” under “Course Policies” for more guidance). Use the “I” voice in DBs and focus on content more than on prose/style. Be prepared to share your questions with the class.

During the course of the semester, you can skip TWO days of DBs (post + responses to peers). If you do all the DBs, I will drop the two lowest scores.

3. Reading Room Analysis (10%)

We will spend class time doing historical research in the Reading Room in Burling (or remotely, depending on the pandemic). Referencing primary documents from the College's Special Collections, you will write an analysis of how these sources support, challenge, or complicate

themes from our class. I will provide you with a written guide to help you structure this activity. We will learn about and practice fundamental historical inquiry skills in these class sessions.

4. Current Events Memo (5%)

During the semester, we will take turns connecting historical themes in education to current events. These short assignments will help solidify how History of Education is relevant to schooling today. Early in the term, you will sign up for a week when you will be connecting a current event in education to a topic we are reading about in class that week. You will find two texts from reliable news sources on your topic (published between 2016-2021) and connect the topic to our course readings in a 1-page memo (approx. 300 words). You will then informally share your findings with the class to promote discussion.

4. Short Papers (20%)

You will write two short papers (500-600 words) in our course with the purpose of making a historical argument based on the synthesis of evidence across our course texts. No outside research is required for these papers.

5. Digital History Project (40%)

You will research an educational topic of interest to you, exploring both its historical antecedents and current impacts on education. You will create a web-based exhibit to present a historical argument using both written text and multiple visual artifacts. In the final weeks of the term, you will present your research to the class and foster a discussion that connects your project to course themes. These presentations will be an opportunity to broaden the scope of the course—not just for yourself, but for the elucidation of your peers and me—and to nourish your own curiosity.

Summary of Course Evaluation

1. <u>Participation & Engagement</u>	<u>Ongoing</u>
2. <u>Discussion Board Posts (DBs)</u>	<u>25%</u>
3. <u>Reading Room Analysis</u>	<u>10%</u>
4. <u>Short Papers (2)</u>	<u>20%</u>
5. <u>Current Events Memo</u>	<u>5%</u>
6. <u>Digital History Project</u>	<u>40%</u>

Course Policies & Tips

Taking Notes: Lectures are not the main source of learning in our class. For this reason, you may need to take notes differently than you are used to. Here are some suggestions:

- Take notes on your peers' comments. Have conversations with those ideas by writing your responses next to them in your notes.
- Take notes whenever we do an activity that pulls our discussions together.
- Keep a "Running Questions" list. Many ideas will get started during class but not necessarily brought to resolution. As we loop back to these ideas, you can add comments from yourself, from readings, and from peers.
- Make a point of going back over your notes routinely to make connections between the readings, your own experience, and observations from your peers.

Reading Critically: I define "reading critically" as engaging *with* a text in dialogue. I believe that the first step to critical reading is making an effort to understand why an author is saying what they are saying rather than simply dismissing their perspectives. If an author is rubbing you the wrong way, that's an excellent opportunity to ask why and to practice the art of "holding space" for ideas that differ from your own. To practice a balance between rejecting completely and accepting completely scholarly texts, I encourage you to ask the following questions:

- What are the author's purposes in this text and how do I know this?
- Who is the intended audience for this piece and how do I know this?
- Whom has the author left out or ignored in the text and why?
- Whose knowledge does the author appear to value?
- Whose knowledge is marginalized, devalued, or excluded and why?
- How do the author's identities inform this text?
- How do my identities inform my response to this text?
- How might the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the text influence my reading?

Out of Class Work Expectations: I expect that outside of class time, you will spend 6-9 hours per week with course texts, taking notes, and working on course assignments. If you are taking considerably less or more time than that, please sign up for my office hours, and we can discuss strategies of learning that might help shorten or deepen your study time.

Academic Resources. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the many resources available to you on campus that can help you improve your academic skills. Here are just a few:

The Writing Center offers one-on-one instruction in composition, organization, coherence, grammar, and style. Make an appointment here: <http://mywco.com/grinnell>

The Academic Advising Office provides academic support through peer tutoring, time management strategies, and individual accommodations, when appropriate. Advocate for yourself! <https://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/academic-advising>

Library Resources: Julia Bauder [bauderj] ext. 4431 is the librarian on campus who focuses on the field of education. She is happy to work with you on finding resources relevant to your assignments. She is also a formidable data analyst and digital humanities scholar, in my opinion. See also PWeb/Library Resources /Subject Guide for useful research links.

Electronic Devices. I encourage anyone with a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to bring it to class (fully charged due to limited outlets). If you do not have access to a laptop, please let me know that, and I can bring a tray of laptops to class when you or I think these devices are useful to course activities. Please respect the class by only using your devices to do activities that are related to our course at appropriate times. Out of respect for others in our mutual space, phones should be silenced during class time. Checking your phone distracts you, me, and your peers. Laptop screens create a physical barrier and obstruct dialogue, so please tilt down the screen when we have group discussions. If you are experiencing an emergency and need to have your phone on, of course do so, but I ask that you notify me before class.

Reasonable Accommodations. I aim to create an educational experience that allows each of you to demonstrate what you are learning in our course. If you anticipate the format and/or requirements of this course are not well suited to you, please meet with me to discuss these concerns within the first 3 weeks of the course. If formal, disability-related accommodations will be supportive for you, it is important to provide documentation to the Coordinator for Disability Resources, Jae Hirschman whose office is on the 3rd floor of the JRC [hirschma] ext. 3089. Their office will notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Then, please make an appointment with me so that we can talk through your formal accommodations.

Religious Observances. Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe religious holy days that fall during the semester. Please contact me within the first three weeks of the semester so we can make arrangements.

Academic Honesty, Intellectual Integrity. “When you submit a piece of work (whether a paper or paper draft, report, examination, homework, computer program, creative project, or other assignment) for a grade, you are claiming that its form and content represent your own original work produced for this assignment, except where you have clearly and specifically cited other sources (Grinnell College’s *Academic Honesty Handbook*, 2017-18, p. 4).” Please refer to the following website to inform yourself about the College’s policies. Note, you must cite even yourself if you are quoting your previous work:

https://www.grinnell.edu/sites/default/files/documents/AcademicHonesty_2017-18.pdf

Communication with the Instructor/Office Hours. Email is still the main way that faculty communicate with students at Grinnell. Get in the habit of checking your email and our course site on PWeb for updates. Note: I check my email twice on weekdays but not on weekends: plan accordingly, especially before assignments are due. I hope you will feel welcome to come to my office hours by signing up here: <https://calendly.com/profmichaels>. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, email me with alternative times and I will try to accommodate you.

Food Insecurity and Homelessness. I urge any student experiencing food insecurity or who lacks a safe and stable place to live to contact the Dean of Students Ben Newhouse [newhouse] ext. 3709 for support. Please also notify me, if you are comfortable doing so, and I will work with you to find resources in the community.

Assignment Submissions:

- All students are permitted two 72-hour extensions on any of the following assignments: DB posts, the Reading Room Analysis, or the short papers. To receive your extensions, simply email me at least 15 minutes prior to the deadline: just tell me that you are taking the extension for X assignment (no explanation necessary). Don't worry if you don't hear back from me: you will receive the extension as long as it is one of your two extensions and you've emailed me ahead of the deadline. With the extension, you must have the assignment in at least 72-hours from the original deadline or you will receive a zero for that assignment.
- All citations and references must be in a consistent, commonly accepted style (i.e. Chicago Style, APA, Turbian). The library has citation guides available or you can check this link, among many others, for assistance: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- Unless noted otherwise, all assignments should be submitted via PWeb. If PWeb gives you a problem, email me the assignment as an attachment by the deadline.
- For legibility, please type up your assignments unless otherwise noted or discussed. You can use a font of your choice as long as it is easy to read and relatively equivalent to 12-point Times Roman (approx. 250 words/double-spaced page). You can double- or single-space your assignments, and I welcome the use of headings and first-person narrative.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE
(subject to change)

I. History of Education: Foundations from the Past

Aug. 26
Th

Indigenous Education versus Schooling

In Class:

Making the familiar strange, the strange familiar

- Introductions to each other.
- Overarching questions of the field
- What purposes and forms did education have before European colonization up to the American Revolution?

Coming Due: DB1 post M 8/30 by 11:59pm on next Tuesday's readings

II. From Private to National Education: Inventing a Nation

Aug 31

T Pre-Colonial and Colonial Education

Due: DB1 post M 8/30 by 11:59pm

Read:

- Urban & Wagoner (2014). *American Education*: Chps 1 & 2: Pre-Colonial America & Colonization: 1607-1776. (pp. 1-54)
- Mintz, Preface, Prologue & Chp 1, "Children of the Covenant." In *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (2004), (pp. vii-31).

Sept 2

Th Comparative Colonial Childhoods

Read:

- Mintz, Chp 2. "Red, White, and Black in Colonial America." (pp. 32-52).
- Solomon (1985). Chp 1, "A Forbidden World," (pp. 1-13). *In the Company of Educated Women*.

Coming Due:

- DB1 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, F 9/3 by 11:59 pm
- DB2 due M 9/6 by 11:59pm on next T's readings

Sept 7

T Nation-Building: Education for a New Republic

Due: DB2 due M 9/6 by 11:59pm

Read:

- Mintz, Chp 3, "Sons and Daughters of Liberty" (pp. 53-74).
- Urban & Wagoner (2014). Chp. 3 "Education and the Building of a New Nation: 1776-1830" (pp. 55-82).

In Class: Current events assignment guide

Sept 9

Th Rural to Urban Shifts: Impacts on Education

Read: Kaestle (1983). Chp 2 & 3 (pp. 13-61) In *Pillars of the Republic : Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860.*

Coming Due:

- DB2 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, F 9/10 by 11:59 pm
- DB3 due M 9/13 by 11:59pm on next T's readings

Sept. 14

T African American Resilience & Self-Education

Due: DB3 due M 9/13 by 11:59pm

Read:

- Williams, Heather A. (2005). "In Secret Places" Chp. 1 (pp. 7-29). In *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom.*
- Danns, Purdy, & Span (2015). Chp. 1 & 2 (pp. 17-56). In *Using Past as Prologue.*

III. The Common School Ideal: Democracy & Capitalism in Contention

Sept. 16

Th Beginnings of the Common School Movement

Read :

- Loewen (1995). Chp. 1 (9-27). "Handicapped by History: the process of hero-making," In *Lies my teacher told me: everything your American history textbook got wrong.*
- U&W Chp. 4 (pp. 83-108). "The Common Man and the Common School: 1820-1860." In *American Education.*

Coming Due:

- DB3 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, F 9/17
- DB4 due M 9/20 by 11:59pm on next T's readings

Sept. 21

T Common for Whom?

Due: DB4 due M 9/20 by 11:59pm

Read: U&W Chp. 5 (pp. 109-144). "Class, Caste, and Education in the South: 1800-1900." In *American Education.*

Sept. 23

Th The Modern State & Schooling Read: U&W Chp. 6. (pp. 145-174). "Beginning the Modern School System: 1865-1900."

Coming Due:

- DB4 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, due F 9/24
- DB5 due M 9/27 by 11:59pm

IV. Progressive-Era Education

Sept. 28

T Mass Education & Standardization

Due: DB5 due M 9/27 by 11:59pm

Read:

- U&W Chp. 7 & 8. (pp. 175-230). "Organizing/Completing the Modern School System: 1890-1929."
- Blount (1996)

Sept. 30

Th Three Purposes of Schooling Read: LabareeF. "Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals." *American Educational Research Journal* (1997): 39-81.

Coming Due:

- DB5 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, due F 10/1
- Short Paper 1 Due Su 10/3 by 11:59pm

Oct. 5

T Working with the Archives

*Meet in the Iowa Reading Room, Basement of Burling Read: Ian Grosvenor, "On Visualising Past Classrooms," In *Silences and Images: The Social History of the Classroom* (Peter Lang, 1999), pgs., 83-104

Read ahead: TRI

In Class:

- Orientation to the Reading Room
- Workshop time
- Questions & preliminary findings

Oct. 7

Th Working with the Archives

*Meet in the Iowa Reading Room, Basement of Burling

Read: documents related to your Reading Room Analysis Assignment

Read ahead: TRI

In Class:

- Workshop time
- Questions & preliminary findings

Coming Due:

- Su 10/10 by 11:59pm, Reading Room Analysis
- DB6 due M 10/11 by 11:59pm

V. Post-"Progressive" Education, 1930 and beyond

Oct. 12

T The Great Depression to Post-War Boom

Due: DB6 due M 10/11 by 11:59pm

Read: U&W Chp. 9&10. (pp. 231-280). 1930-1960

In Class:

- Final Project orientation
- Sign-up for *Using the Past as Prologue* jigsaw

Oct. 14

Th

Common School for All?

Read: U&W Chp. 11&12. (pp. 281-348). 1960-2000

Coming Due:

- DB6 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, due F 10/15
- Read ahead: Lomawaima, McCarty, & Gilberto. (2006). *"To Remain an Indian" : Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education* (TRI)
- DB7 due M 10/25 by 11:59pm on Chp 1-6 of TRI
- Short paper 2 on TRI due Su 10/31 by 11:59pm

Enjoy Fall Break!
October 16-24

VI. Native American Education in the History of US Schooling

Oct. 26

T To Remain an Indian (TRI)

Due: DB7 due M 10/25 by 11:59pm on Chp 1-6 of TRI

Read: Chp 1-6 of *To Remain an Indian (TRI)*

In Class:

- Guided Lecture: "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" Indian Boarding Schools, Physical and Cultural Genocide through Schooling

Oct. 28

Th To Remain an Indian (TRI)

Due: Chp 7-end of TRI

In Class:

- Guided Lecture: We Are Still Here: Native American Resilience, Meskwaki Settlement School.
- Sign-up for *Using the Past as Prologue* jigsaw
- How jigsaw will work

Coming Due:

- Short paper 2 on TRI due Su 10/31 by 11:59pm

- DB7 responses to 2 peers' posts from past week, F 10/29
- DB8 due M 11/1/by 11:59pm on next T's readings

VII. Black American Education

Nov. 2

T Using Past as Prologue (UPP) Due: DB8 due M 11/1 by 11:59pm

Read: Chp 2 & 3 of UPP

In Class:

- Final Project orientation
- Reminder of jigsaw/share expectations for T 11/9
- Lecture: Brown v Board of Education
- UPP Discussion

Nov. 4

Th Using Past as Prologue (UPP) Due: DB8 responses to 2 peers' posts, due F 11/5

Watch: Race: The Power of an Illusion: Part 2

In Class:

- Guided Lecture: The Construction of "Whiteness"
- Final Project orientation

Nov. 9

T Using Past as Prologue (UPP) Due: DB9 due M 11/8 by 11:59pm

Read + Prepare to present on: UPP jigsaw assignment (Chp 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8)

Listen to: [Hometown Hero](#) (approx. 15 min)

In Class: Jigsaw presentations in small group

Nov. 11

Th

_____ Using Past as Prologue (UPP)

Due: DB9 responses to 2 peers' posts, due F 11/12

Watch: Race: The Power of an Illusion: Part 3

In Class: Mapping racial segregation in the US

Nov. 16

T

_____ Desegregation Today Due: DB10 due M 11/15 by 11:59pm

Read + Prepare to Present on: UPP jigsaw assignment (Chp 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13 presentation)

In Class: Jigsaw presentations in small groups

Nov. 18

Th

Afrocentric Schooling Due: DB10 responses to 2 peers' posts, due F 11/19

Listen to: *The Problem We All Live With* (2-hour podcast by Nikole Hannah-Jones)

In Class: Desegregation today

VIII. Complicating the Course Narrative: Other Histories, Your Research

Nov. 23

T Revisiting Purposes of Schooling and the Hope of Education

Lecture: Liberatory Education

Nov. 25

Th

No Class:

Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 30

T

Dec. 2

Th

Dec. 7

T

Dec. 9

Th

Dec. 13

M

Presentations of Your Research

You have a few days after your final project presentation to tweak your website based on peer feedback in the Q&A from the presentation. However, please note: my assessment of your presentation depends on you having a solid website during the final week of classes.

See final project guides/rubrics on PWeb.

Due: Final Website

Upload final weblink to PWeb/Assignments

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've completed the course and FA21.

Enjoy the Winter Break!